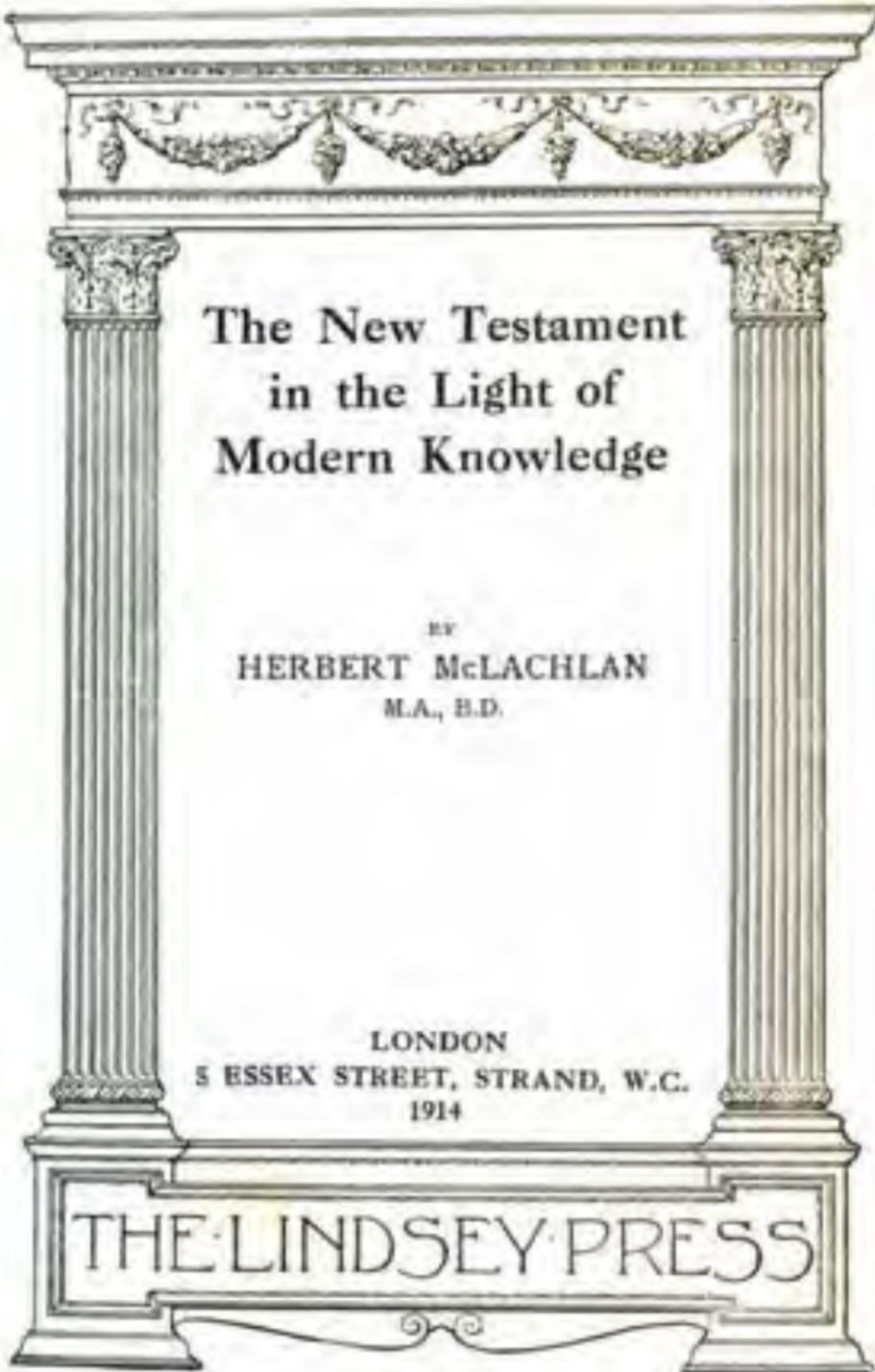


THE NEW TESTAMENT  
IN THE LIGHT OF  
MODERN KNOWLEDGE  
HUGH MCLACHLAN

**The New Testament  
in the light of  
Modern Knowledge**

**McLachlan**



The New Testament  
in the Light of  
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## PREFACE

THE New Testament is a collection of writings intended, from the first, for the spiritual edification of their readers. Those to whom Jesus spoke, and those for whom the Evangelists wrote belonged, for the most part, to the plebeian class; some, at least, of the Apostles were 'unlettered and non-professional men,' whilst in the churches addressed by Paul in his letters were '*not many* wise after the flesh, *not many* mighty, *not many* noble.'

The 'common people' of our time and clime, living in a very different intellectual atmosphere from that of Jew and Gentile in the first two centuries, puzzled, if not repelled, by the form and even content of the Christian Scriptures, frequently fail to find therein the 'comfort' provided for them.

Happily, in the light of modern knowledge, 'wayfaring men' may learn to distinguish clearly the passing and the permanent in the message of Evangelist and Apostle, may possess themselves of 'the riches of Christ' and enter into their inheritance.

## PREFACE

With a hope that it may illuminate some obscurities, and reveal what is hidden, this little book is sent forth. If frankness and reverence for truth be found in its pages, the charitable reader will readily forgive any infelicity of phrase or error of judgment.

H. McL.

Manchester, 14 *May*, 1914.

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CHAPTER I  
THE LANGUAGE OF THE  
NEW TESTAMENT

UNTIL quite recently, in a popular handbook on the New Testament no chapter on language need have been written. To-day, by good right, it claims first place. What was, to a layman, an uninteresting and unimportant branch of theological learning is now recognized as the key to a true understanding of the character and contents of New Testament writings.

Amongst theologians, the language of the New Testament, hardly less than its meaning, was for long the subject of bitter controversy. During the seventeenth century, the warfare between Calvinist and Arminian was not more spirited than that between Purist and Hebraist. The one claimed for the language of the New Testament a classical purity and elegance, the other laid stress

upon its Hebraic style and colouring. To the Purist, it seemed almost impious to deny that the language of Holy Writ was not as classical as that of any pagan writer, whilst to the Hebraist, the close affinities of the two Testaments only made more manifest the inspiration confined within their pages. Of the two theories, the latter did more violence to the text, in the hands of its champions.

There is a well-known passage in the First and Second Gospels in which Jesus confesses a certain limitation of knowledge: 'But of that day or that hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son but the Father.' Because of the difficulty of believing in its invention, it has been called one of the 'foundation-pillars for a truly scientific life of Jesus.' The Hebraists solved the problem it presented in this way; in Hebrew there is a causative form of the verb, and the verb 'to know' with little change may come to mean 'cause to know'; therefore when Jesus said he did not know, he really meant he did not let others know!

By the middle of the eighteenth century, with some slight modifications, the principles of the Hebraists were triumphant.

During the early part of last century grammarians began to abandon the ground thus gained. They taught that the Greek spoken throughout the civilized world, though not the Greek of Plato and Demosthenes, but a language in which peculiarities of various dialects were fused, was, at least, the basis of the New Testament language. For the rest, it betrayed everywhere clear traces of Hebrew influence, and remained a peculiar language, enjoying a splendid isolation. The first words of Winer's monumental Grammar of the New Testament (1st ed. 1822; 3rd Eng. ed. 1882) are these: 'The peculiar language of the New Testament,' and a considerable section of the first chapter is devoted to 'The Hebrew-Aramaic colouring of New Testament diction.' Cremer, in the introduction to his Lexicon of New Testament Greek (1st ed. 1878; 3rd Eng. ed. 1883) discloses, unwittingly, the dogmatic temper which helped to determine this conception of New Testament language. 'A language so highly elaborated and widely used as was Greek having been chosen as the organ of the spirit of Christ, it necessarily followed that as Christianity fulfilled the aspirations of truth, the expression of that language

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received a new meaning, and terms hackneyed and worn out by the current misuse of daily talk received a new impress and a fresh power. In fact, "we may," as Rothe says (*Dogmatik*, 1863), "appropriately speak of a language of the Holy Ghost. For in the Bible it is evident that the Holy Spirit has been at work, moulding for itself a distinctively religious mode of expression out of the language of the country which it has chosen as its sphere, and transforming the linguistic elements which it found ready to hand, and even conceptions closely existing, into a shape and form appropriate to itself and all its own." 'We have,' concludes Cremer, 'a clear and striking proof of this in New Testament Greek.' It is safe to say that never again can statements like these be made in any standard Grammar or Lexicon of the language of the New Testament.

Together with the almost complete disappearance of the mechanically conceived doctrine of inspiration, the last quarter of a century has witnessed an accumulation of evidence which has revolutionized our ideas of New Testament language. Fifty years ago, Bishop Lightfoot is reported to

have said in one of his lectures, speaking of some New Testament word which had its only classical authority in Herodotus, 'You are not to suppose that the word had fallen out of use in the interval, only that it had not been used in the books which remain to us; probably it had been part of the common speech all along. I will go further and say that if we could only recover letters that ordinary people wrote to each other, without any thought of being literary, we should have the greatest possible help for the understanding of the language of the New Testament generally.'

Bishop Lightfoot's striking prophecy has been literally fulfilled. The record of the recoveries from the sands of Egypt reads like a romance. Papyrus, an ancient writing material made from the pith of a reed-plant, has been preserved in great quantities by the dry Egyptian climate, and lately brought to light. Rubbish heaps of towns and villages have yielded papyri in large numbers; one remarkable discovery was a cemetery of crocodiles in which the animals were both wrapped in papyrus rolls and stuffed with them. Works, long supposed to be lost, whose names alone had survived,

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have been deciphered after a lapse, in some cases, of a millennium and a half.

The first fragment of papyrus was discovered as early as 1752 in the buried city of Herculaneum. In 1778, Egypt gave promise of what was to follow, but, save for valuable finds in the middle of last century, little was forthcoming until the year 1891. In the history of classical literature, that year was epoch-making, so numerous and important were the discoveries. Since 1897, Scriptural and Christian texts have excited much interest and attention. In their discovery, two Englishmen, Drs. Grenfell and Hunt, have taken the foremost place. New Sayings of Jesus, fragments of lost and uncanonical Gospels, and New Testament texts are amongst the treasures exhumed during the last fifteen years. No complete Gospel or Epistle has come to hand or is likely to do so, but it is worth remarking that the oldest original manuscripts of the Greek New Testament in existence are papyri, namely, fragments of the First and Third Gospels belonging to the third century, and a fourth century manuscript of one-third of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

By far the largest class of papyri are the

non-literary documents. Nor is this strange. Men do not throw away writings they prize, whether classical or Christian. It is otherwise with the multitude of private and business documents that are out of date and no longer needed. Hence tax receipts, accounts, notes of sales, leases, loans, contracts of marriage and divorce, registers and imperial rescripts, and letters on almost every subject under the sun have been found amongst the papyri. It is a melancholy reflection on the revenges of time that a Library like that of Cæsarea containing such priceless works as Origen's on the text of the Old Testament should have left but scanty traces of its existence, whilst innumerable writings doomed to destruction, and reflecting merely the passing interests of unlettered folk have been preserved.

The papyri already published cover a period of no less than a thousand years (B.C. 311-A.D. 725). In other words, these documents extend over a tract of time equal to that within which all the books of the Old and New Testaments were written. The results which have followed and are still to follow from their publication can scarcely be exaggerated. Historians and geographers,

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economists and philologists are still engaged in restating their doctrine in the light of the evidence they afford. Grammarians and lexicographers of the New Testament are in the same case. Indeed by them other new evidence of equal value must be carefully weighed.

Inscriptions and texts on coins and medals, which have so largely contributed to confirm and correct the historical and geographical data of the New Testament, have a direct bearing upon the interpretation of its language, whilst the discoveries of *ostraka* have created a new science. Poor people who could not afford to purchase papyrus wrote their letters, contracts, scripture verses and the like upon pieces of broken pottery (*ostraka*) which their wealthier brethren had discarded. Here, unquestionably, we come into contact with the lowest orders of society. There is something peculiarly pathetic in the scribbling of a Gospel saying upon the fragment of a broken oil-cruise or kneading-pan, and in it we may find a commentary upon the words of Mark xii. 37: 'The common people heard him gladly.'

It is easy to realize the importance of our new acquaintance with the men and women

to whom primitive Christianity addressed itself. But not less important are these discoveries for the student of the language of the New Testament.

I. The isolation of New Testament Greek as the language of the Holy Ghost is at an end. The *Koinē* or common Greek, colloquial rather than literary, is the language of the Christian scriptures, and letters written in Egypt by ignorant peasants are substantially in the same tongue as the Epistles of the Apostle Paul. The old antagonists were both in the wrong. The *Koinē* is not the classical language but one intermediate between ancient and modern Greek, and the Hebraisms in the New Testament are few and comparatively unimportant. The very title New Testament Greek is a misnomer, and in Dr. J. H. Moulton's invaluable Grammar of New Testament Greek (1st ed. 1906), the fact is patent on every page.

Numerous Hebraisms, falsely so called, may be seen in the Egyptian papyri. In a letter to a man in financial difficulties, A.D. 41, his friend bids him '*beware of the Jews.*' It seems ludicrous to suppose any longer that the words italicised, which could be used

in such a connexion, are a Hebraism.

New Testament phrases, hitherto regarded as due to the existence of similar idioms in Hebrew, are now seen to be international vulgarisms. Colloquialisms of common people, it appears, are much the same in different languages. Semitic influences have, however, operated in one way. Certain phrases owe their frequency in the New Testament to the fact that they translate like expressions in the native speech of the writers. Dr. Moulton adduces a Welsh analogy in 'Look you.' 'Now "look you" is English. I am told it is common in the Dales, and if we could dissociate it from Shakspeare's Welshman we should probably not be struck by it as a bizarre expression. But why does Fluellen use it so often? Because it translates two or three Welsh phrases of nearly identical meaning, which would be very much on his tongue when talking with his own countrymen.'

The frequent use of 'and' in Hebrew where Greek uses a participle or subordinate clause, is a phenomenon familiar to every reader of the Old Testament in the original. Nevertheless, the constant occurrence of this conjunction in certain books of the New

Testament is no proof that the style is not Greek. The language of Homer and of Greek Comedy betrays the same structure of sentences. There are, indeed, curious echoes in the New Testament of the vocabulary of Comedy. As Deissmann observes, 'it is not because the apostles were regular attendants at the theatre or readers of Comedy, but Comedy and the New Testament both draw from the popular colloquial language as from a common spring.' Nearer home the phenomenon referred to may be seen in the numerous 'ands' by means of which the English rustic tells his tale; or, if we want a literary parallel, in the English of Mandeville's Travels, which are written in a style common in that age over all the countries of Europe.

At the same time, the presence of some Semitisms in the New Testament cannot be denied. Aramaic, a language closely related to Hebrew, was the mother tongue of Jesus, and in Mark, our oldest gospel, three Aramaic expressions are reported as proceeding from our Lord (v. 41, vii. 34, xv. 34). According to Paul, Mark was 'of the circumcision,' and his writing reveals many indications of an Aramaic background. One manuscript of

the New Testament (*Codex Bezae*) exhibits Aramaisms absent from the rest, and Wellhausen concludes that there was a tendency quite early, to correct the Semitisms in the language. Unhappily, in its primitive Semitic form, Christianity perished with the sack of Jerusalem, leaving no records behind. As some compensation for this loss, we possess more than one Syriac version of the gospels, and Syriac is a Semitic tongue differing from the Aramaic of Palestine little more than Lowland Scottish differs from English. The first retranslation of our Lord's words into a speech akin to that which he commonly spoke throws some light upon the language of the New Testament. It gives us more original forms of proper names and titles. The latter, at least, are of some importance. Christ, in English as in Latin, is transliteration of the Greek *Christos*, but the Syriac has *Messiah*, i.e., the Anointed one. The accusation in Luke xxiii. 2 reads, 'saying that he himself is the anointed king,' which is the reading of our R.V. margin. The 'saviour' is the 'lifegiver,' and to be saved is 'to live.' Here the Greek gospels are responsible for a distinction not made by Jesus and his Aramaic speaking disciples.

It is quite possible that we owe to Greek philosophy and the Greek mysteries some of the characteristic terms of New Testament Christology.

Some Hebraisms visible in the New Testament are due to the Greek version of the Old Testament, known as the Septuagint, for this translation was the work of Greek-speaking Jews, who, in their comparative ignorance of Hebrew, were frequently reduced to a barbarous literalism.

One writer in the New Testament has been especially singled out for his Hebrew style. That the Apocalypse is the work of a Jewish Christian is obvious from its content, and hardly less from its language. Almost invariably, Old Testament quotations are from the Hebrew, not the Septuagint. The Hebrew mind of the writer has materially affected his expression. The accidents, style, and vocabulary employed are most easily explained by reference to Semitic usage. Indeed, Dr. Charles has shown that some passages in Revelation can only be understood by being translated into Hebrew.

But, when all is said, the language of the New Testament is unmistakably the *Koine*. Paul, certainly, and other New Testament

writers probably, knew Aramaic. Upon one occasion, to gain a hearing, the Apostle addressed the Jerusalem mob in that language. This fact argues neither ignorance of Greek on the part of the hearers nor the customary use of Aramaic by the speaker. Bilingualists are not without a keen love of their native tongue; rather, as in Wales, they are passionately devoted to it. And as in the Principality, so in Jerusalem; a speaker who unexpectedly addressed them in their mother tongue would conciliate unfriendly listeners. Dr. T. K. Abbott quotes a parallel from the sister isle. At a public discussion between a Protestant and a Roman Catholic champion, any approach to a disturbance was at once quelled by a few words in Irish. 'The people were listening to English speeches, but the Irish touched their hearts more nearly.' Habitually, Paul spoke and wrote in the *Koiné*—the universal language, whether he addressed Roman, Greek, Barbarian, or Jew.

2. Words formerly unknown outside the New Testament may be read on the Papyri and the *Ostraka*. The result is now to reaffirm, now to revise their ancient signification. In the letter already quoted, the man

advises his impecunious friend to plead with his creditors, 'Do not *unsettle* us.' Paul uses the same verb in the letter to the Galatians, where he writes of those who *unsettle* his converts. In a quaint letter from a boy to his father complaining that he had not been taken to Alexandria, the admission is made that his mother says 'he is *upsetting* me.' This use of the word throws light on the description of the brethren dragged before the rulers of Thessalonica by Jews who cried, 'These that have *turned* the world *upside down* are come hither also' (Acts xvii. 6).

In the parable of the sower (Matt. xiii. 22) the seed sown among thorns is said to signify the man who 'heareth, but is choked by the cares of the world, and the *deceitfulness* of riches.' The word rendered 'deceitfulness' occurs also in 2 Peter ii. 13. In both passages the sense is improved if, according to contemporary usage, the word is translated 'pleasure.'

3. Words previously represented as the coinage of Christianity are proved to have been borrowed from paganism, and pressed into the service of the new faith. The word from which our 'church' is derived, namely

*kuriakos*, itself derived from the Greek word meaning 'Lord,' was thought to be an invention of St. Paul until it turned up in the papyri, with the meaning 'imperial.' Similarly, other words employed in the hated Cæsar worship were taken over by the Christian Church. 'Son of God' was a constant epithet of the Emperors, and the title 'Saviour' was bestowed by sycophants on such a man as Nero. The word rendered by 'gospel,' in pre-Christian times meaning simply good news, appears on an inscription in connexion with the Imperial cult. *Parousia* (advent), a word significant and sacred to primitive Christians, was formerly a technical expression for the arrival or visit of some eminent personage. A special tax was usually imposed to meet the cost of a *parousia*. Among the wrappings of a crocodile mummy was a papyrus on which the word appears. The elders of a village are writing about a requisition of corn, 'which was imposed for the *parousia* of the king.'

Paul does not explain his psychological terms for the good reason that his correspondents understood them quite well. Reitzenstein observes, 'All the different shades of meaning which the word "*pneuma*"

has in Paul's writings may be found in classical examples in the magic papyri. Paul has not developed for himself a peculiar psychology, and a mystic way of speaking in accordance with it, but speaks in the Greek of his time.'

4. Difficult words and phrases in the New Testament are made intelligible. Matthew vi. 27 in both English versions reads 'And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit unto his stature?' The margin of the Revised Version suggests *age*, 'and if we are to follow the almost unanimous testimony of the papyri this sense should be adopted.' In Luke ii. 52 the statement is that Jesus advanced in wisdom and age, a description to which, we are told, a striking parallel is now afforded by a first century inscription.

The fourteenth chapter of Mark closes with the words, 'And when he thought thereon he wept.' The Authorized Version margin reads, 'he wept *abundantly*,' the Revised Version margin, 'he *began to weep*.' The words italicized represent the translation of a single Greek word. Commentators have been at a loss how to turn it. Here are a few attempts to render it. 'He *covered his face* and wept.' 'He wept *bitterly*.'

'When he *realized it*, he wept.' The reference is to the action of Peter, when he heard the cock crow after the denial of his Master. The A.V. has doubtless served in sermons upon Peter's denial, to illustrate the connexion of repentance with reflection. Unfortunately for this homiletic point, the word will not bear the translation of our old version. In the papyri, it is found, says Dr. Moulton, in the letter of an Egyptian peasant, who complained that his neighbours had '*set to*' and dammed up the canal that irrigated his field. The R.V. margin just misses the meaning of the original, which suggests that Peter, like a woman convicted by her own conscience, just abandoned himself '*to a good cry.*'

Speaking of the practices of the '*hypocrites,*' Jesus says three times in the Sermon on the Mount (A.V.) '*They have their reward.*' (R.V.) '*They have received their reward.*' The word thus translated is commonly employed in papyri receipts, when the account has been paid in full. An extract from a record book belonging to the reign of Tiberius Claudius relates the pleas in a case concerning an adopted child. A contract had been made that Saraeus should nurse

the child for Pesuris. For two years, the former received her pay, then, as the child was neglected, Pesuris took it away. The nurse, seizing a favourable opportunity, recovered the child by stealth. Hence the lawsuit. Pesuris declares, 'I have in the first place the written agreement to nurse, and in the second place, the *receipt* for nursing fees.'

The suggestion in the Sermon on the Mount is that there is nothing else for the 'hypocrites' to receive. They have already all that is due to them. Disciples who do not follow their example may hope for more than immediately follows upon the performance of almsgiving, praying, or fasting.

Referring to the same people, Jesus says (Matt. vi. 16) 'they *disfigure* their faces, that they may be seen of men to fast.' Here the phrase means literally 'cause their faces to disappear.' The meaning, as we learn from the papyri, is simply that they refrain from washing, and the face disappears under accumulated dirt. We see now the force of what follows, 'But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thy head and wash thy face.' In one papyrus, a husband writing to a wife who is away on a visit, and staying longer than he

likes, begs her to come home, and remarks 'since the 17th January, when you were with me, I have not bathed, I have not anointed myself.' In other words, he had caused his countenance to disappear.

When Jesus says (Matt. vi. 24) 'No man can serve two masters,' it seems to us so axiomatic as to be almost meaningless. But the papyri show cases where a third as well as half of a slave is bequeathed in a will. Such a usage may have been in the mind of our Master, and the strife it engendered may have given point and force to his saying.

In Matt. vii. 17, Jesus says, 'Even so, every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, but the corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.' The word 'corrupt' in the lexicons is 'rotten,' but that is not the meaning required by this passage. A rotten tree does not bring forth rotten fruit. The papyri show that the word means 'unfit for food.' In Matt. xiii. 48 the word is used in this sense of fish. 'They sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but the *bad* they cast away.' Obviously, the fish just drawn out of the sea were not rotten.

Turning to the Epistles, we may note two striking instances where the papyri help us

to apprehend the meaning of a passage. In 1 Cor. x. 11 we read 'They were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages *are come*.' In papyrus wills and similar documents, the last word appears as a technical term for property 'descending' to an heir. Dr. Moulton aptly adds that when Tennyson wrote 'We are the heirs of all the ages,' he was unconsciously copying St. Paul.

Hebrews xi. 1 is a well-known difficult verse. For a single word in the Greek, we have in the A.V. and R.V. no fewer than five renderings. 'Now faith is the *substance* of things hoped for'; A.V. margin, the *ground, or confidence*; R.V., *assurance*; R.V. margin, the *giving substance to*. Drs. Grenfell and Hunt have traced the history of the word by means of the papyri. Originally meaning substance, that is property, it came to mean the documentary evidence by which a man establishes his claim to property, what we call 'title-deeds.' As we at once perceive, title-deeds are something more than an assurance, but considerably less than substance. They do not give substance to, but 'ground' and 'confidence' express too vaguely the sense of possession which they afford.

The papyri give us an intimate acquaintance with the language spoken by the class of men and women, amongst whom we must place most of those who wrote, and almost all who read, the books of the New Testament in the early days of Christianity. The writings discovered stand nearer to the Apostolic autographs than any we possessed. What was formerly regarded as a sacred language 'never profaned by common use' is seen to be the vernacular of ordinary daily life. Words and phrases therein previously misunderstood have recovered their true meaning in the light of numerous illustrations such as have been noticed. The new discoveries have naturally demanded a new grammar of the language of the New Testament. Of this the Prolegomena has already been published by Dr. Moulton. A new Dictionary is in course of preparation which will take account of the inscriptions, ostraka, and papyri. When completed, as may easily be surmised, these works will impart to the study of the language of the New Testament an interest, vitality, and freshness such as it has never hitherto enjoyed.

## CHAPTER II

### THE APOCRYPHA AND THE NEW TESTAMENT

**N**OTHING is more noteworthy in the modern study of the New Testament than the attention paid to the Jewish writings belonging to the time between the Testaments. Of these, some are commonly known as the Apocrypha and formerly constituted an integral part of our English Bible; others, chiefly apocalyptic in character like the Revelation of John, belong to the same period of Jewish history. The classification, however, of this literature as Apocryphal and Apocalyptic, is imperfect and misleading. It is better to use the term Apocrypha in the wide sense as including both.

Between the latest book of the Old Testament and the earliest of the New Testament there passed a period of not less than 150

years, within which something like a revolution took place in the cultus, doctrine, and polity of Judaism. If we would read intelligently our Christian Scriptures, we must not be entirely ignorant of the Jewish Apocrypha. The doctrine of Gospels and Epistles owes much every way to the generations which produced the Apocrypha. Perplexing problems, almost non-existent for the ancient Hebrew writers, were created by political and spiritual experiences during an age of persecution. A fresh, and what might fairly be called a modern form was given to men's conceptions of Providence, and the Divine purpose in history. The subtle appeal made by Greek learning and Greek modes of life was met by the appropriation, especially by Alexandrine Jews, of the noblest and most abiding elements in Hellenic philosophy and religion.

The change that has come over the attitude of New Testament scholars towards the Apocrypha may be seen in the contrast presented by a commentary like that of Alford on Revelation (1st ed. 1861) and Dr. Porter's *Messages of the Apocalypses* (1905). Alford made no mention of Jewish Apocalyptic literature; while Dr. Porter, in his

volume, includes not only the Book of Daniel, but also seven other Apocalypses, two Christian and five Jewish. By means of the latter he illustrates and explains the Apocalypse of John, and provides in addition an admirable introduction to Apocalyptic literature as a whole.

Again, as late as 1892, a great scholar like the late Dr. A. B. Bruce could speak in this strain. 'Scholars may revive a professional interest in apocalyptic, and it is not to be denied that the exegete of the New Testament may learn something from their labours; but the great heart of humanity has only one duty to perform towards it, and that is to consign it to oblivion.' Writing in 1910 in *The International Journal of the Apocrypha* (estab. 1905), Mr. Emmet states the case as it is to-day. 'This much at least is clear; the study of the Apocalyptic is no longer a sequestered bypath, into which those who are treading the road of New Testament research may turn aside for a while if they will. It has become a highway along which every serious student must pass. But it is by no means plain to the wayfarer; not only fools, but the wise may easily err therein.' No one supposes that this litera-

ture can ever regain the popularity it undoubtedly enjoyed when it was written, and the difficulties which attend its investigation cannot be denied. Yet it remains true, as Drs. Sanday and Headlam declared, that 'it is by a continuous and careful study of the Apocrypha that any advance in the exegesis of the New Testament will be possible.'

With the aids afforded by eminent scholars like Kautzsch and Dr. Charles, it may be possible even to set forth simply the relations of the Apocrypha to the New Testament. The difficulties of apocryphal study, however, must not be minimized. For lack of evidence, the date of the several books cannot always be fixed except within wide limits, nor, for the same reason, can the authorship always be determined. Some of the books are collections, more or less edited, of what were originally independent writings; others have suffered much by way of interpolation at the hands of Christians. Analysis is frequently based on little more than conjecture, and there are varying degrees of probability in the results reached by various scholars. Worst of all, the apocalypses, from their very nature, conceal much that for complete

comprehension of their meaning should be quite clear. Ideas familiar to contemporaries are often suggested in words and phrases, which provoke and baffle the modern student. Notwithstanding all these obstacles, it is not quite true to say of the Jewish Apocalypses, as Dr. Robert South, Chaplain to Charles the Second, said of the Book of Revelation, that 'the more it was studied, the less it was understood, as generally either finding a man cracked, or leaving him so.'

Within recent years, the apocalyptic interpretation of the life of Christ associated with the names of Schweitzer in Germany, Loisy in France, and Tyrrell in England, has directed attention to the Apocalypses, Jewish and Christian alike. According to these scholars, the word and work of Christ cannot be understood at all except in the light of his doctrine of the last things (eschatology). Jesus believed that the end was at hand, and this belief dominated his thought and life. The founder of Christianity must be regarded not as a great teacher, but as the herald of a miraculous kingdom which is suddenly to take the place of the kingdoms of this world. His ethic was therefore only for the brief

space of time that should intervene before the coming of the kingdom, and had no meaning or validity for the unborn generations of men. In working out his scheme, Schweitzer not only ignores the Fourth Gospel, but also neglects the Third, which vitiates his account of the teaching of Jesus. It is the study of Jewish Apocalypses that has lent strong support to this school of New Testament critics. That study has destroyed the one-sided claim that Jesus was a teacher after the type familiar in the twentieth century. Nevertheless, the eschatological element in the New Testament, once so neglected by liberal scholars, has now been greatly exaggerated. As Dobschütz observes: 'If eschatology is the key to all gospel questions, then it becomes the problem of problems how Christianity could go on without eschatology through so many centuries.' The theory does violence to the gospel tradition, to the moral teaching of Jesus, to the sayings which represent the kingdom and Messiahship as present, and moreover, reads into the text what is to be demonstrated.

Yet the presence of eschatology in the Gospels must be clearly recognized. It is

seen in editorial additions like 'the little Apocalypse' (Mark xiii.), and transfigured into historical prediction, especially by Luke. In its simple form, it is seen in the actual sayings of Jesus, and again, in a different form, as it passed through the mind of Jesus. But taken together, all the eschatological elements represent only a small part of the whole gospel tradition. A scientific and impartial examination of the evangelical narrative, while it reveals the existence of eschatology, reveals also the greater importance of the moral and spiritual elements in the teaching of Jesus. If here we are more occupied with the former, it is because it is more directly related to the subject of this chapter.

The regard in which the early Christians held the Apocrypha is attested in more ways than one. The books with which we are acquainted under that name were included in the Greek Old Testament—the Bible of the early Church—and did not, as in our old English Bible, form a separate group of writings between the two Testaments. Though scholars like Jerome denied their right to this honoured place, they retained it, and were quoted as Scripture until the time of the Reformation. Other books, as we

shall see, must have formed part of the library of men like Luke and Paul, if we may not add the name of one greater than both.

It is significant that the original Hebrew or Aramaic in which so many Apocryphal books were written has perished. A few fragments, as in the case of Ecclesiasticus, have been discovered within recent years, but whether they represent the original text or only a recension of it, remains an open question. In the main, the oldest extant text of Apocryphal books is Greek, the language of the early Church.

The Wisdom of Ben Sira, the oldest and the most popular of these works, constitutes one of the most valuable text-books of Hebrew morality. The title of 'Ecclesiasticus,' which has been current in the Western Church since the end of the third century, means simply 'Church Book,' and points to the position the book occupied for so many centuries of Christian history.

In the last chapter of Ecclesiasticus we read, 'Draw near unto me, ye unlearned, and lodge in the house of instruction.' In the Hebrew text, found by Prof. Schechter in the rubbish room of a synagogue at Cairo, and published in 1899, the personal note is

even more strongly emphasized, 'Draw near, ye unlearned, and lodge in my house of instruction.' It is the earliest mention of the House of Research, as it is more accurately rendered, where great scholars gathered round them a circle of disciples in order to search the Scriptures. From this and other references, it has been inferred that in the Wisdom of Ben Sira, we have the notes of lectures taken down by his students. This may account for a certain lack of order and sequence plainly perceptible throughout the book. Such a text-book as this, associated with the name of Jesus Ben Sira, an honoured teacher in Jerusalem, would be known to his great namesake Jesus of Nazareth. There are not wanting signs that such was the case. Ecclesiasticus xix. 21 in two manuscripts reads 'A servant that saith to his lord, I will not do as it pleaseth thee, though he do so afterwards, angereth him that feedeth him.' The Revised Version omits the verse, adding a marginal note, 'omitted by the best authorities.' Some scholars regard it as a Christian addition based on Matt. xxi. 28-32. Probably the dependence is on the other side.

The passage in the gospels has several

employ.<sup>2</sup> Jesus had regard to the deed, and freely forgave disobedience in word.

Possibly, the passage in the Apocryphal book is the interpolation of some Pharisee who edited the notes of Ben Sira's lectures. For us, the important fact is the rejection by Jesus of the doctrine in Ecclesiasticus.

Again, in Matthew xi. 28-30 alone in the Gospels, we read the moving appeal beginning with the words, 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden.' Harnack has defended the saying as an utterance of our Lord. Mr. Montefiore is not alone in doubting its authenticity. Ben Sira li. 23-26 presents a curious parallel. In the Hebrew, the last verse runs 'Let your soul accept her burden.' Loisy supposes that the author of the First Gospel put the words into the mouth of Jesus because he identified Christ with 'Wisdom.' It is more likely that our Master adopted the sentiments of the earlier Jewish teacher, in his call to his disciples, with some suggestion of antagonism to Ben Sira's claims.

In the mind of our Lord, Ben Sira may well have been reckoned amongst 'those of old time,' whose teaching needed revision. The rabbinical tone of the book, its occasional

worldliness, its low view of woman, and its popularity, may have directed Christ's attention to it, and elicited his censure. Howbeit, parallels to the language of Ben Sira may be found in both Matthew and Luke, and Dr. Adeney is justified when he speaks of our Lord's 'extensive acquaintance' with the Book of Ecclesiasticus. The third evangelist also made use of Ben Sira in his Magnificat, and parallels in thought and language to various passages in it are found in the writings of Paul and John.

In the latest and most critical edition of Tobit, its influence on the New Testament is carefully estimated. Here Mr. Simpson has collected evidence of linguistic affinities between the narrative of Raphael's commission and Ascension and the records of the Transfiguration, Resurrection, and Ascension of Christ. He asks two questions. 'Do their completeness and detail suggest that our book exercised a direct and important formative, if not creative, influence upon the expression of the truths of the Transfiguration, Resurrection, and Ascension of our Lord? Or, are we to suppose both only represent the popular vocabulary in which such events were wont to be related?' Both questions

are wisely left unanswered, but it is significant that the first should have been asked by an Anglican scholar, who also concludes that 'nowhere is there so exact a coincidence of religious presupposition, literary expression, and dramatic climax as in Tobit *sic* 16-22.'

Points of resemblance have been traced likewise between the diction and conceptions of Tobit and those of Paul, and much more, of the Pastoral Epistles. Mr. Simpson, indeed, suggests that the abuses or heresies combated by these Epistles may be found in the 'undue reverence for tractates of mythological, demonological, and useless non-religious though moral—proverbial tendencies, such as we meet with in Tobit.' Though Tobit could scarcely be unacceptable to the early Christians, the description of the heresies in the Pastorals does not correspond closely with anything in the Apocryphal books. Undoubtedly, however, Tobit was not merely read by but influenced in various ways the writers of the New Testament.

The Wisdom of Solomon, still more, has exercised a deep and penetrating influence upon the thought and language of New

Testament writers. Written in Greek by an Alexandrian, and belonging to the last half-century before the birth of Christ, 'Wisdom' exercised a singular fascination for the first Christian believers. 'The unquestionable acquaintance of Paul with the book' is now seldom denied. Drs. Sanday and Headlam, in their commentary on Romans, set forth some striking linguistic parallels between the Epistle and 'Wisdom,' and carefully estimate the way in which the one influenced the other. 'It will be seen that while on the one hand there can be no question of direct quotation, on the other hand the resemblance is so strong both as to the main lines of argument and in the details of thought and to some extent of expression as to make it clear that at some time in his life St. Paul must have bestowed upon the Book of Wisdom a considerable amount of study.' The Christology of Paul's Epistles has much in common with the conception of 'Wisdom' in the apocryphal book. The monotheism of the Apostle like that of the Pseudo-Solomon does not exclude the bestowal of lofty attributes upon a second subordinate personality. As in the words of Paul 'The Lord is the Spirit,' so 'Wisdom and Spirit' to the Alex-

andrian writer are different names for the same reality. As in the letter to the Galatians Christ is an historical man 'born of a woman, born under the law,' and yet the Apostle can say 'Christ liveth in me'; so 'Wisdom' is at once a personal figure and immanent in humanity. The description of 'Wisdom' (vii. 26) as 'an effulgence from everlasting light, an unspotted mirror of the working of God and an image of his goodness' recalls the words of the second letter to the Corinthians, iv. 6-8, iii. 17-18. Both 'Wisdom' and Christ are regarded as having entered into historical relations with Israel, the one as the pillar of fire in the wilderness (Wisd. x. 17), the other as the spiritual rock that followed the Israelites (1 Cor. x. 4).

'There can be little doubt,' as Prof. Andrews remarks, 'that the speculations of the writer of the Book of Wisdom helped to provide the categories for the Christian interpretation of Christ.' It is difficult, therefore, to find in Paul's writings an orthodox Trinitarianism, which obviously was alien to the mind of his gifted forerunner. The fact is that early Christian and contemporary Jewish monotheism admitted speculation on the subject of an intermediary between God and

man without apparently impairing their common affirmation, 'Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God, the Lord is one.'

The unknown writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews so manifestly came into contact with 'Wisdom' as to lead some scholars to suppose that both books were the work of one man, Apollos. Though this ascription of the apocryphal book to the 'eloquent' Alexandrian cannot be established, yet the coincidences 'are too numerous to be accidental.' In the words of Dr. Ryle, 'It certainly appears extremely probable that the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews was acquainted with the Book of Wisdom.' Parallels in thought and language to what is contained in 'Wisdom' may be found also in the Epistle of James, the Fourth Gospel, and elsewhere in the New Testament.

A Greek like Luke, a man of considerable culture, might well have read 'Wisdom' even whilst a disciple of the Law. It is important to remember that when St. Paul wrote the letter to the Romans, which reveals his knowledge of the apocryphal book, Luke had been already in his company. Moreover the style and contents of 'Wisdom' would commend themselves to Luke when they

came under his notice. It is generally admitted that the speeches of Paul reported in Acts were largely shaped by Luke, and these, not infrequently, are inspired by the philosophy of 'Wisdom.' We meet, for example, with the same view of created things as revealing the character of the Creator, the same disdain of pagan idolatry, and the same conception of the heathen search after God. In their interpretation of history, Luke and the unknown author of 'Wisdom' are also in substantial agreement. That unrighteousness is punished and righteousness rewarded is the theme of the second half of the apocryphal book; similarly, exemplified in the history of the Hebrew race, it is illustrated in Acts by the penalties that befell those who stood in the way of the progress of the Gospel, and in the providential care of its messengers and Apostles. But it is not only in Acts that Luke's doctrines, so far as the study of his sources enables us to isolate it, harmonizes with that of 'Wisdom.' In the matter peculiar to the third evangelist, and especially in the parables, various points of identity in teaching are presented. In theology and eschatology and in his singular attitude towards worldliness, Luke may be

indebted to the earlier Jewish author. Linguistic evidence confirms the impression derived from a comparison of the Book of Wisdom with the Third Gospel and with the Acts of the Apostles, that Luke was influenced by the sublime teaching of the Wisdom of Solomon.

Its philosophy must have made 'Wisdom' a book of immense value to Jews and Christians alike in contact with Greek learning. It faced, and in some sort solved problems which clearly pressed upon the minds of Paul and the author of the Fourth Gospel. The New Testament, so far as it discusses doctrine, follows on lines first marked out by the Wisdom of Solomon.

Another of the Old Testament apocryphal books in the English Bible, though only an appendix to the New Testament in the Latin Vulgate, is the Second Book of Esdras—an Apocalypse. It is a Palestinian writing belonging to the first century B.C. Until recently, English scholarship has not been much exercised upon 2 Esdras; yet, in the words of Mr. G. H. Box, 'It is one of the finest works in Apocalyptic literature, and is of supreme importance for the study of early Judaism and the New Testament.'

Written originally in Hebrew, this apocalypse survives only in Latin, Syriac, Ethiopic, Arabic, and Armenian, all of which are clearly translations of a Greek version. Why have both Hebrew and Greek texts disappeared? Gunkel's answer throws some light upon the relation of the Jewish Apocrypha to the Christian Church. Jewish apocalyptic literature, according to this scholar, suffered two catastrophes.

When the Jewish synagogue renewed its life, after the final blow by Rome, the apocalyptic and all Greek writings were thrust forth. We know from the difficulty with which Daniel gained canonical recognition how suspect were the apocalyptic writings. Jewish-Greek literature found a home in Christian circles. The widespread popularity of apocalyptic literature is attested by the numerous translations into the languages of countries far distant from each other. Unhappily the Greek of 2 Esdras did not long survive. A second catastrophe befell it. Christian Fathers, inspired by Greek philosophy, could not endure writings which preserved much of the matter and something of the spirit of Oriental mythologies. 2 Esdras in the mother-speech of

the Christian Church passed away, and continued to live only in the strange tongues of daughter churches.

The book properly consists of chapters iii.-xiv. The first two chapters are Christian in origin, and are occupied with the rejection of the Jewish people in favour of Gentile-Christians. Their addition is further evidence of the adoption of the book by the Church. The last two chapters are Jewish, and refer to various historical events towards the close of the third century.

The unknown author presents us, together with interesting lore important for the study of New Testament eschatology, a series of religious problems and speculations related to eschatology and finding in it an answer or solution. These remind one of similar speculations in the Pauline Epistles. The Pseudo-Esdras resembles Paul, too, in his doctrine of the depravity of human nature, in his denial of the current belief that salvation could be secured by works of law, and in his universalism. His pessimism is far more pronounced, but there are many signs that he belongs to the same pharisaical school as the great convert to Christianity. The question of the relative value

of faith and works discussed in the Epistles of Paul and James was probably a familiar one in Jewish schools. It is touched upon in several passages of 2 Esdras.

The doctrine of 'the last things' in this as in all apocalyptic writings has a long history. Its origins are to be found in the ancient Babylonian mythology, and those who worked over the traditions in later times freely elaborated and reshaped their material. In the New Testament apocalypse of John, some of the figures drawn are not to be understood without reference to the mythology lying beneath the tradition, which the Christian editor adapted for his purpose. The 'Man from the sea' (2 Esdras xiii. 2-13) represents the mythological hero, who returns victorious from the final victory over the watery monster, in order to vanquish the wicked on earth. The same idea is presented somewhat differently in Revelation xxi. 1. 'And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away; and the sea is no more.'

Amongst other apocalypses important for the student of the New Testament are the Apocalypse of Baruch, The Ascension of

Isaiah, The Assumption of Moses, and, above all, The Book of Enoch.

The Apocalypse of Baruch, in form and substance, has much in common with the Second Book of Esdras, but there are also some differences. It teaches explicitly the resurrection of the dead, the doctrine of free will, and salvation by works. Many passages in it betray either acquaintance with the New Testament, or what is more likely, with the ethical doctrine upon which the evangelists, and especially the first, drew very largely. A few examples will show what is meant. 'Ye bridegrooms, enter not into your chambers; ye women, pray not that ye may bear children; for the barren shall rejoice, and they that have not sons shall be glad, and they that have sons shall be sorrowful' (cp. Matt. xxiv. 19; Luke xxiii. 29). 'There shall be rumours many and messengers not a few; and mighty works shall be shown, and promises made of which some shall be vain and some shall be confirmed' (cp. Matt. xxiv. 24). 'For what gain have men lost their life, and what have they who were once on earth given in exchange for their souls' (cp. Matt. xvi. 25, 26). Numerous parallels also between the Apoca-

lypse of Baruch and the Revelation of St. John indicate that the Christian seer was acquainted with this book. Prof. Andrews remarks, 'The Apocalypse of Baruch is of exceptional interest to us because it affords us a clear illustration of Jewish thought in the last half of the first century of the Christian era, and shows us the sort of literature which the Apostle Paul would probably have produced if he had not become a Christian. The measure of the difference between the Apocalypse of Baruch and the Epistles of Paul is the measure of the influence of the Christian religion. The book enables us to see, too, what exactly Pauline theology owes to Judaism, and how Paul has purified and Christianized the Jewish elements which he incorporated into his new philosophy of religion.'

The Ascension of Isaiah, apart from fragments in Greek and Latin, preserved only in Ethiopic, is a compilation of three documents, two of which contain large Christian elements. The Christian sections are valuable for the light they throw upon the doctrine and discipline of the early Church. The book also reveals belief in the appearance of the Anti-Christ, and thus helps us to understand

Paul's prophecy of the coming of 'the man of sin' in 2 Thessalonians, and other similar passages in the Apocalypse of John.

The Assumption of Moses, originally written in Hebrew or Aramaic, though known and quoted up to the twelfth or thirteenth century, was lost until a Latin translation was discovered and published in 1864. From this Apocalypse, the Epistle of Jude derived the story in verse 9 of Michael's contention with the devil about the body of Moses. 'The author represents,' in the opinion of Dr. Burkitt, 'that tendency in Jewish thought, which was most nearly allied to primitive Christianity.' Unfortunately, the text of the book presents unusual difficulty.

The Book of Enoch is a composite collection of apocalyptic writings belonging to the second and first centuries B.C. Written probably in Aramaic, it circulated amongst Christians in a Greek translation which has almost entirely perished. It is sometimes called the Ethiopic Enoch, after the language from which it has been translated, in order to distinguish it from the Book of the Secrets of Enoch, which Dr. Charles translated from Slavonic and published in 1896. The Ethiopic Enoch is quoted in Jude 14, 15; and

was regarded by the ancient Church as a genuine revelation. The importance of this Apocalypse in relation to the New Testament is not easily exaggerated. 'The doctrines in Enoch,' says Dr. Charles, 'that had a share in moulding the corresponding New Testament doctrines, or formed a necessary link in the development of doctrine from Old Testament to New Testament, are those concerning the Messianic kingdom and the Messiah, Sheol, and the Resurrection, and demonology.' It is in Enoch we find the titles and functions of the Messiah, which were afterwards adopted by Jesus, or attributed to him by the evangelists. They have been summarized thus: (a) In the Book of Enoch the term 'Christ' is applied for the first time in Jewish literature to the coming Messianic king. (b) The title 'The Son of Man' makes its first appearance in Enoch, and passes from Enoch into the New Testament. (c) Two other titles which are used in Enoch of the Messiah, namely, 'the Righteous One' and 'the Elect One,' are used of Christ in the New Testament (cf. Acts iii. 14, vii. 52). (d) One of the main functions of the Messiah in Enoch was that of Judgment, and this conception is almost verbally reproduced

in John v. 22. (e) The Messiah is depicted as 'pre-existing' and as 'sitting on the throne of his glory'—two ideas which are also familiar to readers of the New Testament.

The Book of Jubilees, or Little Genesis, is really a commentary on the Book of Genesis—a version of the early history of Israel from the point of view of Pharisaism. Dr. Charles argues that it belongs to the period 135–96 B.C., and is the work of one in sympathy with the Maccabean movement. Other scholars, like Dr. Headlam, think the book was written just before the destruction of Jerusalem by a zealous opponent of Christianity. In any case, the book illustrates the doctrine of the New Testament by contrast not less than by resemblance. 'We have an example of the Law given by angels. The theology of the book is exactly what St. Paul protests against when he condemns the excessive observance of days and months and seasons and years.'

There are many theories as to the source of these apocalyptic writings. The one which finds favour with Dr. Fairweather is that of Bousset, namely, that 'the apocalyptic writings are essentially lay literature, books emanating from the comparatively

uneducated section of the people, and reflecting in some important respects the influence of Oriental and especially Persian religion.' It is some support of this theory that the writers of the New Testament and early Christians generally, who belonged to the same social strata of Palestinian society as the authors of the apocalypses, should have welcomed them and made considerable use of them.

'In the broad sense,' we may say with Dr. Fairweather, 'the apocalypses paved the way for Christianity,' and we may also accept in the same sense the statement of Harnack that 'it was an evil inheritance which the Christians took over from the Jews.' The common elements in the New Testament and the Apocrypha are historically valuable as revealing the roots of certain Christian doctrines. The more sober and spiritual form in which apocalyptic ideas and conceptions are presented in the Christian Scriptures is a tribute to the tone and temper of our Master's teaching. But these elements are neither the most permanent nor the most spiritual in the New Testament; and so far as they obscure or conceal the ethical and spiritual principles of Christianity,

the Apocalyptic is an evil inheritance. In the words of Prof. Peabody, 'When we recall the prevailing tone of ethical teaching, and still more the habitual attitude of the Teacher to the world in which he found himself, it is difficult to see in it a predominating quality of indifference to the world's affairs, or a complete preoccupation with a supernatural catastrophe. On the contrary, the ethics of Jesus exhibit *on the whole* a kind of sanity, universality, and applicability, which are independent of abnormal circumstances, and free from emotional strain.'

Two more apocryphal works, in character different from the rest, merit more than a passing mention: 'The Psalms of Solomon' and 'The Testaments of the Patriarchs.' The Psalms of Solomon, written in Hebrew in the first century B.C., afford a notable picture of Jewish religious parties about the time of Pompey's capture of Jerusalem. They are the work of Pharisees who maintained a bitter opposition to the reigning Hasmoneans. Pompey's conquest is hailed as a Divine judgment. By means of these Psalms, we understand more perfectly the dark portraits of the popular leaders of religion in the gospel narrative. The self-righteousness of the

Pharisees is clearly perceptible. Of their participation in the coming kingdom, they entertain no doubt. Messianic expectation is intense, and the office and functions of the coming one are plainly portrayed. Mr. Travers Herford has recently shown that it was their conception of *Torah* (wrongly translated 'Law'), which compelled the Pharisees to condemn the precepts and practice of Jesus. That there were hypocrites in their ranks, the Pharisees themselves admitted. But, says Mr. Herford, 'to urge that their conception of religion was defective is legitimate; to condemn them as hypocrites on the strength of a different conception of religion is not legitimate, no matter by whom it is done.' This is indisputably true; but it is perhaps not without significance that in his lectures on the Pharisees, their advocate nowhere refers to the *Psalms of Solomon*.

The 'Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs' is of unique interest in relation to the New Testament, for it points the way which Jesus followed as a teacher of ethics and religion. Written between 109 and 106 B.C. in Hebrew, it was lost for several centuries. English scholarship has done more for this apocryphal book than for any other. Robert

Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln, translated it from the Greek in the middle of the thirteenth century. Grabe published it in his *Spicilegium* in 1698-9, with the suggestion that its original was in Hebrew, and that it had suffered various Christian interpolations. This theory, rejected by subsequent editors, has been recently established by Dr. Charles (1906), to whose edition every student must stand indebted. The work of a Pharisee, the 'Testaments' emphasize the doctrines which distinguish the Pharisees from the Sadducees. But 'the main, the overwhelming value of the book lies in its ethical teaching, which has achieved a real immortality by influencing the thought and diction of the writers of the New Testament, and even those of our Lord.' To make plain the striking verbal resemblances between the sayings of the Christian Scriptures and those of the sons of Jacob would require the setting forth of parallels in Greek. But even in English, the dependence of a few passages may be clearly shown.

The outstanding feature of the book is its doctrine of forgiveness. 'Love ye one another from the heart; and if any man sin against thee, cast forth the poison of hate and speak peaceably to him, and in thy soul

hold not guile ; and if he confess and repent, forgive him ' (T. Gad vi. 3). Dr. Charles observes, ' These verses contain the most remarkable statement on the subject of forgiveness in all ancient literature. That our Lord was acquainted with them and that his teaching presupposes them we must infer from the fact that the parallel is so perfect in thought and so close in diction between them and Luke xvii. 3 ; Matt. xviii. 15.' The two great commands of love to God and love to our neighbour are conjoined. ' Love the Lord through all your life, And one another with a true heart ' (T. Dan v. 3, as in Matt. xxii. 37, 39 ; Luke x. 27.) Purity of mind is enjoined in the manner of Christ. ' He that hath a pure mind in love, looketh not after a woman with a view to fornication ' (T. Benjamin, which may be the original of Matt. v. 28). The twelve sons of Jacob are to share in the Messianic kingdom like the twelve Apostles in Matthew, and in the Gospels are many other parallels in phrase and thought. Paul quotes two passages from the Testaments. ' The wrath of God hath come upon them to the uttermost ' (T. Levi vi. 11 ; 1 Thess. ii. 16). ' For they both do the evil thing and

Michael. This angel is the guardian of the righteous of all nations.'

In a lecture delivered in 1870, published posthumously in 1912, the late Prof. W. Robertson Smith argues that the old Catholic Church did not rightly apprehend the Old Testament. 'A true historical sense of the organic connexion between the Old and New Testaments was altogether lacking. The Apostles had lived under the Old Testament. If not in the shape of an explicit historical theory, yet in the form of deep personal experience, they did understand how the New Testament was rooted in the Old, and grew out of it by a process of true development.'

The modern study of the Apocrypha in relation to the New Testament does not deny the organic connexion of the two Testaments, but affirms that something more is to be said. Apart from the apocryphal literature, the connexion between the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures is not fully established, and many of the most important elements in the New Testament are shrouded in mystery. Nothing less than 'a new principle of criticism' is being applied to New Testament theology, a principle evolved

by the recognition of the influence of the Apocrypha upon our Lord and his Apostles. Prof. Andrews states the present position when he says 'a knowledge of Apocryphal literature is even more essential for the study of the New Testament than a knowledge of the Old Testament itself.'

### CHAPTER III

#### THE TEXT OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

THE Revisers of the New Testament, in their preface, allude to the fact that the Greek text of 1611 was 'founded on manuscripts of late date, few in number and used with little critical skill,' and observe, 'But in those days it could hardly have been otherwise. Nearly all the more ancient of the documentary authorities have become known only within the last two centuries; some of the most important of them, indeed, within the last few years. Their publication has called forth not only improved editions of the Greek text, but a succession of instructive discussions on the variations which have been brought to light, and on the best modes of distinguishing original readings from changes introduced in the course of transcription. While, therefore, it has long been the opinion of all scholars that the commonly

of Westcott and Hort, coincident with and partly a consequence of, accessions to our knowledge of textual history, that necessitates the inclusion of this chapter in a handbook on 'The New Testament in the Light of Modern Knowledge.'

The story of critical labours on the text of the New Testament need not be retold; for in the words of the scholar already quoted, 'the theory of Westcott and Hort has coloured all that has been written on the subject for the last thirty years, and supplies the basis of all work done in this field to-day.' Many living critics, indeed, regard their conclusions, if not as final, at any rate as having attained such finality as the subject permits. Prof. Gregory (*Canon and Text of the New Testament*, 1907) apparently congratulates himself that he has sufficient 'good sense for the present to accept' the results of Westcott and Hort, and gives their views as 'essentially his own.' Prof. Souter (*Text and Canon of the New Testament*, 1913) is more eulogistic: 'It appears to the present writer that a great advance upon the text of Westcott and Hort in the direction of the original autographs is highly improbable in this generation. If

they have not said the last word, they have at least laid the foundations which make it comparatively easy to fit later discoveries into their scheme.' It is essential, therefore, that we understand, at least, the outline of Westcott and Hort's theory.

They laid down two principles of great importance. (1) Knowledge of documents should precede final judgments upon readings. (2) All trustworthy restoration of corrupted texts is founded on the study of their history. The authorities for the texts are classified into groups, and traced as far back as possible to common ancestors. It is shown that a few manuscripts, going back to an early date, present a pure text, though differing from the great majority of manuscripts. The possibilities of revision, interpolation, and assimilation are carefully considered. In the early days of Christianity, there was, of course, no such lofty doctrine of the sacredness of the text as was later developed.

Hort, to whom we owe the Introduction to this famous edition of the New Testament, distinguished four groups of manuscripts which he called Syrian, Western, Alexandrian, and Neutral. Each family is supported by

some versions, or translations. The preference of one family of manuscripts to another depends upon the evidence of early Christian Fathers, whose quotations help to determine the date of the manuscripts and the place of their birth. By means of this criterion, the Syrian group is proved to be the latest, and therefore the least valuable. The Alexandrian family is of Egyptian origin, and the readings are often mere corrections in style and language. The Neutral group, as the name is intended to imply, is regarded as preserving substantially the primitive text. Its chief representatives are two fourth century manuscripts, *Codex Vaticanus*, denoted by the letter B, and *Codex Sinaiticus*, denoted by the Hebrew letter Aleph.

The 'Western' text provides the 'burning question' of textual criticism. Its leading MS. is *Codex Bezae* (D), sixth century A.D., a manuscript presented to Cambridge University by Theodore Beza, the Reformer, in the year 1581. Its variant readings, which are both numerous and important, are said by Hort to be due to free handling by scribes at an early date.

Dr. Salmon summarized Hort's attitude towards the 'Neutral' and 'Western' texts

thus: 'Hort, if consulted what authority should be followed, might answer, Follow B and Aleph; accept their readings as true, unless there is strong internal evidence to the contrary, and never think it safe to reject them absolutely. But suppose B has not the support of Aleph? Still follow B, if it has the support of any other manuscript. But suppose B stands alone? Unless it is clearly a clerical error, it is not safe to reject B. But suppose B is defective? Then follow Aleph. What about following the "Western" reading? What about killing a man?'

Criticism of Westcott and Hort's theory has taken various forms. Dean Burgon argued strongly but never convincingly for the traditional text, which is represented by our Authorized Version. In his apologetic, he condemned Codex D equally with the two great manuscripts of the 'Neutral' text. He declared 'without a particle of hesitation, that Aleph, B, and D are three of the most scandalously corrupt copies extant, exhibit the most shamefully mutilated texts which are anywhere to be met with—have become by whatever process depositaries of the largest amount of fabricated readings, ancient blunders, and intentional perversions

of the truth which are discernible in any known copies of the Word of God.'

This line of attack proved profitless, and has now been completely abandoned. Dr. Scrivener adopted a different tone, and recognized the weakness of Burgon's position, but still rejected the theory of Westcott and Hort. He protested, as many others since have done, against the question-begging and misleading names given to his groups by Hort. The 'Western' text is not pre-eminently Western, for witnesses to it are found not less in the East than in the West. Though he admitted that B was 'the most weighty authority that we possess,' he declared 'we have no right to regard it as a second Infallible Voice proceeding from the Vatican, which, when it has once spoken, must put an end to all strife.' Finally, and most conclusive of all, for the various revisions of the text which Hort's theory demanded, Scrivener could discover no historical evidence. Possibly Scrivener, certainly his editor, was not altogether free from a certain bias which affected the judgment of men who clung tenaciously to a text they almost worshipped.

Blass was one of the first to make out a

good case for the 'Western' text. It is largely, yet by no means exclusively, in the Third Gospel and in Acts that the additions and omissions of this text are conspicuous. To account for these, Blass set forth a theory that Luke published two editions of his writings. 'He supposed that Luke wrote his Gospel in Palestine, and that subsequently on his coming to reside in Rome with St. Paul, he was asked by the Christians there for copies of his work, and thereupon wrote it out again for them, with such alterations as an author feels at liberty to make in transcribing his own books. Similarly, in the case of Acts, one copy was no doubt made for Theophilus, to whom it is addressed, another for the Church in General; verbal, and occasionally even substantial alterations being made in the later copy.'

The theory met with the support of several scholars, but cannot be said to be gaining in favour. All the omissions and additions in the Bezan text of the Lucan writings cannot be explained as due to the character of the recipients of the two editions, or to considerations of style; much less does the theory account for similar phenomena in other books of the New Testament. It does

not provide what is required, namely, 'some uniform cause applicable to the whole range of phenomena presented by the "Western" text, with some special addition to account for their special prominence in the two books of Luke.'

Dr. Salmon, reviewing in 1897 the course of the controversy since the publication of Westcott and Hort's text, reiterates some of the criticism levelled by Scrivener, and makes his own contribution. Some of the errors attributed to the Evangelists in Westcott and Hort's text seem too gross to be original. 'In the very first chapter of St. Matthew, according to Westcott and Hort, the Evangelist makes the name of one King of Judah Asaph instead of Asa, and of another Amos instead of Amon. If a Sunday school child thus mixed up the names of two prophets and two kings, we should not be satisfied with his answering; and it seems hard to believe that St. Matthew knew no better.' Salmon thinks the text of Westcott and Hort goes back to an Alexandrian manuscript of the third or possibly the end of the second century, but not to the original autographs. Unlike Scrivener, he does not under-estimate the 'Western' text. 'Hort's

method of casting aside "Western" readings as worthless has certainly the advantage of much simplifying the problem; but it reminds me too strongly of the Irish juryman who, after he had heard counsel on one side, decided that it only perplexed his judgment to listen to what the other side had to say.' As for the licentiousness of Western scribes, there is no good reason for believing they were born with a double dose of original sin. Prof. Ramsay, indeed, entertains the highest opinion of them. In his numerous works on Paul and Luke, he accepts many of the 'Western' readings as the interpolations of a scribe or scribes possessed of a remarkable knowledge of Oriental geography and customs. He is constrained to do this by reason of the intrinsic excellence of such additions, which are often extremely appropriate as regards place or person, and are couched in language that harmonizes with the style of the writer. Moreover, these readings often solve problems textual, archaeological, and geographical which remain in the 'Neutral' text. What we are inclined to doubt, with Prof. Lake, is: whether Prof. Ramsay is safe in confining the knowledge of the *glossator* to Oriental subjects, and whether such good

work is really that of a *glossator* at all.

Sir Frederick Kenyon (*Textual Criticism*, 2nd ed. 1912), whilst he accepts Hort's theory as 'substantially sound,' does not 'go so far as he does in the rejection of all evidence which lies outside the "Neutral" group.' 'The course of investigation, aided by evidence which has come to light since Hort wrote, has tended to emphasize the early and widespread character of the "Western" text, and to render it probable that, among much that is supposititious, there is also something that is original, and yet is not preserved in any other form of text.' 'It would be simpler, no doubt, to be able to rule out all "Western" readings; but the easiest way is not always the one which leads to truth, and the tendency of recent criticism has certainly been to rehabilitate, to some extent, the "Western" text, and to demand a more respectful consideration of it in the future.'

This judicious statement of the present position is illustrated by the theory of Von Soden, whose great work on the New Testament he did not complete. He groups the manuscripts otherwise than Hort, and under different names. One family, the 'I' text, roughly corresponds with the 'Western'

text, but is not dependent upon versions at all. Von Soden regards it as nearer to the original text than the other families. A vital part of the theory is the influence of Tatian's *Diatessaron*—a harmony of the four Gospels, which circulated in the East about A.D. 170. This he regards as the disturbing factor in the history of the text of the New Testament, and the extent to which each group has been assimilated to its text is the criterion which decides its date and the authority of its text. Prof. Lake, reviewing Von Soden's writings, doubts the validity of this criterion. 'Even the latest of the Gospels was no doubt in existence before the year A.D. 110, but the fourfold canon was probably not established anywhere for at least another forty years, and did not become generally accepted before the end of the second century. In the interval between the composition of each Gospel and the recognition of the fourfold canon, each of the four must have had the same history as any other book of its class. They were not yet "Scripture"; every scribe who copied the text was to some extent a redactor, for his desire was not merely to perpetuate a textual tradition, or even merely to reproduce a book, but to

hand on a message the importance of which lay in its contents and not in its form.' 'If this view is correct, it follows that Von Soden is wrong in postulating the existence of a text from which the recensions diverge, and critics ought to direct their attention to the reconstruction of the local texts<sup>2</sup> (and expect to find considerable variation between these), rather than to the manufacture of an "original" text which can be traced all through the second and third centuries.' Elsewhere (*Text of the New Testament*, 4th ed. 1908) the same writer has expressed his opinion that the origin of the interpolations, 'Western' and 'Neutral,' 'is connected somehow with the sources of the New Testament rather than with its text. It is a remarkable fact that the prominent features of the "Western" text exist in the Gospels and Acts, which are based on documents of an earlier date, but are to a large extent wanting in the Epistles, which are free compositions unconnected with other writings. It is therefore well to keep in mind the possibility that we have cases in the text of the Gospels and Acts of readings which are authentic, so far as they are part of the "source-document," but unauthentic in the

sense that the compiler did not use them, and which owe their presence in any text of the New Testament to the reaction of the sources on the text of the compilation.'

From our sketch of recent studies in textual criticism, it is plain that neither Hort's theory nor any other affords complete satisfaction. Those who love a clear-cut scheme before all else will still rest content with the theory of Westcott and Hort. Others will hesitate to dogmatize, and even say with wisdom and courage, 'the most primitive text of the New Testament and its earliest history we do not yet know.' Meanwhile the 'Western' additions, no less than the omissions, must be treated on their merits, and the study of the sources of New Testament writings more thoroughly pursued. A brief narrative of some recent discoveries and researches which have led to the reopening of the problem of the 'Western' text may fitly preface a few illustrations of the contributions which this text makes to the New Testament.

Within the last ten years of the nineteenth century, several important studies of *Codex Bezae* were published. Dr. Rendel Harris endeavoured to show that interpolations in the text of Acts are due to an early scribe,

who had come under the influence of Montanism. The heresy so named had its origin in Phrygia soon after the middle of the second century; its founder Montanus regarded himself as the promised 'Paraclete,' and announced the restoration of the gifts of the Spirit. Certain Bezan additions, which refer to the indwelling of the Spirit, are adduced in support of this theory. *Codex 'D'* is written both in Latin and in Greek, and Dr. Rendel Harris thinks the interpolations were primarily in the Latin. Dr. Chase, in his study of the manuscript, pleaded for the influence of Syriac upon the Greek text, and produced illustrations of Syriac idiom. He connected the 'Western' text with Antioch, and the indications of intimate knowledge of Roman administration and official language in the text support this view, since Antioch was an important centre of Roman government. Both these theories may be partially true, and explain some readings; but neither solves the problem of the 'Western' text.

Wellhausen (*Introduction*, 2nd ed. 1911) is on firmer ground when he shows that *Codex Bezae* has preserved numerous Aramaisms in the Gospels, and especially in Mark, which have been recast in better Greek in

the other manuscripts. Since Aramaic was the mother-tongue of the second Evangelist, as of Jesus and the first disciples, this evidence points clearly to the more primitive character of the 'Western' readings as compared with the 'Neutral' text.

The discovery of Tatian's *Diatessaron* is one of the most important episodes in the modern study of the New Testament. From references by Eusebius, the Church historian of the fourth century, and other ancient writers, it was long ago stated that Tatian had compiled a harmony of the four Gospels about A.D. 170. An Armenian version of a commentary on it by Ephraem of Syria was published in 1836, and translated into Latin forty years later. Later still, an Arabic translation of the *Diatessaron* itself was found in Rome, and another in Egypt, the text of which was printed in 1888. The Greek which lies behind the Arabic *Diatessaron* has certain affinities with the two chief representatives of the 'Neutral' text, but more with *Codex Bezae* and its associates, and therefore tends to support the view that these come nearer to the original text of the New Testament.

In addition to the common Syriac version

of the Bible known as the *Peshitto*, there is one discovered by Cureton—then assistant keeper in the manuscript department of the British Museum—which was published as early as 1858. Another and more important one is the manuscript discovered in 1892 by the twin sisters Mrs. Lewis and Mrs. Gibson in the monastery of St. Catharine on Mount Sinai. Both these manuscripts, and particularly the latter, which is generally considered the earlier, exhibit the type of text which Hort called 'Western.' A third Syriac version, known as the *Philoxenian*, was only known in the four Catholic Epistles (2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, Jude) until 1892, when a manuscript belonging to Lord Crawford, and now in the Rylands Library, came to light. Thomas of Harkel apparently revised the text of this version at the beginning of the seventh century, and evidently used a Greek manuscript which had a 'Western' text. Furthermore, a number of manuscripts in Palestinian Syriac, discovered in the years 1890-95, by Dr. Rendle Harris and the ladies already named, are closely related to the old Syriac, that is, to the 'Western' text.

The two most important Egyptian versions are the Sahidic and the Bohairic, so

called from the districts to which they belong. The Sahidic version, which has lately been published from materials long accumulated, is probably the older, and its text is related to that of *Codex Bezae*. Since it is dated about the middle of the third century, it is an important witness for the 'Western' text.

The case is the same when we turn to the evidence of the Latin authorities. Sir Frederick Kenyon thus sums up an examination of the manuscripts of the Old Latin version. 'Looking now finally at the Old Latin version as a whole, its text is found to be of a very early character. It belongs to, and is a principal member of, that class of authorities which is distinguished by the boldest and most striking departures from the received text. It is found in company with the *Codex Bezae*, and its attendant group.'

Amongst heretics, Marcion witnesses to the 'Western' text in the middle of the second century. Of Christian Fathers, Irenaeus affords evidence of its existence at the end of the century, and recent critical investigation of the works of his contemporary, Clement of Alexandria, shows that he had the same type of text. Last but not least, the manuscript purchased by Mr. Freer in 1907, and

variously dated between the fourth and sixth centuries, is decidedly 'Western.' The order of the Gospels is 'Western,' and the text exhibits many striking 'Western' traits, including the remarkable verse about the man working on the Sabbath day, hitherto known only in *Codex Bezae*.

Elsewhere the writer has discussed a few of the most notable 'Western' readings to be found in the writings of Luke.<sup>1</sup> One is the well-known story of the woman taken in adultery, usually but mistakenly made part of the Fourth Gospel. Another is one of the cycle of Sabbath stories in Luke, namely that of the Sabbath worker already mentioned. A third corrects the common version of the words from heaven at the baptism of Jesus, 'Thou art my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased,' and substitutes 'Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee.'

In Acts, the 'Western' text gives an earlier passage in the first person than does the 'Neutral' text, namely, xi. 28, a passage which is related to the conversion of the writer. By the omission of the word 'strangled,' the 'Western' text makes the Apostolic decree of Jerusalem (xv. 29) into

<sup>1</sup> Luke the Evangelist and Historian.

a summary of moral precepts, and thus makes more intelligible the nature and meaning of one of the most important documents for the historian of the beginnings of Christianity. 'The Apostolic Decree,' says Harnack, 'if it contained a general declaration against eating sacrifices offered to idols, against partaking of blood or things strangled, and against fornication, is inconsistent with the account given by Paul in Gal. ii. 1-10, and with the corresponding passages in the First Epistle to the Corinthians. It is therefore unhistorical.' The 'Western' text, by what at first sight seem trifling variants from readings more generally accepted, helps to clear up difficulties also in connexion with incidents reported by Luke, as, for example, the riot at Ephesus, and the disturbance in the presence of Gallio.

In the First Gospel, it is *Codex Bezae* which gives the singular answer of the Pharisees to the question of Jesus about the two sons. (See chap. II, The Apocrypha and the New Testament, p. 32.) This reply though reckoned nonsense by Scrivener, has been shown by Wellhausen and Mr. Hart to be worthy of credence on good grounds. Considerations of space prevent even the enumeration of

the data, topographical and historical, which have found favour with Prof. Ramsay. One or two illustrations must suffice. In the account of the healing at Lystra (chap. xiv.), *Codex Bezae* adds that the man was 'in the fear of God.' Prof. Ramsay remarks, 'the idea that he was a proselyte is not likely to have grown up falsely in a Gentile congregation, nor is it likely to have lasted long in such a congregation, even though true.' In other words, the reason for the omission of the statement from other manuscripts is quite evident. Similarly, we can see how naturally Luke would mention such a detail as to the man's life, since in all probability, he himself entered the Church by way of the synagogue. In verse 23 'D' reads, 'And the priests of God, Zeus before the city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates, and intended to make sacrifices (beyond the usual sacrifices) along with the multitude.' These details, we are told, had the advantage of local accuracy.

In Acts, chap. xvi, *Codex Bezae* makes an addition to the narrative. Verse 30 reads, 'And he brought them out (Paul and Silas) and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' Prof. Ramsay observes, 'It seems highly im-

probable that a Christian in later time would insert the gloss that the jailer looked after his prisoners before he cared for his salvation; it is more in the spirit of a later age to be offended with the statement that the jailer did so, and to cut it out.'

In chapter xix. 34, the cry of the crowd in *Codex Bezae* is not 'Great is Artemis of Ephesus,' but 'Great Artemis.' The latter is 'a common formula of devotion and prayer, as is attested by several inscriptions.' A parallel in the papyri suggests, in the words of Dr. Milligan, that 'we have here a stock phrase of Artemis worship which rose at once to the lips of the excited mob, rather than an argument directed against St. Paul's doctrine.'

In xxviii. 16, the 'Western' text adds that the centurion 'delivered the prisoners to the Captain of the guard.' Mommsen explains that the officer was the 'Princeps Peregrinorum.' Lightfoot long since remarked that such an addition is 'entirely free from suspicion on the ground that it was inserted to serve any purpose, devotional or doctrinal.' We may add that the words imply a precise recollection of the officer in whose charge the Apostle was placed, such as Luke was likely to possess.

Plainly, as Prof. Knopf has said, in many cases, by the examination of single passages, 'the authority of the highly esteemed neutral text is most severely shaken, on external evidence, since the readings of the "Western" text are frequently much older, and more widespread; on internal evidence, since they prove themselves to be really superior and more primitive.'

It is not assumed that a *single* 'Western' text can be discovered in any manuscript superior to what Hort has called by the title of the 'Neutral' text. 'The choice,' says Wellhausen, 'between the reading of the Vatican and the Sinaitic on the one hand and the *Codex Bezae* and the oldest versions on the other, must be determined by the exegesis of each passage, partly by the style of the individual author.'

It is therefore not admitted that only omissions from the 'Western' text can be proved original. The authenticity of these is now almost generally admitted. The crucial question is the genuineness of variants and so-called interpolations. Dr. Burkitt has remarked, 'It is in the direction here indicated, namely, the preservation of the true text in a considerable number of cases by "Western"

documents alone, that criticism may ultimately be able to advance beyond the point reached by Hort.

Recently a number of eminent scholars deprecated the agitation in certain quarters for a new translation of the Greek New Testament. We can now understand the reason. It is the problem of the 'Western' text. For the present, the reader of the R.V. should carefully observe the marginal notes which refer to the readings of 'some' or 'many' 'ancient authorities,' and remember that not a few of these represent the text in question.

We must also guard against any exaggeration of our ignorance of the true text. The materials for our knowledge of the text 'are incomparably more plentiful in number, and more varied in kind, than in any other instance. The plays of Æschylus are preserved in perhaps fifty manuscripts, none of which is complete. Sophocles is represented by about a hundred manuscripts, of which only seven have any appreciable value. The Greek anthology has survived in one solitary copy. The same is the case with a considerable part of the Annals of Tacitus. Some of the classical authors are, no doubt, in a far more

favourable position than those who have just been named. Yet even so these do not approach the number of witnesses for the text of the New Testament. The number of manuscripts of it, or of parts of it, in the original Greek, is over four thousand.' To these must be added the translations. 'It is therefore probably within the mark to say that there are now in existence twelve thousand manuscript copies of the New Testament, of which no two are precisely alike.' Again, 'in no other case is the interval of time between the composition of the book and the date of the earliest extant manuscript so short as in that of the New Testament.' In most cases the difference is very great. 'Only Virgil approaches the New Testament in earliness of attestation. Yet his text is not in so favourable a position as the New Testament by nearly a hundred years.'

Hence it is true to say that we are probably nearer to-day than ever before to the original text of the New Testament, and are certainly nearer to that text than in the case of any book which has come down to us from antiquity.

The estimate of Hort as to the extent to

which the text of the New Testament is open to doubt may safely be accepted. 'The proportion of words virtually accepted on all hands as raised above doubt is very great, not less, on a rough computation, than seven-eighths of the whole. The remaining eighth, therefore, formed in great part by changes of order and other comparative trivialities, constitutes the whole area of criticism.' Hort, indeed, believed that by his text he had reduced what might be called 'substantial variations' to little more than a thousandth part of the entire text.

Though we can no longer accept his text, we must not magnify the problem that remains. Nevertheless, since we are concerned with the most important book in the history of civilization, it is not unimportant that its text should be frankly discussed in the light of recent research.

CHAPTER IV  
THE WRITERS OF THE  
NEW TESTAMENT

THERE are few books, comparable with those of the New Testament in respect of power or purpose, about whose authors less is known by their myriads of readers. In the Old Testament, Job alone excels in force and genius the works of Evangelists and Apostles, and its author is unknown. Yet we would give much for such an insight into the life and character of the great Hebrew dramatist as we enjoy in the case of Jeremiah the prophet. Happily, some at least of the writers of the New Testament may be to us more than mere names. Until recently, however, scholars have been so absorbed in their doctrine as to manifest little interest in the personalities of the first Christian authors. The theory of Biblical inspiration has also much to answer for.

Differences in style and language have seldom been denied, but rather regarded as a difficulty to be removed. 'The fact,' said Prof. Woods (*Biblical Cyclopædia*, 1845) 'that the individual peculiarities of the sacred penman are everywhere so plainly impressed on their writings, is often mentioned as an objection to the doctrine that inspiration extended to their language as well as their thoughts.' He therefore takes 'pains completely to remove it.' 'Independently of our reasoning, this matter is decided by the Book itself; "All Scripture is divinely inspired," and it is all the Word of God. And it is none the less the Word of God, and none the less inspired because it comes to us in the language of Moses, and David, and Paul, and the other sacred writers. It is God who speaks to us, but it is also man; it is man, but it is also God.' To-day, few scholars will be found to acknowledge the validity of these arguments or the grounds on which they are based. Peculiarities of thought and language are recognized as indicative of the various purposes, prepossessions, and characters of the different writers.

Of late, the problem of the relations of the first three Gospels has been approached

by way of an investigation of the style and vocabulary of the evangelists. Sir John Hawkins in England and Prof. Harnack in Germany have made conspicuous contributions to the literature of the subject. The study of the Papyri has served to show to what degree of culture the several writers of the New Testament have attained. It is admitted on all sides that the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews is one who has not a few claims to rank as a stylist in Hellenistic literature. The Papyri also furnish interesting parallels to the formulæ employed in the New Testament. A more complete knowledge of the age preceding the first century of Christian history enables us to estimate more accurately the nature and extent of the New Testament contribution to ethics and religion. Perhaps, too, the declining influence of Paulinism, due in part to its conflict with science, in part to a return to the religion of Jesus, has thrown into prominence Paul the man, the missionary preacher, and letter writer.

Paul is, indeed, the earliest and greatest of the writers of the New Testament. That his letters were written before the first of the Gospels, though seldom disputed, seems to

require explanation. The omission in the Epistles of any reference to the Gospels is one of several lines of proof. The belief of early Christians in the speedy passing away of the age in which they lived; the prevalence of oral teaching; and the use of the Old Testament as the Scriptures which foretold the advent of Christ, retarded the writing of the Gospels. Most important of all, the first disciples had remarkably little interest in the earthly life of Jesus. It was 'Christ crucified' that was preached rather than the beneficent ministry and moral teaching of the Man of Nazareth. The Epistles corroborate the details of the life of Jesus so far as they refer to them at all, but these are secondary matters in the mind of Paul and the other letter writers. Thus it happens that as there is comparatively little doctrine in the Gospels, so there is little else in the Epistles.

The evangelists had access to sources, oral and written, that were earlier than the first epistle, and these will be considered later. Here, it suffices to make clear that the letters of a man converted to Christianity after the death of Christ are earlier in date than the narratives of the life and teaching of our Lord.

Not all the epistles, which our English version attributes to Paul, are the work of his hand. The Revisers did not profess to deal with the titles of the books of the New Testament. 'These titles,' they observe, 'are no part of the original text; and the titles found in the most ancient manuscripts are of too short a form to be convenient for use. Under these circumstances we have deemed it best to leave unchanged the titles which are given in the Authorized Version as printed in 1611.' Hence it is that the Epistle to the Hebrews, never attributed to Paul by the early Fathers, is reckoned amongst Pauline Epistles by the reader of the English versions.

An early school of German critics ventured even to deny the Pauline authorship of all but the Epistles to the Galatians, Romans, and 1 and 2 Corinthians.

The pendulum has now swung far in the opposite direction. The present position is expressed by Dr. Percy Gardner: 'The setting in of a strongly conservative tendency as regards the authorship of the Pauline Epistles, the general agreement of critics that these Epistles, except those to Timothy and Titus, and perhaps that to the Ephesians

and 2 Thessalonians, are in the main really the work of the great Apostle, brings great gain to the student of early Christianity, whose time for the study is limited. Some years ago we scarcely dared to cite passages from such Epistles as those to the Philippians and Colossians as proof of the character and views of St. Paul. We may now venture to cast aside extreme timidity, and to read the letters of Paul as we read those of Cicero, more in the light of the historic imagination and of spiritual sympathy than in a keenly critical spirit.'

Unhappily, some of Paul's letters appear to have perished, as, for example, the letter to the Laodiceans of which he makes mention. Again, our two letters to the Corinthians were not all the letters sent to the Christians of Corinth. The so-called First is not the first letter addressed to them, any more than our Second is the second letter Paul wrote to Corinth. In all, we can trace four letters from Paul. In one case, the Epistle to the Ephesians, we do not know for a certainty to whom it was addressed—probably it was a circular letter sent to several churches and amongst them to Ephesus.

As a writer, Paul is virile, impassioned, argumentative, and rhetorical; but is not conspicuous for lucidity. Some of his statements, and these not the least important, can be understood in more ways than one. They form a challenge to every commentator and are the despair of many students. When occasion demands, as in the letter to the Galatians, Paul can speak strongly and straight to the point. He knows also how to plead a case—witness his treatment of a vexed question in 1 Corinthians. It is not possible to make a distinction between letters and epistles, as Deissmann does, and confine the writings of Paul within the former category. The Epistle to the Romans is something more than a personal missive such as passes between friends. It resembles rather an elaborate thesis on a doctrinal subject. Other Epistles, too, have an air of authoritativeness, as the work of a man who was not only the friend but the spiritual father and teacher of those to whom he wrote. One letter alone, the Epistle to Philemon, is a brief note, concerned with a matter primarily of interest only to the sender, the receiver, and him whose case is discussed. Many of the Epistles contain

autobiographical data, and these not infrequently conflict with the narrative in Acts. The same event is represented very differently, as in the story of the Apostle's conversion, or his attitude towards Judaism. The difficulty has not been altogether removed, but largely relieved by recent critical study of the personalities of the two friends, and of the sources employed by Luke in Acts.

The 'Epistles of the Captivity,' Ephesians and Colossians, exhibit a style quite different from that of the earlier writings. The sentences are much longer, and the construction is more involved. Some scholars, like Dr. Sanday, account for this change by reference to the employment of an amanuensis. 'I have sometimes asked myself whether this (the relation of Ephesians to some of the other Epistles) may not be due to the degree of expertness attained by the scribe in the art of shorthand. We know that this art was very largely practised; and St. Paul's amanuenses may have had recourse to it somewhat unequally. One might take down the Apostle's words verbatim; then we should get a vivid, broken, natural style like that of Romans and 1 and 2 Corinthians. Another might not succeed in getting down

the exact words; and then when he came to work up his notes into a fair copy, the structure of the sentences would be his own, and it might naturally seem more laboured.'

The curious similarities in thought and language between Ephesians and Colossians have given rise to a problem which has been solved in more ways than one. The simplest way is to suppose that the author writing twice on almost the same theme within a short space of time has consciously repeated himself. It is a practice not unknown amongst modern writers. There is a peculiar difficulty in saying the same thing in two ways, especially when it has once been said after due deliberation.

The Pastoral Epistles, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, though they may contain Pauline material, yet cannot be regarded as the composition of Paul in view of their style and language, and the difficulty of assigning them to any known period of the Apostle's life. Leaving these out of account, a few general observations may be made on the Epistles as a whole before considering the character of their author.

Written for definite audiences, and, as we have suggested, to dictation, they have

some of the elements of speeches. Rhetorical methods were perhaps less consciously observed than naturally adopted under the circumstances, and they are neither very elaborate nor invariably present.

Traces of Paul's indebtedness to Hellenism are perceptible at many points. Tarsus was an important seat of Stoicism, a philosophy which taught the brotherhood of man, self-sacrifice, and a large benevolence. Paul need not have been a student in the Schools to have become acquainted with Stoic ideas. Coincidences in speech and thought between Paul the Christian Apostle and Seneca the Stoic philosopher have led to the conjecture that the two men were related as pupil and teacher. Whilst there is little ground for accepting this theory, there is less for the rejection of the evidence of acquaintance with Stoicism on the part of Paul.

Again, many of the terms and not a few of the ideas found in Oriental religions were taken over by Paul. With some sense of his obligations, Paul confessed himself a 'debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians.' A Christian, who sprang from the strictest sect of the Jews, the Apostle does not unreservedly condemn his Barbarian fellow

countrymen. One Christian writer, Clement of Alexandria, presents a terrible picture of the repulsive practices of the mystery cult. Another, Ignatius, speaks of elements in the mystery with peculiar reverence. Paul combined in his view of paganism the truths contained in these one-sided verdicts. It was part of his mission to win for Christianity precisely those elements in the old faith that gave it life and permanence. Yet there must be no lowering of the ethical ideal, no sacrifice of personal conviction, and no compromise with Pantheism. The twofold nature of Gentile religion, as Paul understood it, led him to speak of it in two contrasted tones. On the one hand, he set forth Christianity as an essential and inevitable advance upon pagan worship; on the other hand, he proclaimed that the only salvation from the powerful and pernicious pagan cults was to be found in the militant and moral faith of Christianity. 'The days and seasons and years' which the judaizing Christians of Galatia observed were familiar to them in the days of their idolatry. Freed from one bondage, they lightly turned to another. The remarkable place which the Apostle gives to the idea of freedom in the Galatian

Epistle is not accidental. Elsewhere he insists as strongly upon rule and order, as in the first letter to the Corinthians. If servility was the weakness of the Galatians, licence was the vice of the Greeks. The worship of angels at Colossæ must have appeared to Paul as a survival of an ancient rite, dangerous in itself, and still more for that which it meant to Phrygians. A religion of divinities was repugnant to one who realized its moral peril.

The central idea of Anatolian belief—the maternal nature of the Supreme Being—was a leaven which worked in the mass of Asiatic thought. One result was to elevate the position of woman in every sphere of life. In the Jewish synagogues of Asia Minor women even held office. The Apostle's horror of feminine assertiveness may have been one expression of his detestation of a doctrine, so hateful to one who belonged to 'the strictest sect of the Jews.'

Another example of what may be called the working of the subconscious mind may be found in the first letter to the Corinthians. In a curious passage, the question is asked, 'Doth God take care for oxen?' By commentators the interpretation of the Law

which the Apostle quotes is understood to illustrate the allegorical method. Yet the question may have been partly suggested by an instinctive antagonism to a primitive Phrygian belief. Amongst Anatolians, the ox was a sacred animal. Before it could be used as food, an ingenious artifice was employed whereby the ox offered itself by moving towards the altar upon which corn had been carefully scattered. Even then the weapons used in the slaughter were tried, condemned, and punished for sacrilege by being flung into the sea. The question of Paul had thus been answered in the affirmative by the heathen teachers of his native city.

When considering the use by Paul of words and phrases originally bound up with pagan rites, care must be taken not to identify the meaning of language in the Pauline vocabulary with that which it imported in its primitive setting. Words change the connotation in the process of time, and when employed in different contexts. When Paul says, 'I will show you a mystery,' he is using the language of paganism; but we need not suppose that the word is used in the ancient sense. Nevertheless, the Phrygian mystery conserved elements afterwards presented in

the Pauline doctrine. The sense of sin, the need of Divine forgiveness, and, above all, the belief in a future life were associated with the cult. The death and rebirth of which Paul wrote to the people of Colosse, 'Ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God,' was actually simulated in the Phrygian mysteries. And when in the same letter the Apostle speaks of 'redemption through Christ's blood,' even the forgiveness of sins and of the mystery now made manifest 'to his saints,' he is again speaking of Christian salvation in the phraseology of paganism. Salvation after death dependent upon a mystic union with divinity was common to Pauline Christianity and to the Phrygian mystery. The terms of the famous declaration to the Galatians may be reminiscent of such a plan of salvation. 'I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me' (Gal. ii. 20).

For the most part, while mystic rites were conceived as working in a purely objective manner, Paul imparts an ethical and spiritual element thereto. Yet the earlier process of operation is not entirely absent from the Apostle's mind. Writing to the Corinthians, he mentions, apparently conceding its val-

idity, the practice of baptism for the dead, 1 Cor. xv. 29. He even employs the fact of this usage, whatever the grounds of its own reasonableness, as a reason for belief in the resurrection. The precise nature of the rite and the manner of its working is not defined, but its objective and material character is evident. Another and clearer example of the same kind is seen in the assumption which Paul makes as a matter of course that weakness, sickness, and even death follow from eating the bread and drinking the cup of the Lord 'unworthily' (1 Cor. xi. 27-30). The solemn banning of a sinner is, in like manner, regarded as sufficient to result in his bodily destruction. With pagan sacrificial meals the Apostle acknowledged an acquaintance in his letters to the Corinthians.

It is plain, then, that Asia was a source as well as a scene of the Apostle's word and work.

Paul's extensive acquaintance with contemporary Jewish literature has been noticed elsewhere (see chap. II, *The Apocrypha and the New Testament*). In controversy with Jews and judaizers, he employs the weapons he had learnt to use in the Rabbinical school. An obvious instance is Galatians iii. 16. Here

a Messianic reference is drawn out of a verse in Genesis, where the word 'seed' is used in the singular. 'To Abraham were the promises spoken and to his seed. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many, but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.' The argument rests on a grammatical error, since neither the plural of the Greek nor Hebrew word for 'seed' can be used of human progeny. 'Only when we interpret it in the Rabbinical manner, and from a singular form draw a singular sense, irrespective of all other considerations, can we see how the Apostle's reasoning would appeal to his Jewish readers.'

The letters of Paul betray his environment in almost every line. He was, in his own words, 'a citizen,' at home in the crowd and busied with the problems of religious life in the town. Jesus, on the other hand, belonged to the country. No casual reader of the Gospels can fail to notice how he loved the quiet and calm of the hill-side, the shores of the lake, the fields, and the peaceful village life. Mark, too, how the great events of his career are associated with nature. It was in the wilderness he was tempted, and on a mountain transfigured. No picture of the Temptation does justice to the symbolic

story in the Gospel save that which depicts him alone, wrapt in meditation. No more fitting scene can be imagined for the story of Christ's converse with the representatives of Law and Prophecy than the mountain where he stood alone in prayer. Finally, it was in the Garden of Gethsemane that Jesus fought his last fight of faith.

Paul, though he discerned in nature evidence of the power and character of God, and drew therefrom a few images to illustrate his arguments, was not at home amid the scenes and sounds of the country. The picture of the whole creation groaning and travailing in pain is inspired not by the birds in the country but by the beasts in the city. As Weinel has shown, 'His pictures, too, are for the most part taken from urban life. Metaphors derived from building and "edification" are employed by Paul very frequently. He shows us the busy town life with its rows of shops, past which the "school-master" leads his pupil to school, and the street through which the glorious triumphal procession wends its way. He frequently takes his images from the soldier's life—even the trumpets are impressed into his service; and the life of the legal world, the theatre, and

the race-course also furnish him with metaphors. All these figures come to him so naturally that it is extremely probable that he was acquainted with these things before he started on his missionary journeys, that these pictures from the life of a Hellenistic city impressed themselves on his soul while he was still a child, and therefore that Tarsus was not only his birthplace but also his home.'

As a teacher, Paul was no doctrinaire with a rigid, consistent theory of man and the universe. He was rather an opportunist, seeking to 'please all men in all things.' Judaism and Christianity contended within him for mastery as he expounded his views. Luke probably exaggerates the extent of his concessions to Judaism; none the less, the severe, uncompromising advocate of the Gentiles which critics of Acts have imagined is not to be found even in the Epistles. Howbeit, he was a bold, independent thinker, the father of Christian theology.

In person, Paul, as his own words suggest, was not attractive—even if we pay no heed to the earliest tradition on the subject. 'The thorn in the flesh,' of which he wrote, has been variously interpreted as malarial fever, epilepsy, and ophthalmia. Yet the

Apostle won more than respect from those to whom he ministered. The report of his interview with the Elders of Ephesus at Miletus is based on first-hand knowledge, where we read that they fell on his neck and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the word which he had spoken, that they 'should see his face no more.'

'The authors of the Gospels were obscure,' says Dr. Moffatt; 'at least their personalities are obscure to us at the present day, with the exception of Luke.' After considering the exception named, we may proceed to ascertain how far the veil which conceals the other Evangelists can be removed.

One point which emerges from recent discussions has been already assumed. In Luke we must find the author of the Acts of the Apostles. The difficulties involved in this identification have not all disappeared, but it is admittedly based on scientific reasoning, and its denial raises more problems than it solves. With its acceptance, we learn that Luke is the only author in the New Testament of two distinct types of books, is the earliest Christian historian, and, next to Paul, the most voluminous writer in Christian Scripture.

In his Gospel, Luke endeavoured to avoid miracles achieved by material means, to prevent undue repetition, and to limit the controversy against the Pharisees. In two points, the reason given is creditable to the character of the Evangelist. He exhibits a 'tendency to spare the twelve—to say comparatively little as to their faults and failings,' and he passes over the incident of the Syro-Phœnician woman 'with its implication that Gentiles were as dogs who could only claim the crumbs of the Master's table, or that the Master could even for a moment grudge his healing.' Both in the Gospel and in Acts, Luke has used his sources with considerable freedom, especially in the matter of style and language. In this respect he is unique amongst Synoptic Evangelists, and amongst New Testament writers generally is comparable only with Paul and the unknown author of the letter to the Hebrews. He is a man of literary attainment and scientific culture. That the third Evangelist was a physician is one of the most certain verdicts of modern inquirers. It was English scholars who first directed attention to the words and phrases, additions and omissions in the writings of Luke which betray his medical training. The

words of Zahn, to which Harnack subscribes, constitute the tardy tribute of German scholarship to one who produced abundant evidence over thirty years ago in support of his thesis. 'Hobart has proved to the satisfaction of anyone who can at all appreciate proof that the author of the Lucan works was a man practised in the scientific language of Greek medicine—in short, a Greek physician.'

As a stylist, Luke is a writer who is as free in his forms of expression as he is rich in his vocabulary. As a story-teller, Luke is at his best. He has a genius for producing effects by contrast and antithesis. Pathos and sadness blend with joy and gladness in his Gospel, giving the narrative an exquisite tone of bitter-sweetness. In many ways Luke is the one New Testament writer most in harmony with the modern mind. There is an element of universality in his Gospel. It is for all nations. Sectarianism is impossible in the narrator of the parable of the Good Samaritan and the reporter of Paul's speech on Mars Hill.

Amongst the most precious precepts of our Lord are those which are peculiar to the Third Gospel. In the first days of the Christian

faith Luke perceived its essentially ethical character, now so generally recognized. One marked feature of Luke is his treatment of women and of the sinful. Nowhere in the New Testament is the sinner touched with so tender a hand, and nowhere are women so reverently honoured. Of old, women had been lightly esteemed by both Jew and Gentile. Luke gives them a prominence in his Gospel which is, in a way, prophetic of the place and power they are surely winning for themselves in our own time. The sinner, in Luke's Gospel, is not an object for severity but a subject for salvation. Christianity is slowly learning the lesson taught by Luke that penitence is not to be compelled by pain but induced by purification.

As an historian Luke must not be judged by modern standards. The scientific conception of history is quite a novelty. Ancient historians allowed themselves a freedom in invention which only makers of fiction now enjoy. Besides, as Dr. Sanday reminds us, 'Luke had not the advantages that (e.g.) Josephus had of living at the centre of the empire, in personal intercourse with the court, and with access to the best authorities. Even with the help of public inscriptions and

the like, it cannot have been an easy matter for a provincial like St. Luke to fix exact synchronisms.' Nevertheless, as Dr. Burkitt says, 'the Gospel according to Luke is a new historical work'; whilst in Acts the description of places and persons, of offices and practices, is accurate and reliable. Even the speeches in Luke's history, however shaped by the reporter, are not inappropriate to the persons from whose lips they fall. True, Luke sets down, almost impartially, the credible and the incredible. He was in this respect a man of his own age. But the notion that he worked up his facts to fit into a preconceived theory is now finally exploded. He writes as one who simply seeks to tell the truth. His sources are often scanty and legendary, and his deductions imperfect and misleading, but his tale is unvarnished and straightforward. Such a conclusion, contradicting the dogma of an early school of critics, is the sober declaration of impartial scholarship.

As a humorist, Luke stands alone in the New Testament. In parables peculiar to him, and in the narrative of Acts, he displays his joyous disposition. A gentle irony and a genuine sympathy unite in his descriptions of grotesque situations and singular characters.

In two letters, included in the Book of Acts, Luke employs the exact formula at the opening and close which the different characters of the letters required. We may properly assume that Luke's preference for classical forms and his acquaintance with the current etiquette of epistolary literature are shown in his use of these formulæ. As the author of those passages in the Book of Acts where the narrative is written in the first person, Luke has been properly regarded as a Diarist. Many scholars have conclusively shown that the author of these 'We passages' is 'the author of the whole book. The linguistic proof is overwhelming, but it is not the only proof. The subject-matter betrays the same interests and beliefs on the part of the writer everywhere in Acts. The persons spoken of in the 'Diary' are in doctrine and practice the same as those of the same name in the rest of the work. In other words, there is no break in matter or manner when we pass to or from a 'We passage.' Strauss's remark upon the Fourth Gospel is much more applicable to the Book of Acts. It is like the seamless cloak. You can cast lots for it, but not divide it. The Diary forms but 'a small tenth part of the Acts,' but it

is in many ways the most important. It has emerged triumphantly from the severe tests imposed by modern scholarship, and in particular the geographical and nautical details in the account of the voyage to Rome have been completely verified. Breusing remarks, 'The most valuable nautical document preserved to us from antiquity is the description of the sea journey and shipwreck of the Apostle Paul. Every seaman recognizes at once that it must have been written by an eyewitness.'

As a man, Luke seems to have had a conspicuous capacity for friendship. Paul's endearing allusion to him in the letter to the Colossians is only one proof of this. The self-repression of the author of the Acts of the Apostles, his tendency to hero-worship, his joyous disposition, and unfailing fidelity are evidences sufficient of themselves. His writings reveal a man of geniality with a modesty that must have endeared him to his kind.

The friends and companions of Luke the Christian evangelist and historian were numerous, and included some of the most striking figures in the primitive Church. If he did not enjoy the friendship of any of the

twelve apostles, he was on familiar terms with their contemporaries and followers. Many, possibly most, of these were rather drawn in the first place to the great pioneer preacher whom Luke honoured so dearly, but some at least entered into most amicable relations with the Evangelist himself. Probably Luke's admiration for the Apostle, so patent throughout Acts, is that not only of a disciple but of a personal convert. Luke was a chosen companion, one of two who accompanied Paul on his perilous journey to Rome. The Evangelist was a missionary preacher with the Apostle, his fellow worker and medical adviser. There are not wanting signs that 'the beloved physician' was a cheery comrade whose presence was inspiring to the older man.

In many ways, the relations in which Paul stood to Luke resemble those between Cicero and his freedman Tiro. The great Roman orator owed much besides the preservation of his letters to his faithful friend. Tiro, in the words of Quintus Cicero, a man 'much superior to the station in which he was born,' was the companion in study of his gifted master. Luke, who only less distinctly than Tiro, has preserved for us the portrait of a

great man of antiquity, was probably a dependent, and certainly to all outward appearances, a servant of the Apostle. As we learn from Suetonius, Seneca, Cicero, and Quintilian, slaves, especially Syrians, practised medicine, and it is not a far-fetched notion that Luke, a native of Antioch, was not only the physician but also the freedman of Paul the Apostle. Again, 'We know,' says Von Soden, 'that it was customary with distinguished travellers, princes, and generals of the ancient Hellenic world to have short diaries kept by some companion as a support for the memory, wherein the stations of the route, and perhaps, here and there, notable experiences were cursorily set down.'

The Greek diarist who travelled with Paul through the provinces and finally to Rome, was not less invaluable to him than the Latin secretary who accompanied Cicero in his travels through the Empire. And Paul might have addressed Luke in the same terms as Cicero did Tiro: 'The obligations which you have conferred on me are countless, in my home, and in the Forum, at Rome, and in my province; they extend alike to my public and my private concerns—to my studies and to my writings.' With Barnabas,

Aristarchus, and Philip the Evangelist Luke was on terms of intimacy. In Theophilus, he had a friend of some eminence, to whom he dedicated both his books. Probably if we knew more of the subordinate persons mentioned only by name in Acts, we should gain a deeper insight into the friendships of Luke.

Jews, Greeks, Romans, and Barbarians were amongst those whom Luke counted his friends and acquaintances. Scarcely second to Paul in magnanimity and warm-heartedness, Luke's intercourse with his friends, as far as that can be made out, displays, in an exalted degree, the type of Christian virtues cultivated in the first century.

John Mark is known to us as the author of what is at once the earliest and the shortest gospel. Whether he ever finished it; or, if so, why the ending has disappeared, are questions which cannot be answered with certainty. The presumption is that he did finish it, and that his conclusion did not, for some reason, commend itself to the early Church. It may be that the ending was simply lost, for so little did the Second Gospel appeal to the favour of the early Christians that there was some danger of its being lost

altogether, after Matthew and Luke had made use of it as one of the sources of their fuller and more popular narratives.

Certainly none of the endings which have come down to us can claim to be original. Of these, the longer ending has recently been discovered in a manuscript purchased by Mr. Freer, with a passage interpolated between the 14th and 15th verses which was unknown except in Latin as a quotation by Jerome.

We learn from Paul that Mark was 'of the circumcision,' and from Luke that his home was in Jerusalem. If, with Dr. Chase, we interpret 'attendant' of Acts xiii, 5 as 'synagogue minister,' in accordance with the suggestion of a Jewish epitaph found at Rome, then we see how close were Mark's ties with Judaism. With Luke, for a time, his relations were far from cordial. The men were of different nationalities, and as a comparison of their writings proves, were of a different order of genius. But these things of themselves would not have separated Luke and Mark. It was the latter's desertion of Paul at Pamphylia when 'he went not with them to the work' that Luke resented. His mention of this act shows that he shared the

anger of Paul which led to the breach with Barnabas. Later, when Paul and Mark had been reconciled, Luke is found in the company of both under circumstances that leave no doubt of the reality of their friendship. When Colossians and Philemon were written, Mark was at Rome with the Apostle as 'fellow worker,' sharing his imprisonment and affording him 'comfort.' This change in the relations of Paul and Mark must be due to the acceptance by the cousin of Barnabas of Paulinism in its broad outlines. In 2 Timothy iv. 11, Luke is with the Apostle, and Timothy is bidden 'take Mark and bring him with thee; for he is useful to me for ministering.' By this expression personal service apparently is meant. Whilst, as a whole, 2 Timothy, as we have seen, is not the work of Paul, this passage with the message that follows is regarded by many scholars as truly Pauline. The reunion of Paul and Mark may have been effected by Luke. It is significant that Paul never mentioned Luke without mentioning Mark. Presumably in the Apostle's mind these two were associated in some special way. A casual reference to the name of the maid-servant in the home of Mark's mother

indicates that Luke was familiar with the family of the second Evangelist. As an intermediary, the former friend of Barnabas would occupy a peculiarly favourable position, whilst his natural disposition would prompt him to play the part of peacemaker. Other reasons for Luke's intervention lie only just beneath the surface. Harnack concludes: 'It is possible that St. Luke brought his Gospel to Rome when he came thither to Paul in prison; and tradition asserts no veto against the hypothesis that St. Luke, when he met St. Mark in the company of Paul the prisoner, was permitted by him to peruse a written record of the Gospel history which was essentially identical with the Gospel of St. Mark given to the Church at a later time.'

Before Mark had reached Rome, Luke probably knew what he had done in the way of compiling his Gospel. Having resolved himself to publish an accurate account of all things from the first, he had a personal interest in the reconciliation of Paul and Mark, since, as the bosom friend of the former he could not otherwise so easily learn what had been accomplished. Certainly Luke made a full if somewhat free use of Mark's Gospel, and if 'the peculiar relation that

exists between the Second and Third Gospels suggests that St. Luke was not yet acquainted with St. Mark's final revision,' then he was indebted to Mark as a private friend for an inspection of a first draft of his Gospel rather than to him as the author of a Gospel which enjoyed something like a circulation in the Church. According to a tradition of Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis in the second half of the first century, Mark was the 'interpreter' of Peter. What precisely is meant by the expression it is not easy to determine. The Second Gospel, as many scholars have shown, betrays the influence of Paulinism—a phenomenon intelligible enough. Probably reminiscences of Peter's preaching are worked up in Mark's Gospel, and thus the earliest gospel goes back, in part at least, to one of the close companions of our Lord.

As a writer, Mark has more of a purely historical, and less of a doctrinal interest than the other evangelists. His portrait of Jesus is more distinctly that of a man of like passions with us. Miracles abound, especially those of healing, but a certain rudeness of speech and simplicity of style witness to the primitive character and historical value of the narrative. Semitic idioms scarcely

concealed behind the Greek bring home to us the fact that Jesus and his first disciples commonly spoke, not in Greek, but in Aramaic.

The omission of any birth story in the earliest Gospel must be accounted for by those who would argue that a miraculous birth story belongs to the most primitive tradition. Mark's portrait of Jesus is not perfect, but it is superior in many ways to one with all the lines smoothed out which is popular in certain circles of Christian believers. 'I would not conceal my belief,' says Prof. Menzies, in his commentary on Mark, 'that the face of Jesus, as he actually was and spoke and strove and suffered, lived and trusted and hoped, has been to a large extent hidden from us by the theology we have inherited; nor my conviction that as earnest and truthful study reveals his features, his spirit will enter with fresh energy into the life of his followers.'

The author of the First Gospel has been identified with the Matthew who was one of the Twelve. Papias speaks of a compilation by Matthew of the Sayings of our Lord in the Aramaic tongue. This gave rise to the theory of Apostolic authorship

which found favour with many generations of Christians. Against this many weighty and convincing considerations have been urged. The First Gospel is not a translation but, as the language proves, an original composition. Further, it is dependent to a large extent upon the Second Gospel—a fact difficult to explain if the author be one of the first followers of Jesus. Finally, there are unmistakable signs of an ecclesiastical editor in the book.

The First Gospel was pre-eminently the gospel of the Church—the popular Gospel, as indeed it still is. Probably the reason for its popularity is the same as for the name it bears. It is because it contains, in a most convenient form, the collection of our Lord's sayings which was attributed to Matthew. His material was arranged by the Evangelist in numerical forms, such as would assist the memories of oral teachers and learners. There seem to have been five chapters of such sayings, as there are five books of the Pentateuch, five books of Psalms and the like, each chapter closing with a formula about Jesus ending his sayings. Further, within these collections a numerical plan was frequently observed, the numbers 3, 7, and 10

being used as helps to memory. There are seven Beatitudes, seven petitions of the Lord's Prayer, seven parables in chap. xiii., and in the genealogy a triad of fourteens. There are three external duties of alms, prayer, and fasting; three weightier matters of the law; and in chapters viii. and ix. there is a collection of ten miracles.

Matthew frequently introduces quotations from the Old Testament in support of facts or statements for which we have the authority of one or more of the other Evangelists, and twice in connexion with incidents reported by him alone. Synoptic writers generally do not thus intrude remarks or comments of their own into the narrative. Dr. Burkitt has called Matthew a Christian Rabbi animated by the idea of a new Law for Christians, and affirms that his Gospel is most clearly in touch with the Talmud. Dr. Streeter is in agreement: 'At every step we feel that he is writing for those to whom pharisaic Judaism is a very real and potent force, of mixed attraction and repulsion.'<sup>1</sup> The emphasis on the anti-pharisaic teaching of Christ shows who were the keenest foes of the Church he worked in, and his apologetic meets them on their own ground in his appeal

to Scripture, and his confronting the old Law with the New.' Yet, if the argument from prophecy is losing its power of appeal, and the campaign against Pharisaism some of its force, a Gospel written for ecclesiastical use, and containing an excellent compilation of our Lord's words, can never be in danger of neglect.

Outside the first three Gospels and the Pauline Epistles, there remain a number of Epistles and one Gospel which deserve more than a passing word. Considerable uncertainty attaches, however, to their authorship, and a clear conception of the personality of their several authors cannot be attained.

It is cause for congratulation that the greatest writers of the New Testament are better known than any others. As we gaze upon the portraits of them which modern critical study presents, we feel more strongly the appeal to our respect, not to say reverence, made by these scribes, who were disciples to the kingdom of God.

CHAPTER V  
THE EARLIEST SOURCES FOR  
THE LIFE OF JESUS

THE title of this chapter is that of an admirable little book by Dr. Burkitt, the eminent Cambridge scholar. 'There can be no doubt,' he writes, 'that the earliest sources for the Life of Jesus are the Gospel of Mark and the source (or sources) which it is convenient to call Q.' By the latter symbol, the first letter of the German word meaning 'source,' is meant the matter common to Matthew and Luke, but not found in Mark, which consists in the main, if not entirely, of sayings of Jesus. Unfortunately, Dr. Burkitt is too obsessed by the apocalyptic interpretation of the Synoptic gospels to be a perfectly safe guide in the difficult paths of early Christian history. Whilst he shrinks from any attempt to reconstruct Q after the manner of Harnack, Stanton, and others, he does

not scruple to assert that a predominating interest in the last things characterizes both the earliest sources for the life of Jesus. The exaggeration in this view has been noticed elsewhere (see chap. II, *The Apocrypha and the New Testament*). If we set this aside, there remain many other important questions for consideration, which are however, closely related to each other.

The priority of Mark or Q need not detain us, except to remark that few scholars have followed Wellhausen in his preference for the former. The use of Q by Mark has recently been brought into prominence by the brilliant essay of Dr. Streeter; but, even if established, it is only to a very 'limited extent.'

The latest discussion of 'Gospel Origins' postulates no fewer than three editions of Mark's Gospel, the canonical writing being the latest. By means of this theory, Mr. Holdsworth explains the differences between the Marcan sections of Luke and Matthew; since these Evangelists used different editions of the Second Gospel. At the same time, he finds room in the primitive Gospel of Mark for the stories of the Baptism, Temptation, and Healing of the Centurion's Servant,

which have commonly been attributed to Q because Mark makes no mention of the third and barely mentions the other two incidents. From Q, consequently, is excluded all trace of narrative, whilst, to account for differences in the Lucan and Matthean versions of it, the collection of sayings used by the third Evangelist is regarded as different from that familiar to the first. The theory is exceedingly ingenious, and accounts for many difficulties. It reduces, however, the work of Matthew and Luke as editors in a way that does not harmonize with what we know of Luke as the author of Acts, or with the motives and manner of Matthew as these are revealed to us by a critical study of the First Gospel. There is the further objection that there is no textual evidence for the three editions of Mark such as have been adduced for the two editions of the writings of Luke. Moreover, it is not self-evident that Q must either be Sayings and nothing else, or a complete Gospel such as we possess in the Synoptics. Howbeit, since in any case the narrative in Q bears but a slight proportion to the whole, this feature in Q may here be safely neglected. Similarly, when considering the nature of the Second Gospel,

we may take it as we find it, without endeavouring to reach behind the canonical writing to an original edition, or a more primitive Gospel, or even seeking to reconstruct the lost ending from such indications of its character as are extant.

Still, we are bound to notice the able discussion of Mark by Prof. Bacon, entitled 'The Beginnings of Gospel Story,' which does all these things. The distinguished American scholar flings aside with little ceremony the 'anecdotes about John Mark,' and confines himself to a rigid analysis of the written word. He is under the spell of the method of inquiry which proved so fertile during the nineteenth century in the field of Old Testament study. More recent research has raised the question whether 'the great Graf-Kuenen school' has said the last word, and it is quite possible that 'the results of the higher criticism' of the New Testament set forth by Prof. Bacon may have to be revised. They may be summed up as regards the Second Gospel in his own words. 'We cannot avoid the conclusion that our evangelist (R) has used the ancient common source of Matthew and Luke (Q) to embellish and supplement an earlier and simpler narra-

tive, which, not from tradition only, but from its intrinsic characteristics, we may appropriately designate Petrine (P).<sup>1</sup> Our evangelist is therefore primarily an editor. He is a whole-hearted follower of Paul, and by no means favourably disposed towards the Jerusalem leaders. \*Sight by hypnotic suggestion has few more curious illustrations than the discovery by writers, under the spell of the Papias tradition, of traces in Mark of special regard for Peter.' Estimating the accuracy of Mark's narrative by comparison with the Pauline Epistles, the Q material, the special Source of Luke: the resultant story of Jesus, we are told, is that he was 'a wage-earner of Nazareth, an ideal representative of that simple piety exemplified in the earlier type of Pharisaism, unspoiled as yet by the ecclesiasticism of the Synagogue sort.' We may find reason to accept the conclusion whilst rejecting the premises on which it is based. Prof. Bacon is apt to discover an apologetic bias in the most ancient traditions concerning Gospel authorship, and to define too precisely the motives which animated the Evangelists.

If Papias was so small of mind as Eusebius seemed to think, perhaps he may have been

not less simple and sincere. In England, at least, a man's innocence is assumed until his guilt is proved. A tradition, too, which is separated by less than half a century from the man it concerns deserves some measure of respect. It is possible that the picture of Peter in the Second Gospel is a witness to the veracity of the Evangelist and not a proof of his Pauline prejudice. As Dr. Burkitt asks, 'Is it psychologically unsuitable that the gospel which tradition associates with the reminiscences of Simon Peter should also emphasize the rebuke which the Master administered to him almost at the moment of his claim? Traces of Paulinism in the Second Gospel do not cause to stumble those who believe it to be the work of John Mark, the man who, as the letters of Paul prove, became his "fellow worker," and "shared his imprisonment."'

No one seriously argues that every detail in the Second Gospel had a place in the preaching or teaching of Peter. Mark, on the most generally accepted view of his dates, stood sufficiently near to the oral tradition to avail himself of it—good and bad alike. The miracles, which play so large a part in the narrative of Mark, demand quite special

consideration. Of old, they were used as proofs of the Deity of Christ. How could a man have wrought such works? To-day, it is the God-man who attests the miracle, not the miracle the God-man. The general acceptance of the scientific view of the universe, the study of Comparative Religion revealing the prevalence of the miraculous in all early religions, and the critical investigation of the evangelical records themselves—these have led to this change in the orthodox attitude towards miracle. Thus Dr. Illingworth writes in *Divine Immanence*: 'The Incarnation is the inevitable presupposition of its miracles. If Jesus Christ was the divine author of our human life and death, it is manifestly absurd to say that he could not, or would not, heal the sick and raise the dead. Such miracles taken by themselves would be in the last degree improbable; but as the results of an incarnation they are so probable that we should even call them natural.'

In reality, the miracles in Mark or elsewhere in the Christian Scriptures or outside them, are neither evidences nor proofs of a Divine origin. Nor can they be treated as a single well-defined class of phenomena.

The miracles of healing, so frequent in Mark, in the opinion of a conservative scholar like Dr. Sanday, present no difficulty to medical science. 'All those which have to do with what would now be called "nervous disorders," all those in which there was a direct action of the mind upon the body, would fall into place readily enough. Given a personality like that of Jesus, the effect which it would have upon disorders of this character would be strictly analogous to that which modern science would seek to produce.' In regard to a different order of miracle, the same scholar wisely says, 'We may be sure that if the miracles of the first century had been wrought before trained spectators of the nineteenth, the version of them would be different.' Again, Dr. Sanday reminds us that the evidence in the Gospels for some miracles is not as weighty as it is in the case of others, and we are not compelled to accept all or none. Upon this interesting contribution to a difficult subject one observation may be made. The term 'miracle' seems to be losing its specific meaning when used of events for which parallels are found in the operations of modern medical science.

Those who, like Von Soden, believe that the Second Gospel as we have it is not the original Mark compiled by the friend of Peter, perceive in our Gospel two groups of narrative. The first, Palestinian in its colouring, presents Jesus as a simple human Rabbi. The tradition of Papias which refers to Mark's want of order, fits, it is argued, these sections and not the Gospel as we know it, since its chronological arrangement is the most correct of all the gospels. Within this earlier group of narrative, interest in dogmatic questions is not shown, and miracles are a secondary matter. The second group is more concerned with the person of Jesus, and in most of the stories the miracle is the central object. The editor of the Gospel is unknown, and writes for readers unacquainted with Jewish affairs. On the other hand, it is not certain that 'order' in Papias means chronological order; it may mean, as many scholars think, 'artistic arrangement and effective presentation of the materials.' There are, too, few signs of compilation in the Second Gospel. The peculiarities in the Marcan sections of Matthew and Luke can be accounted for almost entirely by reference to the literary habits and doctrinal tendencies

of the first and third Evangelists. The division of Mark into two groups of narrative is too arbitrary, and the suggestion that miracle must have been of no moment to a friend of Peter is gratuitous. That Mark made use of a source in the so-called Little Apocalypse of chap. xiii. (cp. Matt. xxiv., Luke xxi.) is not impossible, but the hypothesis of an 'original' Mark has not been established. At the same time it may well be, as Dr. Streeter has argued, that the miracle owes its predominant position in Mark's gospel largely to the need for impressing the Roman populace amongst whom it was written. It is significant that Paul makes no allusion to the miracles of Jesus, and that Q seems in the words of our Lord in the Temptation episode to deprecate recourse to miracle working. 'We may surely conclude,' says Prof. Bacon, 'from such a contrast of Paul and the Q material on one side, with the Marcan prodigies on the other, that the distinctively thaumaturgic traits which have characterized the evangelic tradition from the time that Mark formulated its accepted outline, are largely due to this particular evangelist.'

Howbeit, comparison of Mark with the

later apocryphal gospels shows the superiority of the former even in this respect. The wealth of crude marvels which crowd the pages of these fabrications finds no place in the second or any other canonical gospel. It is not so much deliberate invention with an eye to effect as a lack of anything resembling scientific knowledge, and a naïve reliance upon tradition that have created what are now felt to be difficulties in Mark's narrative of the life of Jesus.

Perhaps, too, we may trace the use of Q by Mark in his singular narrative of the cursing of the fig tree. As an illustration of one type of difficulty in the Second Gospel, this episode deserves more than a passing mention. 'Here,' says Prof. Bacon, 'nearly all investigators recognize a pragmatized form of the Parable of the Barren Fig Tree.' Let us look at it in some detail.

Mark's story of the cursing of the fig tree is amongst the most extraordinary in the pages of the New Testament. When Jesus came to the tree he found nothing but leaves, for, as it is explicitly stated, 'it was not the season of figs.' Yet, in anger, he spoke words which caused the tree presently to wither away.

Matthew has edited the narrative in characteristic fashion, removing a difficulty, and yet heightening the miraculous element in Christ's work. The interval between the curse and its fulfilment is suppressed, so that the tree withers straightway at the word of the Messiah. On the other hand, the difficulty in Mark, felt still by conservative scholars not less than by the first Evangelist, completely disappears. The statement that it was not the season of figs is omitted, and the inference is that a tree with leaves ought also to have borne fruit. Nevertheless, the more difficult is the more primitive record. As a miracle, the withering of the tree has no benevolent aspect, and is a sign of power to accomplish his purposes such as the Jews had demanded from Jesus, and he had distinctly denied.

Commentators, labouring under a theory of verbal infallibility, have been hard put to it what to make of this miracle. One suggests Jesus had a right to expect an early fig on a tree covered with leaves; another, that what our Lord looked for and should have found was a late fig from last season. A third declares that figs would ripen earlier near Lake Tiberias than in the neighbourhood

of Jerusalem, and ought to have been on the tree, though it was not the season of figs in the Holy City.

Plainly, the connexion of the story with its context is very slight. The lesson, 'Have faith in God,' is not demonstrated by it, and Matthew's repetition, in a more suitable place, of the Saying about faith removing mountains, shows that the relation of this to the story of the fig tree is quite secondary: More serious still, the mental attitude of Jesus is hostile to a literal interpretation of the marvel, 'Is not the life more than the food?' 'Be not anxious what ye shall eat.' Surely, Jesus did not curse the tree because it bore no fruit out of season to satisfy his unreasonable desire.

Happily, Luke throws light upon the perplexing passage. He omits the account, and gives instead a parable of a fig tree to which its owner came seeking fruit and finding none. He was minded to cut it down, but upon the entreaties of his husbandman consented to spare it yet another year. In the parable, the fig tree signifies the Jewish nation. The interval in Mark between the curse and its fulfilment corresponds to that in Luke between the owner's visit and the time when

his threat shall be executed. Even in the Second Gospel, coming between the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem and his expulsion of the traders from the Temple, the story has the appearance of symbol. The leaves which gaily fluttered in the breeze were those who had welcomed the advent of the Messiah. But no fruit is to be found. At the critical moment, enthusiasm melted away like snow in spring-time. The fact that the parable belonged to the period of Christ's Jerusalem teaching helped in its transfiguration. The visit of the owner to the tree became the sojourn of Jesus in the capital. The original tradition did not entirely perish, and was revived by Luke in accordance with the purpose expressed in his proem. We thus witness the process by which the parable became materialized into history, and the word of Jesus reported as his work.

In the main, the most striking feature of the Second Gospel is the comparatively scanty fragments of teaching which it preserves. This would seem to show that Mark's Gospel presupposes the existence of the collection of Sayings (Q) already mentioned. In order to elucidate further the relations of Mark

and Q—the two earliest sources for the life of Jesus—it is necessary to consider the latter in some detail. Dr. Streeter has analysed the conditions of the first age of Christian history in order to show that Q is just the kind of writing we should expect it to produce. ‘It was as a prophet that our Lord, like John the Baptist, appeared to his contemporaries. It would never occur to anyone to write a biography—a Gospel in the later sense. Did they know of biographies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the rest of the Prophets? Was it the biographies, was it *not* rather epigrammatic Sayings of the Rabbis that were cherished in their schools? It would be on the analogy of books like Isaiah and Jeremiah that Christians would first record the Master’s work.’ He concludes: ‘Q is a selection, compiled for practical purposes, of those words or deeds of the Master which would give guidance in the actual problems faced by the Christian missionaries.’

The omissions from Q of any reference to the most striking incidents in the life of Jesus need not disturb us. The argument from silence is always more or less precarious, and in this case the nature and object of the com-

pilation explains the omissions. Compared with Mark, however, the interest of Q in 'the last things' is extremely slight. In our earliest source, the Sayings of Jesus are primarily ethical and spiritual, not apocalyptic and eschatological. 'Teacher' is the term most frequently applied to Jesus in our earliest records, and it is as a teacher, not of Jewish doctrines of a speedy and catastrophic end involving signs and wonders on earth and in heaven, but of moral and spiritual truths timeless in their reference and priceless in their value that Jesus is revealed in the first collection of his Sayings. A scholar like Archdeacon Allen would perhaps challenge this. He does not, in defining Q, confine himself to matter common to Matthew and Luke that is not found in Mark, as do most students of the problem, but collects together Sayings as such. Even so, he says of this Q enlarged by passages found only in Matthew, 'The source is characterized by a very primitive doctrine.'

Accepting the more generally accepted reconstruction of the Q document, without attempting to determine every detail, we feel the weight of Harnack's remark, 'The tendency to exaggerate the apocalyptic and

eschatological element in our Lord's message and to subordinate to this the purely religious and ethical elements, will ever find its refutation in Q.' 'This compilation of sayings affords us a really exact and profound conception of the teaching of Jesus, and is free from bias, apologetic, or otherwise.'

As for the authorship of Q, little more can be said than that it is very probably the work of Matthew, one of the Twelve. This would be in harmony with the early tradition on the subject, that of Papias (*circa* A.D. 130), and would explain the attribution of the First Gospel to an undistinguished member of the Apostolic circle and a tax-gatherer. Perhaps the influence of the tradition respecting Matthew is also to be traced in the first Evangelist's substitution of the name Matthew for Levi in a passage taken from Mark. At any rate, as Dr. Streeter expresses it, had Matthew written, it would have been a book like Q. There are no traces of Paulinism in Q such as we find in Mark, and Palestine was not less certainly the home of the one than Rome of the other.

In an age when the return of the Lord was expected so speedily, there was naturally no thought of a complete collection of the

Sayings or a full narrative of the doings of Jesus, which should serve the purposes of posterity. Q defined the teaching of Jesus in relation to that of the Baptist and of the Pharisees and explained, in a way, why Jesus did not plainly manifest himself as the Messiah. All these were matters of importance in the Apostolic age.

The narrative of the Baptism shows how John is the forerunner of one mightier than himself, and the story of the Temptation how Jesus deliberately set aside the current conception of the Messiah. The first is history and the second symbol. The idea that Jesus was baptized by one who called men unto repentance is not likely to have been the invention of a later age. On the other hand, the account of the Temptation illustrates Christ's use of Symbolism. 'For us,' says Dr. Sanday, 'the story of the Temptation has a deep spiritual meaning; for it expresses, if we may so say, the problem that presented itself to the mind of our Lord at the first outset of his ministry—how he is to exercise the wonderful endowment of which he was conscious, how he is to discharge his Messianic mission.'

Again, Mark, as we have seen, is in-

complete, merely a collection of scenes from the life of Jesus supplementing the Sayings already collected in Q, but not like Luke seeking to trace the course of all things accurately from the first. The Roman origin of Mark is shown by the explanations of Jewish customs, and by the use of Latin words in a language which betrays an Aramaic speaking author. It approaches more closely to Q in its doctrine than any other Gospel. The primary document of the Christian faith is undogmatic and non-ecclesiastical. The clue to Christ's character in Q as the friend of publicans and sinners is also illustrated in that source from which Luke derived the parables, which reveal our Lord's tenderness and compassion.

The naïve portrait in Mark of one who refused the title of Good Master, betrayed signs of weakness and anger, was touched up in later writings in the interests of a loftier Christology. Sir John Hawkins, one of the most distinguished investigators of the Synoptic problem, gives a list of passages in Mark omitted or altered by Matthew and Luke, which seemed (a) to limit the power of Jesus Christ or to be otherwise derogatory to or unworthy of him; (b) passages seeming

to disparage the attainments or character of the Apostles.

Despite the errors, crudities, miracles, and eschatology of the Second Gospel it remains, like Q, a stronghold of those who find in the earliest sources for the life of Jesus the picture of one 'touched with the feeling of our infirmities,' 'who went about doing good.'

Another undoubtedly early writing is the Apocryphal Gospel according to the Hebrews. Harnack assigns it to the period 65-100, holding that it probably belongs to the beginning of this period, and is earlier than both Matthew and Luke. Dr. Stanton indicates its position in the primitive Church, 'Never accounted Apocryphal as others than the four were, amongst Hebrew Christians it was the one Gospel in common use.' Oscar Holtzman uses it as a primary source for his life of Jesus. Unfortunately, only a few scattered fragments remain to us, and of these some are obviously late and legendary.

From the somewhat confused statements about the Gospel by Jerome, we learn that it was originally in Aramaic, and held by many to be the work of the Apostle Matthew. Jerome himself, by his translation of it, apparently knew that it differed from the

canonical work. The Gospel was known to Eusebius, who placed it amongst the books accepted as authoritative in certain quarters but not generally throughout the Christian Church. Without connecting it with Matthew, he certainly regarded it as coming from a very early period. Several early writers quote it with respect, and one—Clement of Alexandria—with the ordinary formula for Scripture quotation. Papias mentions a story of a woman accused before the Lord of many sins, which, says Eusebius, the Hebrews Gospel also contained.

From the extant fragments we cannot reconstruct the scheme of the Gospel, but are not without some hint as to its general character. The Gospel at least contained ' the baptism of Jesus by John, a piece which may be connected with either the Transfiguration or the Temptation, the Lord's Prayer, the story of the man with the withered hand, the confession of Peter, the piece about forgiving seven times, the interview with the rich young man, the triumphal entry, the impeachment of the Pharisees, the Parable of the Talents, Peter's denial, Sarabbas, a catastrophe in the Temple at the crucifixion, two appearances of the risen

Lord ; to which is to be added the story of the woman accused of many sins.' Here and there, a tradition earlier than that of our canonical Gospels is preserved. Barabbas is explained to mean 'the son of their Master,' the word being taken not as a name but as a title. The ancient Sinaitic Syriac version in Matthew gives Jesus Bar Abba (cp. Simon Bar Jona), Bar being the Aramaic word for son. Origen suggests that 'Jesus' may have been omitted in many copies, because it seemed shocking that such a name should be borne by a murderer. We may plainly see that this is likely, and that later generations would never have added the name of our Lord to that of a desperate criminal. The Gospel according to the Hebrews, so far as it goes, supports the reading of the Sinaitic Syriac, and we have good ground for concluding that the name of the 'robber' was Jesus—a name, of course, by no means uncommon in Jewish history.

More important still is the reading in the Lord's Prayer, 'Give us this day to-morrow's bread.' The word translated 'daily' in our English versions occurs only here in Matthew and in the corresponding passage in Luke. The true meaning has been preserved by the

Hebrews Gospel, and many scholars accept 'to-morrow' as the rendering of the Greek. Among such folk as Jesus addressed to-day's work is done for to-morrow's bread. Of the narrative pieces, that of the Baptism reports the voice, not of the Father but of the Spirit, and it is addressed, as in Mark, to Jesus himself. Doubtless it is a symbolic representation of some actual experience.

In this Gospel, the man with the withered hand is said to be a builder, and makes his entreaty in these words: 'I was a builder, seeking my living with my hands; I pray thee, Jesus, restore to me my health, that I may not basely beg my bread.' There is nothing improbable in the addition, and the simple appellation 'Jesus' is an evidence of its antiquity; for later writers would have written 'Lord' or at least 'Rabbi' after the manner of the canonical Gospels. Elsewhere, as in the story of the rich young ruler, a genuine tradition may have survived, though not in its most primitive form.

Amongst the Sayings of Jesus not recorded in the canonical Gospels are some not unworthy of our Lord. A Gospel which gives as words of Jesus, 'Never be glad except when you look on your brother with charity.'

and puts amongst the greatest offenders 'the man who saddened his brother's spirit,' may well claim more recognition at the hands of Christians than it has commonly received.

Had the Gospel according to the Hebrews survived in its entirety, it would have been invaluable as an index to the doctrinal position of the Jews in Palestine who accepted Jesus as the Messiah. There is a tradition that the Gospel was used by the Ebionites, a sect of Jewish Christians of a Unitarian type. So far as we are able to judge, we may say it is not inconsistent with the character of the Gospel. It is probable, therefore, that the Gospel according to the Hebrews, like that according to Mark, and the earliest collection of the Sayings of Jesus, preserved the primitive doctrine of the nature and work of Christ, and one far removed from that of the three great Creeds of Christendom.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE JOHANNINE WRITINGS

UNDER the name of John we find in the New Testament one Gospel, three Epistles, and an Apocalypse. The letters are brief, and as they are generally attributed to the author of the Gospel, their consideration naturally follows its discussion.

In the case of the Fourth Gospel, it is more important than in that of the Synoptics to consider carefully the question of authorship and date, for the reason that this is the only Gospel still ascribed by most English scholars to one of the Twelve. The Apocalypse is also claimed, though less frequently, for John 'the beloved disciple,' and both books present peculiar problems alike in their contents and in their relation to each other. Unfortunately also, as we shall see, the evidence of their use by early writers is confused and perplexing. No wonder then that

the literature on the subject is enormous and increases in volume every year. Probably, few scholars are even acquainted with all that has been written about the Johannine writings.

Reasons of space forbid here more than a summary notice of leading opinions, with some of the grounds on which they are based, an indication of points of agreement towards which controversialists on different sides have moved, and a statement of such a view as seems most tenable in the light of modern knowledge.

The traditional opinion which regarded all the Johannine writings as the work of the Apostle John finds now much less support than formerly. Some scholars abandon the Apostolic authorship of the Apocalypse, others of the Gospel, and not a few of the Epistles. As early as the third century, Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, denied the apostolic authorship of Revelation. He founded his case on considerations of style, language, and the like, and, accepting the apostolic authorship of the Gospel, suggested that the Apocalypse was the work of another John.

A radical critic of the early part of the last

century, Ferdinand Christian Baur, attributed the Apocalypse to the Apostle John, and supposed the Gospel to be a production of the latter part of the second century. His view was largely dictated by the needs of a theory which discerned everywhere in the literature of the New Testament the influence of an early conflict between Peter and Paul, the representatives of Jewish and Gentile tendencies in the primitive church. The Apocalypse was Johannine because it breathed the spirit of Judaism, and the Gospel was not, because it transcended and comprehended the two opposing tendencies. To-day, few scholars ascribe the Apocalypse to the Apostle, and fewer date the Gospel as late as the latter part of the second century. On the other hand, the Apostolic authorship of the Fourth Gospel, despite eminent names on the opposite side, holds the field, as we have already said, in the circle of English scholars. On the Continent and in America the reverse is more nearly the case.

Within the last half century one change of some moment has taken place in the discussion of the Gospel. Lightfoot, in his essay on *The external evidence for the authorship and genuineness of St. John's Gospel* (1867-

1872) wrote, 'The genuineness of St. John's Gospel is the centre of the position of those who uphold the historical truth of the record of our Lord Jesus Christ given us in the New Testament. Hence the attacks of the opponents of revealed religion are concentrated upon it. The assailants are of two kinds: (1) Rationalists, (2) those who deny the distinctive character of Christian doctrine—Unitarians. The Gospel confronts both. It relates the most stupendous miracle in the history of our Lord (short of the Incarnation and the Resurrection), the raising of Lazarus. Again, it enunciates in the most express terms the Divinity, the Deity of our Lord. And yet it professes to have been written by the one man, of all others, who had the greatest opportunities of knowing the truth. The testimony of St. Paul might conceivably be set aside, as of one who was not an eye-witness. But here we have, not a personal disciple merely, not one of the Twelve only, but *the one* of the Twelve—the Apostle who leaned on his Master's bosom, who stood by his Master's cross, who entered his Master's empty grave. If therefore the claim of this Gospel to be the work of John the son of Zebedee be true, if in other words the Fourth

Gospel be genuine, the most formidable not to say an insuperable obstacle stands in the way of both classes of antagonists. Hence the persistence and the ingenuity of the attacks ; and hence also the necessity of a thoroughness in the defence.'

Upon two questions of fact in this statement a word must be said in passing. The Deity of our Lord is not enunciated in the most express terms by the Evangelist ; it is only one of several interpretations of his doctrine. The Gospel, again, does not claim to be the work of John, the son of Zebedee ; the sentence or two which are said to suggest this may be otherwise interpreted, and in any case fall very far short of any such claim. For the rest, ' The whirligig of time brings in his revenges.' One of the most distinguished defenders of the Apostolic authorship of the Fourth Gospel in our time is a Unitarian—Dr. James Drummond, the late Principal of Manchester College. He does not feel however, driven to accept as historical ' the most stupendous miracle '—the raising of Lazarus. Moreover, the ' assailants ' now include Dr. Burkitt, the Norissian Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge, who has never been suspected of Unitarian sympathies,

Prof. Bacon, of Yale, and Prof. E. F. Scott, an eminent Presbyterian scholar. More striking still, perhaps, are the admissions of leading Anglican conservative teachers in our Universities. Prof. Sanday, for example, allows that 'historical recollections and interpretative reflection have come down to us in the Fourth Gospel inextricably blended,' and Dr. Salmon, in his last work, published posthumously, said: 'I have not always confidence in accepting additions which (the fourth Evangelist) makes to the previously published story. The best theory I can make about him is that he was the Apostle John's assistant. It remains for inquiry whether this assistant was not capable of ornamenting or making additions to the stories he heard from the Apostle.'

It is plain, then, that the Apostolic authorship of the Fourth Gospel is not, as was supposed, something which an orthodox scholar must naturally accept and a Unitarian reject; nor is the historicity of its narrative necessarily guaranteed by the Apostolic authorship, if admitted.

It is a clear gain that the scientific examination of the problem before us is at length freed from theological prepossessions.

At the same time, it may be frankly admitted that the theory of Dr. Drummond is difficult to hold, despite his skilful exposition of it. Something either *more* or *less* appears to be required according as the evidence, external or internal, inclines us for or against the Apostolic authorship.

One question immediately presents itself to the reader who passes from the admittedly earlier narratives of the first three Gospels to that of the Fourth. Could the portrait of Jesus in John's Gospel have been drawn by a personal friend? Dr. Drummond answers it in the affirmative, but only by an interpretation of its contents, which does not satisfy orthodox scholars; and, what is more important, scarcely does justice to its teaching. Surely it is at most the statement of a half-truth to speak of the Christ of the Fourth Gospel as 'the picture of a profoundly religious and devoted man such as a loving friend might undoubtedly draw!' Granted that several centuries of dogmatic definition separate the doctrine of the Fourth Gospel from that of the Athanasian Creed; still the admission must be made that humanitarianism is not the ruling Christological conception of the Gospel according to St.

John. True, human traits are by no means absent from the fourth evangelist's picture of Jesus; but these are, as we shall show, subordinate elements in an apologetic which has for its main object a metaphysical interpretation of the person and work of Christ. It does not suffice to point to a phrase or two like 'Jesus wept,' and 'a man that hath told you the truth'; these must be considered together with statements claiming for Christ pre-existence, prescience, and divine power; and unless with Harnack we sever the Proem from what follows, the doctrine of the Logos or Word must be taken into account. There is a further question, not indeed unrelated to the foregoing, and that is the historical character of the Fourth Gospel as a whole. There is no need to detail the many striking differences between it and the Synoptic Gospels; they may be perceived even by the casual reader of the New Testament. They concern questions of date and topography, narrative, and sayings—in a word, the ministry of Jesus from first to last. No scholar claims infallibility for the Synoptic record, and here and there its tradition may be inferior to that of the Fourth Gospel; but, in the main, as the admissions of Drs.

Sanday and Salmon prove, as history the first three Gospels are more trustworthy than the Fourth.

Dr. Drummond, indeed, goes much further than these scholars, and says, 'we are thrown back on the hypothesis of a deliberate construction of narrative as a pictorial embodiment of spiritual truth.'

Let the fullest allowance be made for the difference between ancient and modern history, for the use of allegory, and the dreamy nature of John; yet, presumably, however remarkable his spiritual power, he was endowed with a memory and some appreciation of a past in which he had played a part. The Apostle writing as Dr. Drummond thinks he did, apparently performed a miracle almost as astounding as those in the Gospel which cause Dr. Drummond to stumble.

If the orthodox traditional view be accepted in its ancient form, John's Christology and his statement of events are of unquestionable importance. But then there is this difficulty, which, as we have learnt, has been felt in many quarters. It is simply impossible to reconcile the data of the Synoptic and Johannine Gospels. The ministry of Jesus, its motive and purpose, and

the sequence of events that finally led to the crucifixion may be construed according to the Synoptic view or that of the Fourth Gospel—either, but not both.

Internal evidence for the authorship of the Apostle John is most inconclusive. It proves that the writer was a Jew and knew Palestine, but little more. The passages which are alleged to prove what is required are thus described by Prof. Peake, a defender of the traditional view. (1) Chap. xxi. 24 is 'a certificate stating the authorship of the Gospel, and affirming the truthfulness of the narrative.' The disciple referred to in the passage is identified in verse 20 with the disciple whom Jesus loved. (2) Chapter xix. 35 'does definitely contain the claim that the authority on which the statement rests was that of an eyewitness, whether identical with the author of the Gospel or not.' (3) Chapter i. 14, 'The presumption is rather strong that in this passage the writer is not simply claiming for himself such a spiritual vision of the glory of the Word as all Christians may be said to enjoy, but to have actually seen the incarnate Word as he dwelt on earth.' This presumption is confirmed, in Prof. Peake's opinion, by the opening words

of the First Epistle of John, which is by the same author as the Gospel.

This is a long way from the statement of Lightfoot about 'the claim of this Gospel to be the work of John the son of Zebedee.'

The second passage need not be interpreted at all with reference to the author of the Gospel. The third raises 'a strong presumption,' and the first is an attestation by Ephesian elders. It may even be admitted that the writer of the last passage meant to claim the authorship of the Gospel for an eyewitness, but we are not thereby shut up to the Apostolic authorship. Clearly, the writer of the Gospel intended it to be an authoritative document. But the argument against the Apostolic authorship is drawn not from a few passages like these, but from the rest of the book. Its character we must examine presently in some detail. Dr. Drummond, however, lays great stress on the external evidence. 'On the whole,' he writes, 'I cannot but think that the external evidence of Johannine authorship possesses great weight, and, if it stood alone, would entitle the traditional view to our acceptance.' Dr. Sanday is by no means so confident. 'The subject of the external evidence has been pretty well

fought out. The opposing parties are probably as near to an agreement as they ever will be. It will hardly be an unfair statement of the case for those who reject the Johannine authorship to say, that the external evidence is compatible with that supposition. And on the other hand, we may equally say for those who accept the Johannine authorship, that the external evidence would not be sufficient alone to prove it.

The problem is the more complicated by the mention in the earliest tradition of two Johns. The conjecture has commended itself to Harnack and others that it is to the John 'the Presbyter' that we owe the Gospel.

A comparatively modern aspect of the question is presented by the confident affirmation of many scholars that the Apostle John suffered an early martyrdom with his brother James. The evidence is threefold. (1) In Mark x. 39 Jesus promises the two sons of Zebedee that they shall drink the cup that he drinks of, is the opinion of most commentators, an allusion to his death and theirs. The meaning of the expression is shown by Mark xiv. 36 ('remove this cup from me'), and elsewhere in the records of

the martyrs. (2) The oldest manuscript of the Chronicle of George the Monk (ninth century) makes the statement that John the Apostle suffered martyrdom, basing it on Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis. This is confirmed by the publication (1888) of a fragment of an epitome based on the Chronicle of Philip of Side (fifth century) which says, 'Papias in his second book says that John the divine and James his brother were killed by the Jews.' (3) Various ancient Church Calendars, including the fourth century Syriac, on the 27th December commemorate the martyrdom of John and James. Profs. Burkitt and Moffatt, therefore, with many German scholars, accept the early martyrdom of the Apostle John. In view, however, of the silence of the early writers who knew the writings of Papias, and the tradition of the Ephesian residence, the case is not quite made out. Yet plainly, to the plea for Apostolic evidence based upon external evidence, we must at least bring in the non-committal Scottish verdict, 'Not proven.'

Happily, there are some things on which most scholars may now be said to be in agreement after a debate, still unfinished, without parallel in the history of New Testament

scholarship. The tradition of an Ephesian origin for the Johannine writings, and the date (end of first century or beginning of second) are commonly accepted. So is the use by the Fourth Gospel of the first three. Acquaintance with Western Palestine, and with Jewish ideas and literature are seldom denied. In dating the Last Supper, the Synoptists are in error, not the fourth Evangelist. Still in dispute is the dependence of 'John' upon Paul and Philo—the Alexandrian Jew who sought to reconcile Hebrew religion with Greek philosophy. It is allowed by those who discover such dependence that the freedom exhibited in his use of the Synoptic records is also displayed in 'John's' use of Paul and Philo.

The fourth Evangelist is less concerned with the facts reported in the first three Gospels than with what he takes to be their inward meaning. The symbolic nature of some, at least, of the incidents he narrates is admitted by many who believe the writer to be an Apostle. But the contents as a whole cannot be thus interpreted. A few of 'John's' corrections of the Marcan narrative are probably based on better tradition. The two most dramatic incidents in the Synoptic

story—the expulsion of the traders from the Temple, and the confession of Peter at Caesarea Philippi—are treated in accordance with his theory of the nature and work of the Christ, and lose their original significance. In the same way, the omission of a birth story is due, not to any difficulty about a miraculous conception, but to the doctrine of the Logos which made it unnecessary. So, too, the Temptation and Agony are passed over, since they seemed to humble Jesus to a merely human level. In his ministry, we see Jesus represented as omniscient, taking no hint from mother or disciple as to what he shall do, and performing, not deeds of beneficence, but *signs* indicative of his power and glory. Compassion in the sense in which it characterizes our Lord in the Third Gospel is absent from the Fourth. There is a certain aloofness in the attitude of Christ which separates him even from his most faithful friends and followers.

In the Sayings of Jesus there is, superficially, very little in common between the Fourth Gospel and those that preceded it. Closer study reveals the fact that the Johannine saying is not infrequently an echo or restatement of what is reported by the

Synoptics. Thus, the answer to Nicodemus, 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God,' reminds us of a well-known verse, 'Except ye turn and become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.'

The remarkable difference, however, between the teaching of the Fourth and Synoptic Gospels cannot escape the slightest observation. The discourses are concerned, not as in the other Gospels with the paternal nature of God, or the need for man's repentance and reformation, but with the relations of himself to God and to those who believe on him. His conversations frequently follow an almost definite form. A dark saying is misunderstood by his hearers, and the correction of error leads to a further enunciation of 'truth.' So uniform is the style of the fourth Evangelist throughout that it is most difficult to determine when Jesus is the speaker and when the words are those of the narrator. The main purpose of the Evangelist in both narrative and Sayings of Jesus is to disclose the secret, as he supposed, of the personality of Christ. Clement of Alexandria had perceived this when he wrote, 'Having observed that the bodily

things had been exhibited in the other Gospels, John, inspired by the Spirit, produced a spiritual Gospel.'

Again, with all his indebtedness to Paul, John does not simply reproduce his theology. Whether we can, with some scholars, identify Paul with the singular figure of Nathanael or not, the influence of Paulinism can scarcely be denied. Elements in the Apostle's doctrine inspired by the peculiar nature of his experiences have naturally no place in the Johannine Gospel. But the Fourth Gospel is hardly conceivable without the previous existence of Paul's teaching. It is naturally the differences between them which are most important, and these are often simply developments. The 'Man from heaven' becomes in John's Gospel the 'Word, who was with God from the beginning,' and partakes of his attributes and nature. The glory ascribed by the Apostle Paul to the risen Christ is carried back by John to the life on earth. It is the later Pauline Epistles which exhibit most affinities with John's Gospel; in certain ways the latter displays a tendency to correct the earlier teaching of Paul.

The Pauline conception of sin occupies a

very subordinate place, whilst the doctrines of Faith and Atonement, so characteristic of the Apostle, are conspicuous by their absence. To the fourth Evangelist, sin is a privation, not anything positive, and salvation consists in entering upon a fulness of life. For the atoning death of Christ is substituted the life of Christ, who does not rescue men from sin but reveals to them the life eternal. Consequently Faith, with all its deep implications in the Pauline theology, gives way to a belief in Christ, the Word of God. Certain catchwords of the Gospel—Word, Truth, Life—rightly understood, throw a flood of light on the fourth Evangelist's doctrine of the person and work of Christ.

The relation of 'John' to Philo requires for its elucidation a critical investigation of the entire Gospel, such as cannot be attempted here. From Acts we learn of Apollos, 'a Jew born at Alexandria,' who came to Ephesus and taught the things of the Lord. Apparently he was one who adapted the allegorical method of Philo to the propaganda of the Gospel. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, and to some extent in the Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians, the influence of Philo is also to be traced.

'John's' Prologue is a statement of Philo's doctrine of the 'Word' (Logos) related to the person of Christ, and though the term is not employed again, the idea is none the less present in the rest of the book. The attempt to deny the Alexandrian origin of the 'Logos' doctrine, and to connect it with a somewhat similar conception current in Palestinian rabbinical circles, has not met with much success.

Howbeit, the fourth Evangelist, with the independence and originality already noted, is no slavish reproducer of Philonic doctrine. The other elements, briefly discussed, drawn from the Synoptic Gospels and from Paul are combined with Alexandrian ideas and methods, and the whole made subservient to the purpose of the Gospel. Symbol is employed, and the use of persons as types, but the interpretation of the narrative is not forced or fanciful, granting the motive of its composition. Above all, the 'Word' is made flesh; a conception foreign to the teaching of Philo. The Evangelist does not lose himself in the region of pure speculation. He recasts ancient traditions but does not wholly abandon them. Hence a dualism runs through the Gospel, which the genius of

its author does not overcome. With the Fourth Gospel, as never before, Alexandrian philosophy passed into the service of the Church, in order to give what was regarded as an adequate expression to the truth about Christ. This involved gains as well as losses. A Faith, Jewish in origin, was thus rendered more acceptable to the Gentile world. Paul's famous declaration that there was 'neither Jew nor Greek, barbarian nor Scythian, bond nor free in Christ,' was emphasized by the identification of Christ with the Logos—the Word that was from the beginning, the light that lighteneth every man. The person of a Galilean teacher was robed in the glory of the eternal word; and the miracles, language, and life of the Master were shaped under the dominating influence of this idea.

The precise form which the Gospel narrative frequently takes was dictated by the needs of the age in which it was written. The controversial elements, prominent in the Pauline Epistles, are not absent from the Fourth Gospel. Various questions at issue between Jew and Gentile at the beginning of the second century lie only just beneath the surface of some of the discussions of Christ with the Jews. The Evangelist seems even

to meet possible or actual objections by the very turn he gives to his narrative. Why did one of the Twelve betray the Lord? The answer is twofold. Satan had entered into Judas. And Jesus foreknew and permitted his betrayal (vi. 64, xiii. 11). The stumbling-block of the cross is removed by the conception of Christ's death as self-determined, and requisite for his entrance into glory. Not a few of the Jewish objections met by the Evangelist are known to us also in Talmudic writings, and in those of anti-Christian controversialists.

The picture of the life and work of the Baptist is obviously apologetic. He is not the preacher of repentance. He does not baptize Jesus nor, whilst in prison, send an embassy to Jesus to learn if he is the one who should come. He recognizes him as the Messiah from the first, and is at great pains to emphasize his own insignificance in comparison with him. This subordination of John to Jesus is evidently designed to meet more exalted claims made in behalf of the Baptist. In Acts we catch a glimpse of a Baptist party, and against this, or the Jews who made use of it, the fourth Evangelist is writing.

But the polemical aims of this Gospel were not confined to Jews and the followers of the Baptist. Like other books in the New Testament, closely related to it, especially the so-called Epistles of John, the Fourth Gospel contains references to the heretical teaching known as gnosticism. The first Epistle of John denounces those who deny that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh. The Gospel lays stress on physical details which prove the reality of the life and death of Christ. A gnostic legend professed that Simon of Cyrene suffered instead of Jesus. It is significant that he is not mentioned by 'John,' who says Jesus 'went forth bearing the cross for himself.' In other ways, various tenets of gnosticism are combated, like the worship of angels, which are never mentioned in the Gospel, and the low view of the Old Testament, whose Prophets and Patriarchs are spoken of with reverence by 'John.' Withal, despite these things and an avoidance of certain terms characteristic of gnostic philosophy, the pervading spirit of the Fourth Gospel is not essentially different from that of gnosticism. The ideal value of Christ's life, the place of knowledge and belief in the scheme of redemption, and the

antithesis of light and darkness, the earthly and the spiritual in the book are indications of a certain affinity between John and those whom he antagonizes. Probably they point to the unconscious assimilation of ideas rather than to anything like deliberate borrowing.

Prof. E. F. Scott sums up his penetrating study of the Fourth Gospel in these words: 'By the heightening of the miracles, by the suppression of all that might seem derogatory to the divine nature, by the substitution of lofty oracular language for the simple sayings and parables, he sought to represent our Lord more worthily as the Son of God, manifest in the flesh. We cannot but feel, however, that he largely defeats his own purpose. The plain Synoptic narrative, in which Jesus passes before us as he actually lived, leaves on our minds a far truer and grander impression of his divine character than the elaborate theological Gospel.' It is a statement to which the present writer is compelled to subscribe.

As for the author of this Gospel, our conclusion is more decidedly negative than positive. He was not John, the son of Zebedee, one of the Twelve. He may have

been one of a school founded by the Apostle—perhaps the somewhat mysterious figure, John, 'the Presbyter.' We do not know.

Of the Epistles traditionally attributed to the Apostle John, the First is anonymous. Its early date is attested by early writers like Papias and Polycarp. The opening words are said by some scholars to claim an eyewitness for its author. Others interpret the words in a spiritual sense. It is probable that they represent the testimony of the church to which the writer belonged.

'The so-called Epistle of John,' writes Dr. Moffatt, 'is neither an Epistle, nor is it John's—if by John is meant the son of Zebedee.' At the same time he admits the close affinities between the Epistle and the Gospel. These had led commonly to the acceptance of a common source for the two writings. What is required may be met if we suppose they proceeded from an Ephesian school.

The Epistle is rather a tract than a letter in the ordinary sense. Lightfoot thought it was issued as a kind of covering letter to the Gospel. The latest commentator prefers to regard it as an appeal to the Church to abide by the teaching of the Gospel, which is more

probable. It is intended to combat some heresy relating to the person of Christ. This heresy denied that Jesus Christ had come in the flesh; if it did not, indeed, make a distinction in gnostic fashion between Jesus and Christ. Immorality is said to be the accompaniment or outcome of the heresy in question. The precise nature of the system attacked cannot be defined, but there is nothing to prevent our dating the tract at the beginning of the second century. With its strong insistence upon brotherly love, the Epistle has secured a place in the affections of Christians.

The Second and Third Epistles are assigned by Dr. Moffatt to John, 'the Presbyter.' There is this to be said for it that both profess to be written by 'the Presbyter.' The Second in the English versions seems to be addressed to a lady. 'Electa' has been understood by some scholars as a proper name. The objection is that the sister of verse 13 would then bear the same name. Dr. Rendel Harris thinks the lady was a Gentile proselyte of the tribe of Ruth, and like Ruth a widow! A little more ingenuity might give us the cause of her husband's death. The prevailing view is that the letter was addressed to a church;

possibly the church of which Gaius of the Third letter was a member.

The Third Epistle is obviously a personal note, resembling in this respect Paul's letter to Philemon. It is designed to commend to the hospitality of one Gaius certain traveling missionaries about to visit his church. Harnack thinks the Diotrefes of verse 9 was the head of the church, and resented the supervision of 'the Presbyter.' Consequently, he sees in the action of 'the Presbyter' a protest against the growth of the monarchical bishopric. It may be so, but the author of these letters appears to have had more interest in matters doctrinal than ecclesiastical.

The Revelation of St. John the Divine belongs to that class of literature, called the Apocalyptic, which has been described in our second chapter. Its interpretation in the light of this literature is one of the gains of nineteenth century criticism. In 1886, Vischer, a pupil of Harnack, published an epoch-making investigation of it. His theory was that originally this Christian Apocalypse was a Jewish writing, and that in its present form it has been worked over by a Christian scribe. In 1895, Gunkel, in *Creation and*

*Chaos*, showed that the Apocalypse included ancient lore which had its origin in Babylon. On this view, the Christian author may not have understood all the tradition which he handed on. In 1904, John Weiss in his study of the book pointed out that literary sources were used by the writer, whom he identified with John, 'the Presbyter.' A Jewish Apocalypse was combined with the Christian writing by a disciple of John, and thus our present work came into existence.

Theories of the authorship and interpretation of Revelation are almost as numerous as the sand on the seashore. What is certain is that the Christian author employed Jewish material, and that some of it goes back to the Babylonian myth of Marduk, the god of light, and his conquest of Tiamat, the dragon of the waters—a myth which is reflected also in Job, the Psalms, the first chapter of Genesis, and elsewhere. The crudest polytheistic elements had been shorn off the tradition before it came into the hands of the Christian author, yet what remains is often almost meaningless apart from a reference to the ancient mythology. Passages in Daniel, Ezekiel, and Zechariah, in the same way, need to be interpreted in the light of

Babylonian conceptions. In the Apocalypse, the Horsemen of chap. vi., and especially the figures of the Dragon in chap. xii., and the Beast in chaps. xiii. and xiv., not to mention numerous details throughout the book, are rendered intelligible in this way. Even in one of the most beautiful passages in Revelation, 'And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away, and *the sea is no more,*' the last phrase probably is, as we have suggested, in chapter ii. related to the idea of the ocean as the original power of chaos, the element of the great evil spirit.

To the modern mind, more important than the analysis of the book, and the tracing to their source of the varied elements it contains, is an understanding of its aim and purpose. In the words of Prof. Porter, 'The aim of the book is to establish wavering faith, to warn apostates, and especially to encourage believers to resist foreign influences, and to endure trial even to death, in view of the speedy coming of God as judge and saviour.'

Throughout there is no indication of any personal knowledge of the earthly life of Jesus, and much in the singular picture of the Messianic office and functions that seem

to preclude authorship by an Apostle. The author calls himself a prophet, and the evidence, external and internal, proves that he belonged to Asia. The work may be pseudonymous, and the writer have taken the name of John as a later Christian apocalypticist assumed the name of Peter. Against this is the fact that the author does not claim to be an Apostle, as might have been expected. We cannot say whether he was John, 'the Presbyter,' or one of a school founded by John the Apostle. We must simply conclude with Dionysius of Alexandria, who wrote in the third century, 'That he who wrote these things was called John must be believed, as he says it, but who he was does not appear.'

Whoever the author, he writes with a view to the immediate future, and for the comfort and consolation of his own people. He does not intend to sketch any of the historical characters who have been seen thinly disguised in the figures of the Beast in chaps. xiii. and xvii., neither Mohammed, nor Luther, nor the Pope.

It is the persecution of Domitian, and in particular the attempt to enforce the cult of Cæsar-worship, which form the background for the book. In the East generally, the

worship of the emperors was popular, but to the monotheistic faiths of the Jew and Christian it was utterly abhorrent. 'The Book of Revelation,' says Prof. Porter, 'is the first expression of Christian faith as it asserted itself and took its stand over against the world-power when this became its outspoken enemy through insistence upon an idolatrous worship. The end of the warfare thus opened was not what the book expects, the fall of Rome and the enthronement of Christ and his martyr saints in its place. It was an end that would have been inconceivable at the outset, the Christianization of Rome itself.'

The book is dated by early Fathers and modern scholars near the end of the reign of Domitian. The date has an important bearing on the relation of the Apocalypse to the Fourth Gospel. If it be accepted, then, says Dr. Moulton, on purely grammatical grounds 'the author cannot have written the Fourth Gospel only a short time after.' In the matter of style, the fourth Evangelist, says Dr. Swete, 'stands at the opposite pole to the eccentricities, the roughnesses, the audacities of the Apocalyptist.' The Christology of the book is perplexing. In many ways one of the

most Jewish of New Testament books, it invests Christ with the most exalted powers. Probably some, at least, of the attributes bestowed on him were borrowed, indirectly, from pagan deities. In the Letters to the Seven Churches, Prof. Ramsay discovers allusions to the history and repute of the cities named as well as to the conditions and character of the churches therein. Thus he says of Ephesus, for example, 'The note alike in the church and in the history of Ephesus has been change. The church was enthusiastic; but it has been cooling. And the penalty denounced against it is that it shall be moved out of its place, unless it recreates its old spirit and enthusiasm. And, similarly, in the history of the city the same note is distinct. An extraordinary series of changes and vicissitudes had characterized it, and would continue to do so. Mutability was the law of its being. The land and site of the city had varied from century to century.' The theory is suggestive even if it fails to carry full conviction. Prof. Ramsay also holds that the seven cities were on certain important roads, and were centres of distribution, where other messengers could receive letters for delivery within their

several circuits. An Apocalypse does not, however, seem a natural medium for the transmission of a bishop's message to the churches. The angels of the churches have been variously interpreted. Prof. Moulton thinks the conception belongs originally to Zoroastrianism, the religion of Persia. In Zoroastrianism, 'a *fravashi* is part of a man's identity, dwelling in heaven but powerful to aid on earth' (cp. Matthew xviii. 10; Acts xii. 5). It is also applied to a nation or community, and 'the *fravashi*' becomes a complete counterpart of the nation (Daniel) or the Church (Apocalypse).

In three verses of chap. xxi. we find the basis for a Christian doctrine of an earthly millennium: 'fateful verses which have produced one of the least useful chapters in the long history of Christian thought.' The earthly millennium was supposed to provide for the fulfilment of Old Testament prediction, as the consummation of hopes in heaven found a place for later eschatological expectation. The idea of a new Jerusalem begins with the conception of a glorious restoration of the city after its fall. It was afterwards thought of as made in heaven, and only waiting to descend on earth.

The Apocalypse is rich in ideas and conceptions that have their root in Jewish national hopes and rabbinical doctrines as well as in ancient Babylonian myths and in the historical conditions of the first century A.D. But its supreme value for us lies in a few imperishable passages which voice the Christian hope and bring comfort to the sorrowful. It is 'essentially a form of religious poetry, through which, though the form is often grotesque, one can still feel the pulsation of a true faith in God and in the blessed life to come.'

## CHAPTER VII

### PSEUDONYMOUS AND ANONYMOUS WRITINGS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

AS many of the later Jewish writings were pseudonymous, that is, attributed to well-known figures in Hebrew history like Solomon and Ezra; so the later Christian Scriptures are similarly ascribed to the leaders of the primitive Church, like Peter and James. The reasons for this practice, which appears singular, to say the least, to us in the twentieth century, were really very much the same in both cases.

Solomon enjoyed amongst the Hebrews a unique reputation for wisdom, so to him were assigned all the words of wisdom, as all Law had been supposed to proceed from Moses, and all the Psalms from David. Ezra was the most prominent of Jewish scribes and took a leading part in establishing the supremacy of the Law after the return of

the Jews from exile ; hence he might naturally be regarded as the author of a fresh version of Jewish history. Furthermore, great names gained for these writings, whether Jewish or Christian, a certain authoritativeness, and might even secure for them a place in the collection of sacred books. Pseudonymity also provided a means of protection for writers who lived in times of persecution.

#### First Epistle of Peter

The earliest of these writings is the First Epistle of Peter. By many scholars, indeed, it is believed to be the work of the Apostle Peter, for whom it is claimed in the first verse. This view has weighty support from external evidence, for the letter was known to the authors of the Second Epistle of Peter, and the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, as well as to Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis. All this is quite consistent with Petrine authorship. On the other hand, the internal evidence, despite the verse mentioned, seems conclusive against it. Peter was, in the words of Luke (Acts iv. 13), an unlettered man, and as we learn from Matthew xxvi. 73,

he spoke Aramaic with a distinctly provincial accent. The author of this Epistle not only writes good Greek, but also quotes from the Greek version of the Old Testament. A certain resemblance in ideas between the Epistle and those of Peter's speeches proves little, since the latter were certainly the composition of Luke.

More serious still is the indisputable Paulinism of the Epistle. If the history of the primitive Church is to be made intelligible at all, some differences between Paul and Peter must be clearly recognized. Advocates of the Petrine authorship are hard put to it to account for its dependence upon Paul.

Prof. Peake finds a solution of the difficulty in the personality of Peter, whom he describes as 'a highly receptive and large-hearted' man. Other scholars would simply minimize the Pauline tendencies in the author. It is hard to suppose Peter was so plastic as to teach Paulinism, even if the doctrine of the Epistle is not the rigid anti-Judaic teaching of the Epistle to the Galatians. It cannot be denied that the Epistle more strongly resembles the genuine Pauline Epistles than do the Pastoral Epistles, or the Epistle to the Hebrews.

This has driven many to find refuge in the theory that Silvanus must be held responsible as an amanuensis of Peter, for the theological tone of the Epistle, if not for its entire composition. For this view, there is much to be said. But the very nature of the reference to Silvanus seems to preclude the idea of his authorship. We would rather not credit him with such self-praise.

The absence of any personal reference to Jesus in a letter written by Peter is strange, though it is quite true that the primary interests of the early Christians were not biographical. On the other hand, the theory that the letter is a pseudograph is not free from difficulty. We expect more emphasis upon the Petrine authorship than the mere presence of the name; nor yet is it easy to see why a letter so Pauline should be assigned to his most conspicuous opponent in the Church.

Perhaps we may find the way out of a perplexing situation by ascertaining when and for whom it was written. The latter is the simpler question to determine. It is professedly written to the 'Elect who are sojourners of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.'

The words suggest Jewish Christian readers, but the description of them which follows (especially iv. 3, 4) shows that they are Gentiles. Peter had no personal relations with these churches, and the letter betrays no intimate knowledge of those to whom it is written; facts which, so far as they go, tell against the Apostolic authorship.

It was written during a time of persecution (iv. 12-17). If the work of Peter, this must be the persecution of Nero (A.D. 64-66). It is, however, questionable whether Christians suffered death for the name of Christian so early as this; and the description apparently demands a date after rather than before A.D. 80. Possibly the unknown author would then find no reason why he should not attribute to Peter an Epistle displaying Pauline tendencies in view of the movement within the Church to minimize the differences between the early Apostles. Taken as a whole, the internal evidence is against Apostolic authorship. The Epistle is one of hope and consolation, and together with some conceptions that would be more in place in an Apocalypse, it contains much ethical admonition of abiding value.

**Second Epistle of Peter**

The Second Epistle of Peter, though proclaiming itself the work of Simon Peter the Apostle, is, by almost general consent, non-apostolic. It alludes to Paul's writings as Scripture; betrays the influence of Romans and Ephesians; and is also largely dependent, in language and ideas, upon the Epistle of Jude. The letter was obviously written when the Second Coming seemed indefinitely postponed, and combats a type of gnosticism which had no existence during the lifetime of the Galilean Apostle. Even its very insistence upon a Petrine origin renders it open to suspicion. Origen first mentions it, and it was not generally accepted as authoritative until the end of the second century. The Epistle makes use of apocryphal writings, and exhibits resemblances with the writings of Philo and Clement of Alexandria. It may have had its origin in Egypt, and, in any case, its style shows that it was not written by the author of the First Epistle. As Peter is, as Jülicher puts it, 'not only the latest document of the New Testament, but also the least deserving of a place in the Canon.'

### The Epistle of Jude

The brief Epistle of Judas declares itself to be the composition of the brother, or as the Greek may be translated, the son of James. This James has been identified with the brother of our Lord. The name Judas was, of course, not uncommon in New Testament times, and there is no strong case for the tradition that the author of this Epistle was one of the brethren of Jesus.

The object of the letter is to warn its readers against certain heretics of a gnostic type, whose influence was being felt in the Church. The similarities between 2 Peter and Jude have been already mentioned. 'The Faith' is spoken of as though it were something like a Creed; and the Apostles as a distinct Order in the Church. Jude makes use of Apocryphal books like The Assumption of Moses, and The Secrets of Enoch. More than one passage apparently alludes to the predictions in 1 and 2 Timothy, whilst there are coincidences of expression between Jude and the Pastoral Epistles. Possibly the author was an Egyptian Christian who wrote certainly not earlier than the second century.

### The Epistle of James

The Epistle of James has been commonly assigned to the brother of Jesus already mentioned, who was a prominent personage in the Jerusalem Church (Gal. i. 19), and presided over the Council held in Jerusalem to settle the question of the admission of Gentile-Christians into the Church (Acts xv.).

Accordingly, some scholars find in James the earliest book in the New Testament. The practical nature of the teaching, its Jewish character, and the attitude of the writer towards poverty have been urged in support of this view. James has even been deemed a Jewish document Christianized by a couple of interpolations.

The arguments against these opinions are based on both external and internal evidence. Its place in the Canon was not secured before the fourth century, and there is nothing in the external evidence which counterbalances the suggestions of a late date afforded by the internal evidence.

If written by the head of the Jerusalem Church, the absence of any early tradition associating it with him is not lightly explained away. The Greek, too, is excellent, and hardly likely to have been written by a

Palestinian. The general culture and acquaintance with classical writings, which the Epistle betrays, do not favour Jacobean authorship.

The letter makes no reference to the controversy of Christianity with Judaism, or to the Messiahship of Jesus. Hence Dr. Moulton has argued that the Epistle was the work of James, and written specifically for Jews. But much the same type of teaching is to be found in the Christian writings of the early part of the second century. Indeed, the absence of such references in an early Epistle would be more difficult to explain than their presence. In the famous discussion, James makes some allusion to Paul, if not to the Hebrews Epistle. Probably, what is presented is less an attack upon Paul's teaching than upon a current interpretation of it. Dr. Moffatt remarks, 'The idea that a man was justified by works and faith combined (James ii. 24) is contrary to the genius of Paul's religion, and thus, although both James and he agree in their demand for an ethical faith, the demand is based upon different conceptions of what faith means.' 'That the controversy presupposes the Pauline propaganda is beyond all reasonable doubt.'

Perhaps the lack of any insistence upon the Jacobean authorship is rather against its being pseudonymous. The author may have been a James, but not James the brother of Jesus. Of course the interpretation of the title in this particular way is not surprising. One striking feature of the Epistle is the remarkable resemblance of many of its Sayings to some of those in the Sermon on the Mount. Whoever the author was, he does seem to have been acquainted with a collection of Sayings of our Lord.

The wide differences of opinion in regard to the Epistle of James can scarcely be paralleled in the case of any other book in the New Testament; but most, if not all, of the evidence, external and internal, is met by the theory that it belongs to the early part of the second century. Jülicher thinks the author 'wrote under the name of James, not because he wished to mark the antagonism between Paul and the Jewish-Christians, but because he honoured in the person of James the first representative of our Lord upon earth, and did not venture to imitate Peter or Paul, whose Epistles were already in circulation. The exceedingly late appearance of James in the literature of the

Church is also a strong support to this view.\*

#### The Pastoral Epistles

Under the name of Paul in the New Testament are two letters addressed to Timothy, and a third addressed to Titus. Their existence from an early date in the second century is proved by quotations in Polycarp, although Marcion, the celebrated gnostic, did not include them in his Canon. This exclusion is not explained by the nature of their doctrine, since similar teaching is found in Epistles which he accepted. If genuine, the Epistles must belong to a period after the release of the Apostle from the imprisonment recorded in Acts. The manner in which Luke calls attention to the favour shown by the Roman authorities towards Christianity suggests that if he had known of Paul's release, it would not have passed unnoticed. Against this is urged the early date of Acts as recently accepted by Harnack. But, of course, this is not generally granted.

The language, at least, of the Epistles is not Pauline, and many words are absent from the Epistles which are characteristic of the Apostle. The same may be said even more emphatically of the style. As Jülicher

says, 'Nowhere is there a trace of the Pauline swing and energy, and we hardly ever come across an anacoluthon, a break in the construction, or an ambiguity caused by the rush of hurrying ideas; all is regular and smooth in the Pastoral Epistles, but all is also without force or colour. Their words are many and their ideas are few; of Paul one might say exactly the opposite.'

Again, the three letters are singularly alike in spirit and diction, despite trivial differences; and, apart from a few points of resemblance, are unlike what we know came from the Apostle's pen.

It is an evasion of this argument to refer, as many apologists do, to the time when Paul is supposed to have written these letters, for the latest of his Epistles do not betray any traces of the style of the Pastorals, which is not that of senility. In short, it is not a case of development of style, but of a complete change such as cannot be paralleled.

Moreover, the personal details in the Pastorals are difficult to explain on the common view. It is not merely that Timothy is regarded as a youth when he must have been much more than that; since to a teacher the disciple might appear to remain for ever

the tone of the letters is moralizing rather than evangelical, and no more reminds us of the great Apostle than does the language employed. Dr. Moffatt expresses the common critical opinion when he writes: 'The three Epistles are pseudonymous compositions of a Paulinist, who wrote during the period of transition into a neo-Catholic Church of the second century, with the aim of safeguarding the common Christianity of the age in the terms of the great Pauline tradition.' This conclusion is supported by the quotation as Scripture of Luke x. 7 in 1 Timothy v. 18, 'The labourer is worthy of his hire.'

Certain details in 2 Timothy call for special consideration. The references to Paul's cloak, books, and the like (2 Timothy i. 15-18, iv. 9-21) are so circumstantial as to warrant the theory that they represent primitive traditions, if not genuine Pauline fragments. Howbeit, these cannot outweigh the evidence against the Apostolic authorship of the books as a whole. Attempts have been made to analyse different strata in the letters, but they cannot be said to have met with much success.

**Epistle to the Hebrews**

The most important non-Pauline Epistle is anonymous. It was known and used in the Roman Church before the end of the first century, but there is no reference to its author so early as this. Tertullian, in the first quarter of the third century, attributed it to Barnabas; Clement of Alexandria thought Paul wrote it in Hebrew, and Luke translated it into Greek. Luther and some others have spoken of it as the work of Apollos. Harnack has argued for its authorship by Priscilla, the wife of Aquila; whilst lately Prof. Ramsay and the Bishop of Lincoln have held a brief for Philip the Deacon. Even this does not exhaust the list of conjectures. Probably Origen was not far wrong when he confessed that its author God only knows. What is certain is that Paul never wrote it. 'The unknown author,' says Prof. Peake, 'builds up a solid argument, but with little of that nervous energy, intellectual keenness, and passion for ideas which made Paul one of the most powerful and brilliant dialecticians the world has ever known. The well-known account of the contests of wit between Ben Jonson and Shakspeare at the Mermaid illustrates pre-

cisely the difference between the author and Paul.<sup>1</sup> The style of composition is literary, and even in parts classical. The author is not without an eye to rhetorical effects. Indebtedness to Philo, the Book of Wisdom, and Alexandrian thought generally is manifest throughout the Epistle. Even technical philosophical terms are employed, such as are characteristic of the early Greek philosophical writers.

Unlike the Pauline Epistles, Hebrews possesses no introductory greeting, though it has an epistolary conclusion. We are not, however, obliged to assume that an introductory paragraph has perished, or that the conclusion is a later addition. We can see how easily belief in Paul's authorship might arise in view of the fact that he was the letter writer *par excellence* of the early Church, but not even in Alexandria where the book first gained its canonical position did the tradition pass unchallenged that it was Pauline.

It is generally agreed that it was written to a church in Rome, whether composed entirely of Jewish-Christians or not. The readers seem to have been exposed to the temptations which Judaism presented; con-

sequently the writer makes an interesting comparison of Christianity and Judaism in order to demonstrate the superiority of his faith in respect of its ordinances, and more especially of the nature and office of its founder as compared with Moses. The Christology is lofty and of course Alexandrian and not Palestinian in character, but there is considerable emphasis upon the frailty of Christ's nature.

The Epistle cannot have been written later than A.D. 95, since it was mentioned in the Epistle of Clement.

Like the pseudonymous Epistles already noticed, Hebrews is not, strictly speaking, a letter at all. Of the letter, properly so called, personal in its reference, and spontaneous in its nature, we have an example in Paul's Epistle to Philemon. Deissmann, indeed, sharply distinguishes letters from Epistles, and brings all the Pauline Epistles under the former category. 'The letter,' he says, 'is a fragment of life; the Epistle is a form and a creation of art.' 'The letters of Paul are not literary, they are genuine familiar letters, not Epistles, not written by St. Paul for publication and for after-ages, but simply for those to whom they were sent.'

The great German scholar has discovered a truth in reference to New Testament literature in general and the Epistles in particular, and it seems to him to be the whole truth. The Epistle to the Hebrews, being 'polished in form, and of carefully considered contents,' he would reckon an Epistle. But the last phrase is surely true of Romans, which was clearly designed to be a contribution to a question of more than local or passing importance. Romans really represents a development from Philemon in the direction of the Pastoral Epistles and Hebrews.

In the words of Dr. Moffatt, 'Thus partly by the circulation of really personal letters and partly by the adoption of the epistolary form for public or semi-public ends, the transition was made from the private letter to the Epistle or epistolary homily. The New Testament Epistles vary between both; the former was transmuted into the shape of a letter addressed to some church for which the writer (Paul) felt a strong personal affection; the latter passed, in the sub-Pauline period, into writings which were for the most part epistolary in form only (1 John, James, 2 Peter).'

## CHAPTER VIII

### CANON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

The word Canon is derived from a Greek word meaning 'a straight rod,' from which the metaphorical use of the word as meaning measure or rule followed. By Canon of the New Testament is meant the collection of books which constitute the recognized rule of Christian faith. The history of the New Testament Canon is the story of how the several books in it were brought together to form a collection, to the Christian mind, unique in its nature and authority. In connexion with the Bible, the word Canon is not found in use before the fourth century, but the idea was much older than the word.

The conception of a Canon was derived by the Christian Church from Judaism, and, in the primitive Church, the Scripture was the Old Testament in the Greek translation, which included the books now commonly

called the Apocrypha. Early Christians discovered in the Old Testament, especially in the Prophets, various references to Jesus as the Messiah. To-day, this unhistorical method of interpreting the Hebrew sacred books has been all but universally abandoned. It is one reason, however, why the first Christian societies had few Christian writings, and no thought of a Christian Canon. Another obvious reason is that those who stood near to the first disciples of Jesus were still available as sources for trustworthy traditions relating to his word and work.

Paul had no idea of creating a literature which should rival in authority the Law, Prophecy, and other Writings, when he wrote his Epistles to the churches of Galatia, Corinth, and elsewhere. We see, however, the germ of what followed in the reverent use of the 'word of Christ.' It is even possible that he was familiar with other Sayings of our Lord besides those to which he alludes, and the one he quoted to the Elders of Ephesus at Miletus, recorded not in the Gospels but in Acts, 'It is better to give than to receive.'

Luke's preface to his Gospel shows that there were many accounts of the life and death of Jesus, and he simply sets to work

to compile another better than the rest. The fact that more than one collection of Sayings of Jesus were probably in existence when the First and Third Gospels were written; the freedom with which Christ's words were quoted; and the evident loss of many of his Sayings, all show that there was nothing in the early Christian circles parallel to the Canon of the Old Testament amongst the Jews.

The Epistle of Barnabas (A.D. 125) first introduces words of Jesus which occur in Matthew's Gospel with the formula commonly used when quoting from the Old Testament. Twenty years later, the so-called Second Epistle of Clement designates as Scripture a collection of the Sayings of our Lord. Gradually, too, Christians came to recognize as authoritative the Sayings of those who had been most intimately associated with Jesus, namely, the Apostles; what was believed to be the doctrine of the Apostles was deemed worthy of credence.

Christian societies must have used written records of the words and deeds of Christ before we hear anything at all of a Canon, for during the period (95-140), Zahn finds only four Gospel citations which are not from our canonical Gospels.

Along with the Gospels, Paul's letters and Acts were very early included amongst the books used for the purpose of public edification. It is easy to see how Acts, as an historical account of the beginnings of the Christian movement, would be treasured, whilst Paul's letters would be read more than once by those to whom they were addressed; and, as we know, they were sent occasionally to other churches also. Yet nothing like the exclusive use of Gospels and Epistles generally prevailed.

The first Canon was the work of a heretic—Marcion, the gnostic, who at Rome collected together Paul's Epistles and Luke's Gospel, editing them in the interests of his doctrines. The Pastoral Epistles he did not include at all. The Church, whilst combating his teaching, followed his example, and began to collect the Christian Scriptures to form a Canon, whose authority might be recognized, as it were a court of appeal, for the definition of doctrine.

The curiously vague references of Justin Martyr (A.D. 150) to the 'Memoirs of the Apostles,' which in one place he calls Gospels, prove that he knew our four Gospels, but his material is not drawn exclusively from them.

and his quotations are not from our text, and are frequently very free. Papias, a contemporary of Justin, certainly knew the First and Second Gospels, and probably also the Third and Fourth, but he expressed a preference for the living oral tradition, which was trustworthy. Tatian, a disciple of Justin Martyr, set great store by Paul's Epistles, and made a Harmony of the four Gospels. Polycarp was not only familiar with the Pauline Epistles, but also with the Pastorals, as was Theophilus of Antioch (190). The latter definitely ranks the Gospels with the Prophets. In Irenæus (180-190) something like the whole of the New Testament is quoted and the fourfold form of the Gospel seems so certain that he believed it to be pre-figured in the four winds and the four quarters of the world.

Clement of Alexandria (160-220) distinguished between canonical and uncanonical Gospels. Tertullian (197-220) based the authority of the four Gospels on the fact that they came from Apostles or from those in their immediate circle.

Some books were accepted in certain quarters, and not in others. Hebrews, for example, was not accepted in the West until

quite late. The Epistle of James and 2 Peter were the last to receive recognized canonical position amongst the churches.

The Canon, as we know it, was settled before the middle of the third century. There were books not included in our collection which still enjoyed a local or temporary canonicity, and the deliverances of the Councils of the Church upon the question of the New Testament Canon did not begin until A.D. 363 or 382. But by that time it was rather a recognition of existing practice than anything in the nature of innovation.

In 1546, the Council of Trent adopted the Vulgate as the standard—'The whole books with all their parts, as they have been accustomed to be read in the Catholic Church, and as they are contained in the old Vulgate-Latin edition'—were pronounced sacred and canonical, and a curse invoked on those who did not so esteem them.

The Reformers substituted for an infallible Pope an infallible book, but men like Luther did not scruple to criticize various books from the point of view of their own doctrine. For a time, it even seemed possible that they would reject these books from the New Testament as they did the Apocrypha from the

Old. But this subjective criticism left no abiding mark on the history of the Canon amongst Protestant Churches. The twenty-seven books were finally accepted as equally canonical and authoritative.

Prof. Souter remarks, 'There are not wanting signs that in future stress will be laid neither on an infallible Church, nor on an infallible Book, but on an infallible Christ.' He does not, however, proceed to show which conception of Christ is to be authoritative, the Johannine or the Synoptic, nor in what regard he is to be held infallible.

Liberal Christians, without seeking an infallible standard at all, would search the Scriptures and find therein what may minister to the highest and deepest needs of our human nature, giving thanks to him 'who is in all, and through all, and above all'; 'the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.'

## CHAPTER IX

### UNITARIANS AND NEW TESTAMENT CRITICISM

DR. CONYBEARE, in his 'History of New Testament Criticism,' 1910, says, 'The Unitarian movement, which flourished in Poland during the sixteenth century, and penetrated to England during the seventeenth, contributed but little to the criticism of the New Testament.' Unitarians 'merely accepted the New Testament text as they found it in Erasmus's Greek edition or even in the Latin Vulgate, and accepted it<sup>17</sup> as fully and verbally inspired. They questioned neither the traditional attributions of these texts nor their historical veracity.

It is a statement which requires considerable modification, especially if by 'Unitarian' we do not mean exclusively Socinian, and do not confine the 'movement' to the sixteenth century. It will be convenient

first to summarize the critical positions of sixteenth century anti-trinitarian scholars, and then examine the contributions of Unitarians to the criticism of the New Testament under the heads of Textual Criticism, Translations, and Higher Criticism.

Servetus (1511-1553), who was an anti-trinitarian but no Socinian, in a preface to his edition of Pagnino's Bible, 1542, sets forth his original view of prophetic Scripture. It resembles that of modern conservative scholars, who retain something of the old, whilst they find room for the new, conception of Hebrew prophecy. The language, he imagined, was too large for the occasion, and compelled the mind to consider one who was to come later. This principle left him free to interpret the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah as a lament of Cyrus, and Deuteronomy xviii. 15 as the annunciation of Joshua; whilst in both he discerned the outlines of Christ. The Song of Solomon he leaves without a single heading or marginal note to suggest a reference to our Lord, probably making a shrewd guess as to its true character. We may contrast our Authorized Version of seventy years later, wherein the heading of the first chapter begins with "The Church's

love for Christ,' and that of the last ends with 'The Church prayeth for Christ's coming.' In his New Testament notes, Servetus distinguishes between the writings of John the Apostle and John the Presbyter.

'In the *Christianismi Restitutio*,' says the Rev. Alexander Gordon, 'Serveto's medical knowledge framed his conception of theological ideas, and his interpretation of spiritual processes. The phenomena of demoniacal possession he claimed to be still existent in the forms of disease.' 'Contraction of the nerves is called by Christ (Luke xiii. 16) the chain of Satan; just as Paul calls his own (bodily) infirmity a messenger of Satan' (2 Cor. xii. 7).

Dr. Macalister, writing in *Hasting's Dictionary of the Bible*, diagnoses the case of the woman rather differently, but with most modern authorities, biblical and medical, agrees with Servetus in treating the chain of Satan as a form of physical suffering. Similarly, though doctors and critics still disagree about the precise nature of Paul's 'thorn in the flesh,' none deny that the messenger of Satan was, as Servetus said, a bodily infirmity.

Again, speaking of the treatise of Faustus

Socinus *Concerning the Authority of Holy Scripture*, Mr. Gordon observes, 'Of the whole modern literature of rational credence in Scripture, this is the fountain-head. What Spinoza is to the school of rationalistic criticism, that Sozzini is to the school of rational credence.' His object is simply to prove that the authors of both Testaments were credible men, writing *bona fide* in historical spirit. 'He has no doctrine of inspiration whatever. Christ, just before he entered upon his ministry, was taken up bodily into heaven, and there instructed in the divine message. Our conviction that the report is authentic depends upon our persuasion of the messenger's veracity. And so, in their measure, of other revealers. This is far from the modern, scientific view of the Scripture, but it is by no means to be identified with the traditional doctrine of inspiration. In his opinions upon toleration and interpretation of Scripture, Socinus prepared the way for men like Falkland, Chillingworth, and Locke. Dr. Gardiner, the eminent historian of the Commonwealth period, observes, 'At this date the term Socinianism was applied, not as later to a certain doctrine on the second person of the Trinity, but

rather to a habit of applying reason to questions of revelation, which led up to that doctrine as its most startling result.' Such a use of the term was truly a tribute to the rationalism of Socinus exhibited in his attitude towards Scripture not less than in his formulation of theology.

A contemporary and correspondent of Socinus, George Enyedi (d. 1597), Superintendent of the Unitarian Churches in Transylvania, in his *Explanation of the Passages of the Old and New Testaments from which the Dogma of the Trinity was usually established*, published posthumously, (1600?), set forth six arguments against the Apostolic authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Nearly all the copies of the first edition of the book were publicly burned, and it was interdicted throughout the German Empire. A second edition, printed in 1670, circulated in England and elsewhere.

The same critical view, now so generally accepted, was argued at greater length by John Crell (1590-1633), the German scholar, who became Rector of the College at Cracow. His works form part of the eight folio volumes comprising the *Library of the Polish Brethren, whom they call Unitarians*, published 1650.

The commentary on Hebrews in this collection was written by Jonas Schlichtingius, but in his preface he acknowledges that Crell was associated with him in such a way that he is bound to ascribe the chief merit to him. We may therefore attribute to Crell the views on the Epistle found in the Prolegomena. Therein he contrasts the style, form, and doctrine of the letter with those of the Pauline Epistles; he notes the absence of ascription to Paul in the manuscripts, controverts the arguments for the Apostolic authorship, and rejects the theory that it was written in Hebrew by Paul and translated by Luke. The entire discussion is distinguished by critical acumen, and, for its date, is quite remarkable.

(1) Leaving the sixteenth and early seventeenth century anti-trinitarians, and entering the field of Textual Criticism, Unitarians may boast a few names that deserve honourable mention.

Christopher Sandius, in an appendix to *Interpretations of the Paradoxes of the Four Gospels* (1670), discusses the well-known passage on the Three Heavenly Witnesses (1 John v. 7) omitted from the Revised Version. Erasmus had not included it in the

first edition of his Greek Testament, but, yielding to clamour, inserted it in his third edition on the authority of a single manuscript then in England. Sandius quotes manuscripts, versions, Fathers, and editors against the retention of the verse nineteen years before the more critical discussion of Father Simon, who is usually mentioned in this connexion. Socinus himself had marked the meagre evidence for the verse, and accepted a suggestion thrown out by Erasmus in controversy, that its presence in the Vulgate was due to interpolation by Jerome—an unjust aspersion on that scholar.

In 1690, Sir Isaac Newton sent to John Locke his *Historical account of two notable corruptions of the Scripture*, dealing with this text, and another, 1 Timothy iii. 16, 'Great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh,' as it is read in our Authorized Version. Locke, instead of taking the letters with him to Holland for publication, sent them to Le Clerc, a Divinity Professor amongst the Remonstrants, who undertook to translate and publish them. Newton, however, intervened and prevented their appearance. Le Clerc then deposited the manuscript in the library of the Remonstrants,

where it remained until a copy was published, wanting both beginning and end, in 1754. A complete edition was afterwards included in Newton's works by his editor, Bishop Horsley. The Heavenly Witnesses passage is now generally admitted to be an interpolation. In his discussion of the second text, Newton is at one with modern scholars in rejecting the word 'God,' but, whilst he preferred instead a neuter relative, most editors now read a masculine. It has been disputed whether it is just to count Newton a Unitarian. Thus, in his life of Newton in the *Dictionary of Biography* Mr. Glazebrook says, 'the views expressed in the two letters do not prove him to be an anti-trinitarian but are rather the strong expression of his hostility to the unfair manner in which, in his opinion, certain texts had been treated with a view to the support of the Trinitarian doctrine.' The evidence for Newton's Unitarianism is threefold. There is the investigation of these texts and his evident satisfaction with the conclusions which he reached. Moreover, Newton nowhere in his writings on religion or Scripture has once expressed his belief in the Trinity or in the deity of Jesus. Then we have,

finally, the witness of Mr. Hopton Haynes and the famous William Whiston, two men long associated with him; the former as his fellow servant in the Mint, and the latter as his deputy and successor in the Mathematical Chair at Cambridge.

It is curious that the anti-trinitarianism of Locke and Milton were also unknown until long after their death; in the case of one, not until the publication of his *Commonplace Book* in 1829; and in the case of the other, not until the discovery of his *Treatise on Christian Doctrine*, published in 1825.

In 1715, Thomas Emlyn, who suffered imprisonment for his Unitarian opinions, published *A full enquiry into the original authority of 1 John v. 7*. It consists of a review of the evidence for and against the passage offered by John Mill, the Father of English Textual Criticism, in his great posthumous edition of the New Testament, 1707. Emlyn has little difficulty in showing that Mill's conclusion cannot be drawn from his own premises, and subscribes to a remark of Le Clerc, 'If Dr. Mill hath not concluded here like a judicious critic, yet certainly he hath shown himself to be a candid and ingenuous man, in producing the arguments

which effectually overturn his own opinion.' A controversy into which Emlyn was drawn on his treatise had this result that the great Bentley, when appointed to the Chair of Theology at Cambridge, publicly announced his abandonment of the text.

Two Arian divines of the eighteenth century, Daniel Mace and Edward Harwood, have not always received the honour that is their due as pioneers in the science of Textual Criticism. Scrivener remarks, 'The anonymous text and version of William Mace, said to have been a Presbyterian minister (*The New Testament in Greek and English*, 2 vols., 1729), are alike unworthy of serious notice, and have long since been forgotten.' Harwood he does not even mention. Both are passed over in silence by Sir Frederick Kenyon and Dr. Conybeare. 'William' Mace in Scrivener's contemptuous notice is an error due to identification of the author with a Gresham lecturer of that name, who died early in 1767. Miller, the editor of the last edition of Scrivener's *Introduction*, apparently knew less of Mace than his chief, for he is content to quote in a foot-note a remark of Dr. Gregory that 'Mace's edition had no accents or soft breathing, he antici-

pales most of the changes accepted by some critics of the present day.<sup>1</sup> The second half of this statement is more accurate than the first. Mace employed the hard breathing and the circumflex accent, but nothing more. Most contemporaries condemned the text for exhibiting capricious changes and mutilations designed to help the Arian hypothesis. One, wiser than the rest, J. G. Wolff, treats with respect the readings of the anonymous Englishman. Much later, critics of the standing of Reuss, Gregory, and Abbott recognized the value of the work.

Mace included in his edition critical and historical notes, and dedicated it to Peter Lord King, the author of a critical history of the Apostles' Creed, whose mother was a cousin of John Locke. An index of matters contained in the New Testament reveals the Arianism of the author, and his translation contains many odd words, but the textual scholarship of Mace is indisputable. 'In many cases,' says Dr. Gregory (*Canon and Text of the New Testament*, 1907), 'he has the readings that the modern critics with their vastly enlarged critical apparatus have chosen. It was a most excellent work, and was, as a matter of course, violently denounced.'

Edward Harwood was a Lancashire man, who numbered among his friends Joseph Priestley and John Taylor. A semi-Arian in the early part of his life, he inclined more towards Socinianism towards its close. He published an *Introduction to the Study and Knowledge of the New Testament* (2 vols., 1767, 1771) which won for him the degree of D.D. from the University of Edinburgh, and in 1768, *A Literal Translation of the New Testament*. His boldness led to his ostracism. In the Preface to the Introduction he wrote, 'I remember when I published Proposals for my Liberal Translation, or Concise Paraphrase of the New Testament, in which I had advanced some free sentiments, that I was instantly shunned by the multitude like an infected person; and especially about the time that I wrote a little tract entitled *The Melancholy Doctrine of Predestination Exposed*, that for many months I could hardly walk the streets of Bristol without being insulted.'

His studies were more encouraged by Anglicans than by Dissenters. Continental scholars recognized the value of his work, and the first volume of the Introduction was translated into German. The Translation of

the New Testament met with little favour owing to its affected style. In 1776 he published his edition of the Greek Testament in two volumes. It was rather overshadowed by the simultaneous appearance of Griesbach's edition. Reuss, however, confessed its worth, and Dr. Gregory speaks of it in high terms. 'He knew nothing of the future *Codex Sinaiticus*, and there were no scholars to tell him how valuable the *Codex Vaticanus* was, and his keen discernment led him to turn to the *Codex Bezae* for the Gospels and for Acts, and to the *Codex Claromontanus* for the Pauline Epistles.' 'Reuss counted Harwood's new readings, and did not name as new the ones which Griesbach at about the same time had preferred, and yet he found two hundred and three readings, many of which are approved by modern critics. That was a very good showing for the year 1776.' 'If Scrivener and Burgon had appreciated and commended what Mace and Harwood did in those times that were so perilous for daring scientific work, their names would be better known, and would attain at least to such greatness as various other names which Scrivener counted fit for approving notice.'

*The New Testament in an Improved Version* (1808), of which Thomas Belsham was editor in chief, will be noticed hereafter. Its contribution to Textual Criticism, however, entitles it to mention here. Not only does the Preface present an admirable summary of the history of the Canon and Text, the Versions and editions of the New Testament, it also discusses briefly such questions as the value of patristic quotations, the use of critical conjecture, and the like.

A Unitarian minister, the Rev. Samuel Wood, contributed to *The Monthly Repository* of 1829 what has escaped the notice of most if not all writers on Textual Criticism. In *The Journal of a Tour on the Continent* he relates how he recently visited the Vatican Library. 'On requesting the priest, who was in attendance as Librarian, to show me the celebrated manuscript of the New Testament which is here preserved, he immediately sent one of his attendants to fetch it, and I had the very great pleasure of examining this most precious relic for the space of an hour.' He then proceeds to describe the contents of the manuscript, remarks on two readings (1 John v. 7 and Acts xx. 28), and gives a facsimile of the lettering. It is the

first published facsimile of any portion of this important manuscript. The narrative is also interesting for another reason. In 1809 Napoleon carried off this treasure from its home in the Vatican Library to Paris, where Hug first examined it and made known its age and value. After the fall of Napoleon it was brought back to Rome.

Historians of Textual Criticism generally observe at this point that the manuscript was altogether withdrawn from the use of foreign scholars. A little later, as critics like Tischendorf and Tregelles discovered, it was most jealously guarded, but the narrative of Samuel Wood disproves the common statement that its withdrawal dates from its return to Rome.

John Scott Porter (1801-1880), Irish Unitarian minister, was a pioneer in British Textual Criticism. In 1848 he published *Principles of Textual Criticism with their application to the Old and New Testaments*. 'I gratefully own,' he said, 'Griesbach and Hug as my masters in the art of criticism, and, in dissenting occasionally from their views, would wish to express my own with deference.' Howbeit, Porter's work was a real contribution to the subject, and its

value has been attested by Dr. Gregory and Abbott.

### (2) Translations and Paraphrases

The long series of Paraphrases and Translations of Scripture by Unitarian scholars begins with Locke's posthumous paraphrases of St. Paul, 1707. A recent historian of the Arian movement in England observes, 'Grotius, as a commentator was much esteemed in England, but, in the matter of method, Locke's influence was paramount. He and his followers treated the New Testament in such a way, that the halo of verbal inspiration began to disappear, and by the middle of the eighteenth century the Socinian method of dealing with the Scriptures was universally adopted.'

John Locke (1632-1704), 'the Socinus of his age,' as he has been called, prefaced his paraphrases with an essay entitled *An Essay for the understanding of St. Paul's epistles by consulting St. Paul himself*. The sting is in the tail. His purpose was, as he declared, to set aside the meanings men had read into Paul's words in order to harmonize his doctrine with their orthodoxy, and explain the Epistles by the light of history, archæology,

considerations of style, and the comparative study of other Scriptural writings; in other words, by the methods commonly employed to ascertain the sense of ancient books.

James Peirce (1674-1726), who played so prominent a part in the proceedings which led up to the Salters' Hall controversy, which gave Unitarians 'the charter of their liberties,' published in 1725 *Paraphrases and Notes of Paul's Epistles*, avowedly inspired by Locke. If not a Unitarian, as Whiston thought, he was heterodox on the subject of the Trinity, and declined, we are told, to subscribe to any proposition not in Scripture (not even that three and two make five).

Closely associated with Peirce in the Salters' Hall controversy was Joseph Hallett, whose son of the same name published in 1729 *A Free and Impartial Study of the Holy Scriptures recommended, being notes on some Peculiar Texts* (3 vols.).

Amongst many excellent contributions to Biblical scholarship is an essay proving that the Doxology to the Lord's Prayer is not as old as the Prayer itself. In his view of *Codex Bezae* Hallett anticipates Hort: 'The testimony of the Cambridge manuscript is the more to be regarded in this case, because its

general character is that 'tis full of interpolations. Its testimony then in favour of an addition cannot be of great weight, whereas its testimony against an addition cannot but be considerable.'

Another scholar who published *Paraphrases and Notes, Attempted in imitation of Mr. Locke's manner*, was Dr. George Benson (1699-1762), of whom Dr. Grosart says, 'He was undoubtedly a Socinian, a fact which explains the neglect that attended his works after his death.' He was Socinian in his view of the Atonement, but not otherwise, but a well-grounded suspicion of heresy doubtless led to the result mentioned by his biographer.

To the value of the Paraphrases mentioned, testimony is borne by Dr. Doddridge: 'Locke, Peirce, and Benson make up a complete commentary on the Epistles, and are indeed all in the number of the most ingenious commentators I have ever read.'

William Whiston (1667-1752), the celebrated divine, mathematician, and eccentric scholar, published in 1745 *The Primitive New Testament in English*. It is in four parts, the first containing the Gospels following *Codex Bezae*, with some help from the Vulgate where this manuscript is deficient ;

the second containing the Pauline Epistles according to the Clermont manuscript; and the remaining parts following *Codex Alexandrinus*. Like many other productions of Whiston, it is more curious than critical.

John Worsley (d. 1767), a Hereford schoolmaster of Arian opinions, made a translation of the New Testament, published posthumously by subscription, edited by his son Samuel and Matthew Bradshaw. The object of the translation is 'to bring it nearer to the original, either in the text or notes, than the common version, and to make the form of expression more suitable to our present language.' In both respects the translator met with a large measure of success.

John Taylor (1684-1761), the distinguished Hebraist and theologian, dedicated his *Paraphrase with Notes on the Epistle to the Romans, and Key to the Apostolic Writings* to the Society of Christians in the city of Norwich whom he served. The general attitude of liberal Christians towards Scripture at this time may be expressed in the words of Taylor's dedication. 'The Apostles were inspired and infallible writers, but we are none of us either inspired or infallible interpreters. None of us have dominion over the faith of our Fellow

Christians and Servants ; nor must anyone pretend to set up for Master in Christ's school, Christ alone is our Master and Lord ; and we ought not, as indeed, justly, we cannot, substitute any supposed infallible Guide in his place.' John Taylor was, for a time, a Tutor at the Warrington Academy, the forerunner of Manchester College.

Some time later, Gilbert Wakefield (1756-1801) was Tutor there in the company of Joseph Priestley and John Aikin. He published a translation of the First Epistle to the Thessalonians (1781), of St. Matthew's Gospel (1782), and, ten years later, of the entire New Testament. Wakefield was an admirable classical scholar, and a fearless advocate of unpopular theological and political opinions. In his translation of 1 Thessalonians he 'followed no particular edition of the Greek Testament, and, in various readings, and especially those of controverted texts, paid respect to the number and authority of the manuscripts, not altogether disregarding the scope and exigencies of the passage,' which, he concludes, 'in the case of trivial variations, and when the design of the writer is extremely clear, is a more satisfactory and decisive rule.'

Wakefield's first translation attracted little attention, though some anonymous writers took him to task severely for his freedom of thought. Three years before the translation of the New Testament came *A New Translation of those parts only of the New Testament which are wrongly translated in our Common Version*. Some 'exceptionable' passages he left untouched, where any alteration would expose him 'to an imputation of prejudiced attachment to a particular system of Divinity.' But in one or two such places, he 'yielded to the cloud of witnesses, and sacrificed the timidity of his scruples to the truth.' In the Fourth Gospel, he suggests one or two transpositions to improve the sense, a proceeding which commends itself to some modern scholars of different schools.

Wakefield's translations are interesting examples of brilliant, individual renderings, but here and there it is clear that the author was not less distinguished as a controversialist than as a philologist.

Thomas Belsham (1754-1829), Unitarian divine and one time Tutor, was the principal editor of *The Improved Version of the New Testament* (1808), and the author of an annotated translation of St. Paul's Epistles.

(1822). The Improved Version was based upon Archbishop Newcome's New Testament translation. The editors had desired to use Wakefield's as a basis, but this 'being found impracticable' they fixed their choice upon the one named. 'To this choice they were induced, not only by the merits of the translation, but principally because it followed the text of Griesbach's edition.' Where the editors differed from it, Newcome's translation was placed at the foot of the page. Though violently attacked and ridiculed by orthodox controversialists, the Improved Version merits great respect, and, in very many passages, its readings anticipate the judgment of the last Revisers of the New Testament.

Belsham's Exposition of St. Paul's Epistles was based upon pulpit utterances at Hackney. The translation takes account of the work of his predecessors; in his own words, it may be called 'an Eclectic, or Select version, rather than a new one.' He candidly confesses in the Paraphrase a Unitarian bias, and finds in others Trinitarian or Arian prepossessions. He adopts, as he tells us, the theory of interpretation first suggested by Locke, and amplified by John Taylor.

Another translator of Griesbach's text was John G. Palfrey (1800-1881), a Unitarian Professor at Harvard University. The translation was published anonymously in 1828. Palfrey aimed 'not at a revised translation, but to present the Common Version precisely as it would have been, if the translators could have had access to the standard text of Griesbach, instead of the adulterated text of Beza.'

In 1840 appeared the posthumous translation of the New Testament by Edgar Taylor (1793-1839), a great-grandson of John Taylor. It was announced on the title page as 'Revised from the Authorized Version with the aid of other translations and made conformable to the Greek text of J. J. Griesbach. By a Layman.' It was edited by William Hincks, Professor at Manchester College (1827-1839), and Editor of the *Inquirer* (1842-1849). In revising the Gospels, Taylor 'attends to the principle of rendering the same words in the same way, and thus of marking the adoption of some common narrative or the fact of mutual borrowing.' Elsewhere he has 'not been very anxious about preserving uniformity, by always rendering the same words alike; an object in itself

not always desirable.' We may compare the plan adopted by the Revisers of 1880, which carried the principle referred to throughout the New Testament, and has met with much criticism. In the Epistles, Taylor aimed chiefly at simplicity. Scrupulous to avoid anything like the interpretation of passages, in one or two places he indicates how the foundation of different interpretations arise out of the Greek. The rendering of a few terms is specially discussed in the Preface, whilst variant readings are given at the end of the book. The translation is one of considerable value, and may still be consulted with profit.

In the same year as Taylor, Samuel Sharpe (1799-1881), the Unitarian Egyptologist, revised the Authorized Version upon the basis of Griesbach's Greek text. Like Palfrey, he seldom changed the Common Version except when the Greek required it. Speeches, poetry, and quotations were distinguished by inverted commas, a smaller type, and italic. Sharpe laid claim to little originality, but his judgment was excellent.

The last four mentioned scholars, as we have remarked, used the Greek text of Griesbach. For this they were assailed by

the champions of orthodoxy and the old theory of verbal infallibility. Thus the Bishop of St. David's in his *Vindication of 1 John v. 7 from the objections of M. Griesbach*, says of Unitarians, 'They trust to their auxiliar, M. Griesbach. He is the rock of their infidelity, and the pope of their system. His single authority is sufficient for mutilating the received text of the New Testament.' The reason for the early Unitarian choice of Griesbach's text of the New Testament was simply that it was the best produced in their time, and, as Sharpe observed, the 'standard text to which most scholars appealed.' In the words of Sir Frederick Kenyon, 'The name of Griesbach ranks with the highest in the history of textual criticism.'

The discovery by Tischendorf of the *Codex Sinaiticus* (1858) in a basket of old parchment destined to feed the fires of the monastery on Mount Sinai helped to depose the text of Griesbach from its position of eminence. Tischendorf's eighth edition of the New Testament (1865) first took account of this discovery, and Unitarian scholars promptly translated it into English. Robert Ainslie (1803-1876), a Unitarian minister, straight-way broke away from the tradition of the

Griesbach text in his translation of 1869. The order of the books follows that of the *Codex Sinaiticus*, and the titles, paragraphs, numbering of chapters and verses are those of Tischendorf. The preface gives an account of the discovery of the famous manuscript and of previous English translations, and notes some of the principal changes in this version as compared with the Authorized. Many of the readings are extremely quaint. James iii. 6 says of the tongue, 'it setteth on fire the circle of our family,' and Ainslie observes, 'I believe it to be an accurate translation; it is common sense—it is a matter of fact, and of universal experience, and presents to us a truth, whose power is witnessed in daily life.' Again, in Titus ii. 3, the aged women are bidden be 'in behaviour as becometh holiness, not *devils*.' The translation enjoyed little vogue, but it is by no means worthless. 'As a Translator,' said Ainslie, 'I know nothing of Theology; I have no theological system to uphold.' It is a statement which many New Testament translators and commentators could not make and it cannot be disproved from his translation.

By a singular coincidence in the year 1869

also appeared the translation of the New Testament by George R. Noyes (1798-1868), Professor of Hebrew at Harvard University, from the last text of Tischendorf, so far as it had been published. This, partly posthumous, translation was edited by Ezra Abbot. The text is divided into paragraphs, not into verses, but the order of the books is the same as in the Common Version. Noyes's aim, in his own words, was 'to make a version more free from wholly or nearly obsolete words and phrases, more intelligible, more critically accurate, and on the whole even closer to the original than that of King James's translators, though less encumbered with mere Greek and Hebrew idioms.' The translation is exact and marked by sobriety and good taste.

The year after the publication of the two translations of Tischendorf's text by Unitarian scholars, action was taken by the Convocation of the Province of Canterbury which resulted in the Revised Version of the New Testament (1881).

George Vance Smith (1817-1902) was a member of the New Testament Revision Committee. He was Principal of Manchester New College, 1850-1853, and Carmarthen

College, 1876-1888. Together with Charles Wellbeloved and John Scott Porter, he took part in a translation of the Old Testament (1857-1862). His appointment as one of the New Testament Revision Committee raised a storm in certain orthodox quarters, and a resolution condemning it was passed by the Upper House of Convocation.

It may fairly be claimed that the revision of 1881 justified the attempts of the Unitarian translators to produce an English version nearer than that of 1611 to the original of the oldest manuscripts. It is further safe to prophesy that any future revision will more closely resemble many of those early individual efforts in their modern idiomatic speech than does the Revised Version of the New Testament.

(3) In the Higher Criticism of the New Testament, as in textual criticism, and in translation, Unitarian scholars have been among the first to point the way which modern scholarship has travelled.

Nathaniel Lardner (1684-1768) was a conservative in Biblical Criticism, but a rationalist in his treatment of such a problem as 'demoniacal possession.' And it was his letter on the 'Logos,' addressed to Viscount

Barrington, 1759, that converted Joseph Priestley from Arianism to Socinianism, though it was inspired not by Socinian writers, but by the study of the Scriptures and the early Fathers.

Joseph Priestley (1733-1804) was a 'way-maker' in biblical as in scientific studies. His opinions have been thus summarized by Mr. Gordon: "He rejected the doctrine of the Virgin Birth as without historical basis. He expressed the conviction that the place of Christ's nativity was Nazareth. He reached the position that our Lord was neither naturally impeccable nor intellectually infallible, had been under illusion respecting demoniacal possession, had misconceived the import of certain of the prophecies, and had sometimes recommended indisputable truths by halting arguments. As for the doctrine that Christ made the world, he saw no good proof of its apostolic origin; but, if otherwise, inasmuch as it was certainly no part of Christ's own Gospel, he did not think we should be "under any obligation to believe it, merely because it was an opinion held by an Apostle." Save in his tenacious adhesion to the literal verity, and evidential value, of the miraculous element in the

Ephesians, Colossians, and Hebrews, and those of James, John, and Jude. The New Testament published in accordance with his plan in 1807, two years after Evanson's death, is a mere torso. Evanson's views, though recently disinterred by Dr. Conybeare to serve the purposes of 'Rationalist' propaganda, are merely critical curiosities. As a pioneer in the comparative study of the Gospels, however, this fearless Unitarian investigator has secured a place for himself in the history of New Testament Criticism.

Timothy Kenrick (1759-1804), Unitarian divine and head of a Nonconformist academy, exhibits some traces of the influence of Evanson in his *Exposition of the Historical Writings of the New Testament*, published posthumously in 1807. He does not notice the birth stories of Matthew and Luke because, as his editor remarks, 'with the exception of the preface to Luke's Gospel, he did not look upon the chapters in question as the production of those Evangelists, but as fabrications by an unknown, though early, hand.' The Temptation is treated, in the manner of modern scholars as a symbolic narrative, and demoniacal possession described as an 'absurd notion' which the New Testament

writers and Christ did not combat. Miraculous elements in the Gospel are not denied, and, in general, the exegetical position is that of the older Unitarian school.

Thomas Belsham as a translator has been already mentioned. A sympathetic student of Astruc, Geddes, and Eichhorn, the founders of Old Testament Criticism, he drew attention in 1807 to the composite character of the Pentateuch. Fourteen years later, at the advanced age of seventy-one, he rejected the history of creation in the book of Genesis as incredible, and irreconcilable with science. 'If the history of the creation in the first chapter of Genesis be inspired, then all the discoveries of Kepler and Galileo, of Copernicus and Newton are false, and all their demonstrations must be erroneous, which is impossible.' Naturally, a man so open of mind and bold of speech, was not lagging behind the times in his attitude towards the New Testament. In a letter to a young friend, then studying in Germany, Belsham writes, 'I love German criticism as much as I dislike German theology, and would give a great deal to be able to read or to hear Eichhorn's lectures upon the Old and New Testaments.' Belsham doubted if

the four Gospels existed in their present form in the time of Justin Martyr (A.D. 150), since he does not quote them by name, and he is 'inclined to think that more than that number were in general circulation, and some, perhaps, e.g. the Gospel of the Hebrews, nearly as valuable as those which we at present possess.' Before our canonical Gospels were universally known and acknowledged, Belsham believes 'those who were in possession of early copies made additions of narratives which they believed to be authentic, which accounts for the interpolations which they now contain. And it seems that Matthew has been more corrupted than any of the rest; and Mark, perhaps, the least, because of its brevity.'

It is not too much to say that these conjectures of Belsham are nearer the conclusions of liberal scholars in England and Germany to-day than anything that was written in the early part of the nineteenth century.

Andrews Norton (1786-1853), Unitarian theologian, of Harvard University, amongst his works included two on *The Genuineness of the Gospels*, and, posthumously published, a translation of the Gospels. Though counted

now amongst conservative scholars, he was reckoned by his contemporaries a radical.

John Kenrick (1788-1877), classical scholar and historian, was first Tutor, then Professor at Manchester College. The articles contributed by him to various quarterlies include some on New Testament Criticism. In discussing the narratives of the Crucifixion (*Christian Reformer*, 1845), he exhibits a candour that was uncommon before the middle of the nineteenth century. 'To maintain the credibility of the New Testament,' he says, 'and find a firm basis for faith in its narratives, after we have abandoned the doctrine of verbal inspiration, we must be prepared to show that when treated according to the acknowledged rules of philology and historical criticism, they furnish a result of unquestionable truth. Nothing must be allowed to pass in the school of Theology, which would be rejected in the interpretation of other histories.' In his preference for Mark's Gospel as the earliest, Kenrick anticipated later investigation as in his recognition of the accretions which the fuller Gospels of Matthew and Luke acquired. John Kenrick, says a biographer, was beyond question the greatest scholar of his denomination.

A pupil of his was John James Tayler (1797-1869), Principal of Manchester College (1853-1869), who published in 1867 an *Attempt to ascertain the character of the Fourth Gospel*. 'For years,' he wrote, 'I clung to the opinion that the most spiritual of the Gospels must be of Apostolic origin.' Closer study of the evidence, with the help of German scholarship, led him to a contrary opinion. It was an unfounded 'apprehension of spiritual loss,' which kept him for a long time from 'accepting the plain dictate of unbiased scholarship.' Even so, Tayler was the first Englishman to plead a case for the non-Apostolic authorship of the Fourth Gospel. As early as 1694, indeed, Stephen Nye in one of the Unitarian Tracts laid stress on the fact that the early Unitarians, called the 'Alogi,' rejected the Johannine authorship, but there was nothing like a full statement of the case against the Apostolic authorship before John James Tayler. In the *Encyclopædia Biblica*, Schmiedel, in a note to his article on John, observes that the English literature is mainly 'conservative.' The critical view is represented by a short list of names in which John James Tayler comes first.

Ezra Abbot (1819-1884), Harvard Professor and member of the American Revision Committee of the English Bible, was an eminent Textual critic, and a stalwart Unitarian. Not infrequently his discussions of texts had reference to some doctrinal controversy. He rendered valuable assistance to Prof. Gregory in the preparation of the Prolegomena to the eighth edition of Tischendorf's Greek Testament. His essay on *The Authorship of the Fourth Gospel* is his great contribution to the Higher Criticism of the New Testament, and is still recognized as an authoritative statement on the conservative side of the discussion. Abbot also contributed largely to an enlarged American edition of Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*.

The contributions to Biblical scholarship of Dr. Martineau and Dr. Drummond, former Principals of Manchester College, and of Dr. Carpenter, the present Principal, belong to a survey of modern discussions of New Testament problems, and lie outside the scope of the present chapter.

In the fields of Textual Criticism, Translation, and Higher Criticism, from the sixteenth century onwards, Unitarians, using the term in its broad historical sense, have been

amongst the most distinguished pioneers. And the influence of Unitarian scholars, at least in the eighteenth century, was not confined to this country. J. D. Michaelis, one of the founders of German Biblical Criticism, owed much every way to his relations, personal and otherwise, with English scholars who have been named. In 1746 he published in Latin, Benson's Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistle of James, with his own foot-notes. The following year he published Peirce on Hebrews, and made an effort to do the same with Hallett's Notes. The German recognition of the work of Mace and Harwood has been already mentioned.

Of the Unitarian scholars, whose work has been noticed, most were teachers in academies or colleges. Consequently their influence, through the men whom they trained for the ministry, was both real and wide. It is the absence of doctrinal tests for teachers and ministers alike that has made possible the progress of Biblical Criticism which has been traced.

The result is that whilst there is still great difference of opinion amongst orthodox scholars and preachers as to the inspiration and authority of Scripture, and varying degrees

of hostility towards the adoption of the same critical methods in regard to the New Testament as have met with general favour in the case of the Old Testament—Unitarians are at one in their rational yet reverent use of Scripture, and welcome cordially all investigation of New Testament problems. They believe with John James Tayler that critical studies 'will ultimately procure a firmer standing-point, a clearer vision, and a directer spiritual action for the preachers of the pure and everlasting Gospel of Christ.'

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