

NEW POINTS OF VIEW IN TEXTUAL CRITICISM.

THE textual criticism of the New Testament is on one side almost irredeemably dull, a mere algebra of the combinations of the letters of the various alphabets, handled often by the help of *a priori* assumptions which are incapable of verification by experience ; and on the other side it is a study, which is as full of interest and of meaning as Church History itself, to which it properly forms a literary pendant, and without which it often cannot be understood. It has, too, whether from the algebraic or the historical point of view, its own peculiar uncertainties, its own verifications of the law that the unexpected always happens, as for instance when the discovery of some new document upsets the balance of the favourite combinations, or forces the student to recognise that there were important influences operating in the creation of textual variations which he had too hastily assumed could be neglected.

When we try to estimate the direction in which textual criticism has moved in recent times, and in which it is almost certain to move further, we run the risk of being thought reactionary, especially by the junior members of the craft, who are slow to believe that there is anything serious in the suggestion of revolt against the authority of great names on the one hand, and of favourite manuscripts on the other. This is not the place to discuss the question of the future of New Testament criticism over the widest area ; but it may be not altogether unprofitable, both to the expert and the non-expert, if we try to recapitulate certain recent results, our own or arrived at by others, which are likely to make a permanent mark upon the history of the science. Let me explain in detail what I mean, and illustrate the argument by chosen examples.

Well, in the first place, there is a revolt against an assumption of Dr. Hort, that there were no traces of dogmatic or heretical depravation in the text of the New Testament. In order to make the matter clear, I shall be obliged to reproduce some quotations which I first made in the Angus lectures for 1908, and which appeared in print in the published volume of those lectures, entitled *Side-Lights on New Testament Research*. For instance, in Dr. Hort's *Introduction*¹ we find the following astonishingly optimistic sentence: "It will not be out of place to add here a distinct expression of our belief that even among the numerous, unquestionably spurious readings of the New Testament there are no signs of deliberate falsification for dogmatic purposes"! Again: "Accusations of wilful tampering with the text are accordingly not infrequent in Christian antiquity; but with a single exception (that, namely, of Marcion's mutilation of the text of Luke), wherever they can be verified they prove to be groundless, being in fact hasty and unjust inferences from mere diversities of inherited text."

It is not necessary to make further extracts, though more might be made, from Hort's *Introduction*: the quotations show that Hort believed there were, historically, no heretical manipulations of the text except the famous case of Marcion's Gospel of Luke, and that even for the Marcionite movement, covering, perhaps, at one time, half the Church, and, for a long time, a large part of the known world, there were no signs of Marcionite corruption of the text among the numerous corrupt and rejected readings in the critical apparatus of the New Testament.

In challenging this statement, I selected two cases for study, the first being the Marcionite influence already referred to, which, according to Hort, had made no impression on the text; the second was the Ebionite movement, with

¹ pp. 282, 283.

its lower Christology, and consequent internal inconsistency with the Scriptures as commonly known to us in the Catholic tradition. I was able to show that the watchwords of Ebionite attack (or, if you please, Ebionite defence) could be found lying round in the New Testament text of the second century; and also that indisputably Marcionite glosses and corrections could be found in some of the greatest manuscripts and versions which have come down to us. At this point, I do not wish to recapitulate the argument for Ebionism in the New Testament: those who wish to examine the matter at length will find it treated briefly in an appendix to the first Angus lecture. As regards Marcion, I should like to point out the evidence on which I was working, because it appears to show that, at a point where Marcion had left his text of Luke uncorrected, his followers had been obliged to go further and add to the mutilations of their leader, which disposes at once of the complacent belief that no one did any harm to the text, as known in surviving documents and evidence, except Marcion.

The students of Church history will recall how Tertullian makes play with Marcion over the sudden appearance of Christ from heaven in one of the Galilean synagogues: and he quotes against Marcion these verses of his own gospel, which correspond to the Lucan statement that our Lord came to Nazareth (or, as Marcion says, to Capernaum) where He had been brought up, and, as His custom was, entered the synagogue on the Sabbath day. Whence, says Tertullian pointedly, could the custom have arisen to a person who had only just arrived? Clearly Tertullian's copy of Marcion's Gospel had enough of the Lucan statement in it to make Marcion look ridiculous. Even if we suppose that Marcion had erased the words about Christ's being brought up at Nazareth (possibly by an omission accompanied by a substitution of Capernaum for Nazareth), he had not erased

the custom of going to the synagogue on the Sabbath Day. A little reflection showed that Marcion's position was insecure from the very start, unless both of the statements referred to above were removed from the text. For if Christ was brought up at Nazareth (or Capernaum) He did not come into the synagogue from heaven; and if He attended the Sabbath service habitually He could not have appeared in the Synagogue suddenly and for the first time.

So I asked the question whether among the existing MSS. and versions of the New Testament there were any traces of an attempt to secure the Marcionite position or to turn the argument of Tertullian. The answer was forthcoming at once: the Codex Bezae and two Latin MSS. of the first rank had erased the word "His" before "custom," so that the Gospel merely said that it was the custom to go to the Synagogue on the Sabbath day, a very simple and ingenious bit of evasion; it was further pointed out that the Codex Bezae had omitted the statement about our Lord's being brought up at Nazareth, and merely says that He came into the Synagogue. Further, the great Codex Palatinus, known by the letter *e* among the Latin MSS. and belonging to the fifth century, has no reference to "the custom" or to "His custom" in coming to the Synagogue, but omits the words entirely. There can be no doubt as to the meaning of this: the codices in question are Marcionised. It would be appropriate to make a catalogue of all the MSS. involved in the corruptions indicated: but let it suffice to prove our point that the MSS. known as *D a c e* all stand convicted. Now what results from this? surely that, over and above the flat contradiction of Hort's untenable assumption about the freedom from heretical depravation of our existing texts, we have also established a new method in textual criticism, which may, perhaps, be crystallised into the following statement: that the history of the text must

be read side by side with the history of the Church, and in the light of the various parties into which the Church was divided.

I should not have made this brief recapitulation of a former argument, if it had not been necessary to break through the silence with which the followers of the dominant school in Textual Criticism are accustomed to meet what is, I hope, a reasonable contention. Even when the points are not actually ignored, they are treated quite insufficiently by those who affect to be our leaders in such matters. Is it nothing to have proved that a group of the greatest manuscripts of the Western text are tainted, and perhaps saturated, with Marcionism? Yet, as far as I know, the only admission made to my argument as yet, is in a few inadequate lines of Professor Souter, who speaks of the matter in his recently published work, *The Text and Canon of the New Testament*. Observe that what we have proved is something quite apart from the decision as to what Western texts are most closely related to the text of Marcion; that is something quite different, and does not necessarily attach any stigma to the MSS. that turn out to be nearest neighbours of Marcion. What we establish is that certain MSS. and versions are, in certain passages, deliberately Marcionised. I now pass on to another case of depravation, of greater importance textually, and of equal interest dogmatically.

Some years since I published in the *American Journal of Theology*¹ an article entitled *Did Judas really commit Suicide?* In this article it was maintained that the expression in the Acts of the Apostles, which describes Judas as *falling headlong* or *falling flat on his face* were the result of a substitution of the words *πρηνῆς γενόμενος* for an original *πρηνσθείς* (or some similar term), according to

¹ *Am. Jour. Th.*, July, 1900,

which primitive reading Judas *swelled up and burst asunder*, after the manner in which the villain of the piece makes his end in some forms of the story of Nadan, the nephew of the sage Aḥikar. There was confirmation for this mode of dying in the legends preserved from Papias of the end of the Traitor, who swelled to a huge size and was crushed by a passing carriage. The tendency of the investigation was to relegate the incident to the region of mythology, and perhaps to suggest that the whole Lucan account of the death of Judas may have been interpolated in the text of the first chapter of Acts.

Against this view Dr. Chase wrote an important paper in the *Journal of Theological Studies*¹ in which he maintained that there was no need to amend *πρηνῆς γενόμενος* into *πρησθείς*, for the word *πρηνῆς* did not necessarily mean the equivalent of the Latin *pronus*, but was itself a medical term derived from a root meaning "to be swollen or inflamed." The statement that Judas *swelled up and burst* should therefore be a part of the existing text of the Acts. and not of any supposed early form of the tradition. As a medical term, it does not necessarily convey the gross form of inflation and crepitation in which those who write of the horrible deaths of traitors and ungodly people may be assumed to delight.

Dr. Chase's argument was not final, as he did not produce an actual instance of the medical term which he postulated; but his case was strongly supported on linguistic grounds, and Professor Harnack was satisfied that a new word, or a new sense to an old word, had actually been added to the New Testament Lexicon.

This was not all; for it was natural to say that the expression *πρηνῆς γενόμενος*, if medical, must also be counted Lucan, in which case the supposition of interpolation

¹ *J.T.S.*, Jan. 1912.

must definitely be abandoned.¹ The confirmations of this view are abundant ; they consist, first of all, in the fondness of Luke for the forms *ἐγένετο*, *γενόμενος*, etc., and in the next place, in the fact that he commonly uses the form to describe medical symptoms : the best instance of the latter is in the case of Herod Agrippa I. who is described as *γενόμενος σκοληκόβρωτος*. The general use of *γίνομαι* in Luke can easily be verified from the concordance.

Now if Dr. Chase is right, as he seems to be in the main, in his contention that the language of Acts i, 18 is medical and Lucan, we clearly cannot stop the inquiry at this point. The next case to be examined is that of Luke xxii. 43-44, with its significant *γενόμενος ἐν ἀγωνίᾳ*, and the description of the symptoms of acute suffering which are to be paralleled in medical writers. If these verses are medical and Lucan, what becomes of the theory that they are an interpolation in the text of Luke ? If, however, they are an integral part of the text of Luke, how is it possible that they could have been excised ?

The way to answer these questions is not to begin by quoting manuscript authority for the omission, for, as Dr. Hort would say, knowledge of documents and, we may add, of Church History, should precede final judgment as to readings, but to do as we did in the previous case ; put the textual phenomenon side by side with the Church History of the second century, to which it is agreed that all these varieties belong. Are there, then, any people, or is there any school of thought, to whom the incident that we call the Agony in the Garden would be offensive ? A moment's reflection assures us that to the Docetists, at all events, the narration must have been not only unpalatable, but simply impossible, incredible. For if Christ only suffered

¹ I have explained this more at length in the *American Journal of Theology* for Jan. 1914.

on the Cross and elsewhere in appearance and not in reality, then there can be no Gethsemane. Great drops of blood do not consist with the phantasmal theory of the non-suffering, impassible Logos. Here, then, is the sufficient explanation of the removal of the passage from the early MSS.

But, it will be said, you have the MSS. B R T and ever so many more attesting the omission. Certainly: that is a fact of very great importance. The MSS. in question are all Alexandrian in origin, and Alexandria could not tolerate the Agony in the Garden; it did not agree with their Docetism or with their philosophy; and the attestation of the omission is clearly, overwhelmingly Alexandrian. But, it will be said, Codex B is neutral in its type of text. My good friend, whoever you are, let us leave off talking about Neutral texts: there are no Neutral texts in existence, not even one providentially preserved specimen. When you know Codex B a little better, you will remove its popular label.

So now we have a second school of depravators identified, and with the curious result in modern criticism that certain of our great New Testament scholars are found to be in the net of Docetism!

It will be interesting at this point, in view of the reasonable explanation at which we have arrived for the excision of the section on the Agony, to read Dr. Hort's judgment on the matter.¹

"Notwithstanding the random suggestions of rash or dishonest handling thrown out by controversialists there is no tangible evidence for the excision of a substantial portion of narrative for doctrinal reasons at any period of textual history. Moreover, except to heretical sects, which exercised no influence over the transmitted texts, the language of the *vv.* 43 f. would be no stumblingblock in the first and second centuries; and to a later time than this it would

¹ *Notes on Select Readings*, p. 64.

be impossible to refer the common original of the documents which attest omission."

The *petitio principii*, that depravation of the text for doctrinal reasons is not to be thought of, runs through the whole of this interesting judgment. We have found for Dr. Hort the heretics whose influence he dared not suspect, and shown that it was absolutely necessary for them to affect the transmitted texts in the way that the MSS. exhibit.

We come now to a much more difficult case to interpret, and one in which the landmarks are, at first, not to be recognised at all. What are we to say of the famous omission of our Lord's prayer for his murderers in Luke xxiii. 34? It is an omission attested by a very early and important group of MSS. (*vide infra*), but, if the method followed in the previous case be a just one, we ought not to begin by asking which among the MSS. omitted the passage, but who are those to whom the words were so offensive that they would wish to excise them. At the first glance, one would say without hesitation that these words can never have provoked the scalpel of any heretic, and that any school of Christian thought would feel itself to be spiritually and historically pauperised by their removal. We need not, therefore, wonder that Dr. Hort [expressed himself strongly on the point.

Introd., Notes on Select Readings, p. 68. "Its omission, on the hypothesis of its genuineness, cannot be explained in any reasonable manner. Wilful excision, on account of the love and forgiveness shown to the Lord's own murderers, is absolutely incredible: no various reading in the New Testament gives evidence of having arisen from any such cause."

The language is strong, and it contains the usual untenable assumption that the text of the New Testament has not been subject to depravation; but it is not much stronger than

might have been expected from any one who was mainly influenced by the strength of the testimony for the omission, and who supposed that he had exhausted the evidence on the subject. Are we so certain, however, that we have got to the bottom of the matter? To begin with, who are the murderers in question for whom Christ prayed? The answer of the early Church will be that they are Jews. Is it possible, then, that there could be any persons or any group of persons in the early Church so anti-Judaic as to wish that Christ had not prayed for the Jews, or so wilful and so wicked in their opposition to Judaism as to excise from the Gospel the record of divinest charity? Obviously, if we are to answer that query we must know more about the early Church; we must test it for anti-Judaism, which does not lie on the surface in the same way as Marcionism or Docetism. We do not find a great deal of hostility to Judaism in the New Testament. St. Paul, for example, is on the side of the Jews for the most part: we have an occasional outbreak, as when he charges the Jews (in his first epistle to the Thessalonians)¹ with having killed the Lord Jesus as well as their own prophets, and as being in opposition to everybody; and as when he affirms the wrath to have come upon them to the uttermost. This was a not unnatural judgment, in view of the hostility which the Jews had shown to him in the Macedonian campaign. Sometimes, too, he uses hard words of them, as in the epistle to the Philippians,² where he coins a word for them and calls them Concision (refusing to allow the term Circumcision to them, much as the Anglicans reserve for themselves the title of Catholics), and when he exhorts his followers to avoid them in the same way as they would avoid the most grossly immoral persons.

¹ 1 Thess. ii. 14.

² Phil. iii. 2.

In the Galatians,¹ there is again a strain of strong language, no doubt provoked by the intrusion of Judaisers into the churches which he had founded ; and here also he refuses communion with the Jews on the Scriptural ground that the bondwoman and her son are to be cast out ; clearly this means that there is to be no more Church fellowship with the Synagogue. It is the language of removal, of alienation, of renunciation : and it seems clear that St. Paul's passionate expressions of devotion to the salvation of his own race were quite consistent with, and almost necessarily involved, an opposite polarity and an ecclesiastical stringency.

Probably the same exclusion of Jews and Judaisers is implied in Hebrews xiii. 10, where those who serve the sanctuary are explained as not having gone outside the gate in the reproach of Christ.

It is when we come to the end of the first century that we find how strongly anti-Judaism has affected the Churches. The Gospel of John, for example, always speaks of the Jews as a remote people from the author, engaged in long-drawn-out hostility to Jesus. Even their feasts are not His feasts : the passover itself becomes a feast of the Jews : even the innocent customs as to washings before table are called the purifications of the Jews, and are quite outside the writer's own experience. Every one who reads the Fourth Gospel carefully notes these things, but not every one recognises what they imply as to an anti-Judaic polarisation of the Churches of Asia. The same story is told in other documents of the same time : the Gospel of Peter fastens the guilt of the Jews upon them by the remark that when Pilate protestingly washed his hands, none of the Jews shared in the ablution : the teaching of the Apostles shows the Church instituting new fast-days in order that they may not practise

¹ Gal. iv. 30.

a religious rite along with the Jews, who are now described as "the hypocrites." "Let not your fasts be with the hypocrites!" "Do not pray as the hypocrites." Here the renunciation of communion with the Jews (for it would be quite unnatural to interpret hypocrites here as Pharisees) is pronounced and decided, and we see incidentally that Catholic practice has arisen in an Anti-Judaic medium.

When we come to the Apology of Aristides, we have not merely a statement that the Jews are a deicide people, but the statement is a part of the creed itself: "He was pierced by the Jews," says the formula: and just as in the previous case, the Catholic formula must be held to have emerged from an anti-Judaic form, or at least to have passed through such a form. Before we come to the rule that "He was crucified under Pontius Pilate," we have the simpler announcement, in which the responsibility is more definitely assigned: so that with the anti-Judaic hostility expressed in broken fellowship and religious elongation we have the Symbol of the Faith itself in evidence for the temper which we have been studying. As to the temper itself, every student of Church History knows how it shows itself in the story of the part which the Jews took in the death of Polycarp; and it may fairly be assumed that, unless such a state of polarity existed, the extreme form of anti-Judaism which we find in the Marcionite movement would hardly have been possible. There is evidence, then, of a definite and central character, that the confession of some of the churches of the second century was anti-Judaic in type, and that their mode of life was a definite abrenunciation of Judaism.

Let us go a little further afield and see whether we can find further traces of the same sentiments; those authorities whom we have been quoting are all dated within certain narrow limits, but there are other documents more or less apocryphal and more difficult to date, which tell the same

tale. For instance, Mr. Hoskier draws my attention to the documents of the Church of Edessa. There seems to be little doubt that Christianity in Edessa started among the Jews, and that the early community was Judæo-Christian in character and ideas. It will be more remarkable if we find evidence of a rupture with the Jews in the Edessan Church, and of definite hostility to Judaism on the part of the Christians. In the *Doctrine of Addai* ¹ we find Addai saying that the Jews crucified Jesus almost in the language of the creed of Aristides: "for he is the God of the Jews who crucified Him, and the erring Gentiles also worship Him though they know it not." King Abgar ² wishes to go to Palestine and slay the Jews, *because they had crucified Christ*, and being afraid to do this on account of possible political complications, he writes to Tiberius and tells him "*the Jews . . . who dwell in the country of Palestine, assembled themselves together and crucified the Christ*," and he suggests to Tiberius to take the matter of the punishment of the Jews in hand. Tiberius replies that Pilate (whom Abgar does not mention) has been disgraced *for having done the will of the Jews*. As soon as Tiberius has a favourable opportunity, "he sent and slew some of the chiefs of the Jews, who were in Palestine. And Abgar the king greatly rejoiced when he heard it, that the Jews had received punishment, as was right!"

No doubt this is all legend and apocrypha, but it is none the less valuable evidence as to what the Edessa writer of the story thought on the subject. He, at least, was anti-Judaic through and through. In the same document, when Addai the Apostle makes his last discourse to the Edessans, he says, ³ "*Take heed, therefore, of those that crucified, that*

¹ Ed. Phillips, p. 28.

² *Ib.* p. 36.

³ *Ib.* p. 41.

ye be not friends to them, that ye be not responsible with them whose hands are full of the blood of Christ ” : which is about as definite an abrenuntiation, as if they had been told that the friendship of the world was enmity with God. The people accept the injunction and promise¹ that from the worship of “ things created which our fathers worshipped, we flee, and *with the Jews, the crucifiers, we will not mix ourselves* ” ; where the Jews are renounced along with the idols ! Is it not a natural suggestion that the Christian abrenuntiations of the devil, which we know in the early baptismal ceremonies, are modified from even earlier abrenuntiations of idolatry and Judaism ?

A similar state of feeling is betrayed in the Syriac *Didascalia Apostolorum*,² where there is a series of commandments given by Addai the Apostle, among which will be found the following excommunication of any Church teacher who fraternises with the Jews : “ The apostles have also decreed that he who loves the Jews, like Iscariot who loved them, or the heathen who worship the creatures instead of the Creator, shall not enter among them nor serve ; or if he be among them, they shall not allow him, but he shall be separated from them and shall not serve with them.”

Here again the Jews are placed with the pagans, and a decree of excommunication protects the church from any fellowship with them.

In the Syriac *Teaching of the Apostles* published by Cureton³ we have the story of an interview between the Apostles and the leaders of the Jews (Gamaliel, Nicodemus, etc.) ; the Apostles appeal to them as follows :

“ Do not by reason of the shame and fear of men forfeit

¹ *Ib.* p. 45.

² *Ed. Gibson*, p. 20.

³ *Syriac Documents relating to the Church of Edessa*, p. 31 (I am again indebted to Mr. Hoskier for the reference.)

your salvation before God, nor have the blood of Christ required of you : even as your fathers, who took it upon them : for *it is not acceptable before God*, that while ye are of one mind with His worshippers, *ye should go to associate with the murderers of His adorable Son.*"

This is as clear a demand for abrenunciation of Judaism as can be imagined : and those to whom the appeal is made take it in that sense, and reply : " We confess and believe in Christ who was crucified, and we confess that He is from everlasting the Son of God ; *and those who dared to crucify Him do we renounce.*"

Here the abrenunciation is associated with the fundamental Christian confession.

We get the same statement in a very early Syriac writer (this time not a Christian) named Mara Bar Serapion, in whose epistle we find¹ as follows :

" What advantage did the Athenians gain by the murder of Socrates the recompense of which they received in famine and pestilence ? Or the people of Samos by the burning of Pythagoras, because in one hour their country was entirely covered with sand ?² Or the Jews by the death of their wise king, because from that same time their kingdom was taken away ? "

In the same volume of Syriac texts from which we have just quoted will be found a portion of what purports to be the lost Apology of Melito of Sardis from the latter part of the second century.³ Here we find the doctrine that Israel is a deicide people very strongly expressed :

" This is he that was put to death. And where was he put to death ? In the midst of Jerusalem. By whom ? By Israel. . . . Thou gavest the command and he was

¹ Cureton, *Ancient Syriac Documents*, p. 73.

² So the Sybil: *ἔσται καὶ Σάμος ἄμμος.*

³ *Ibid.* p. 54.

crucified. . . . Thou slewest thy Lord and he was raised on a tree . . . God put to death ; the King of Israel slain by an Israelitish right hand . . . Thou smotest thy Lord.”

As it is not quite clear what Melito is the author of this document, I only use it to show how deeply rooted was the conviction in primitive Christianity that the Jewish race were under the ban for the death of Christ. To say that the same belief prevails all over the East to-day adds nothing, however, to the argument.

We have abundant evidence, then, of the wide diffusion of the belief that the Jews were the murderers of the Christ, and therefore excommunicate from every form of Christian fellowship. The difficulty is to determine in what time and in what places the taboo became operative, for it is within such bounds that we must assign the supposed removal of our Lord's prayer on the Cross from the Biblical text.

It may, perhaps, be said that we can carry back the challenge of a verdict for the murder of Christ to the very beginning of the Christian Church. There is plenty of it in the early chapters of the Acts of the Apostles, at all events, whose composition cannot be very late, and whose traditions can hardly diverge far from historical accuracy. It is not a very long step from the position where St. Peter says, with affectionate concern, that “Ye slew the Prince of Life,” to the position where Christians say, “With the Jews, the crucifiers, we will have no fellowship.” The supposed change in the text of Luke xxiii. 34 may, therefore, have been very early. St Luke might find nothing inconsistent in recording both the Prayer and the Fact : those who came after him emphasised the Fact and erased the Prayer.

We have suggested that the earliest Christian creed contained an anti-Judaic clause. Here is a further curious piece of evidence in the same direction. The famous passage in Josephus concerning Jesus Christ is, to-day, the matter

of renewed dispute as to its authenticity. Whatever may be the final judgement upon the point, one thing seems clear, that the Josephus statement is modelled on a Christian creed : and the creed which underlies it contains a reminiscence of what appears in Aristides' creed as " He was crucified by the Jews." For Josephus (or his pseudo) says :

" *On the accusation of our chief men* Pilate condemned him to the cross . . . he appeared to them (his followers) again alive on the third day."

The sentence concerning the crucifixion is a modification of a previous statement in two directions ; (1) it is not the Jews generally but only our leaders that were responsible ; (2) even in their case the burden begins to be shifted to the shoulders of Pilate.

Whatever be the truth as to the genuineness of the quotation in Josephus, the creed, whether of himself or the interpolator, is an early creed, and shows signs of anti-Judaism in the apologetic turn that the passage takes.

Well ! We have said enough to show what kind of sentiments prevailed in certain Oriental churches with regard to the Jews ; and they are clearly incompatible with the prayer of our Lord on the Cross. It is reasonable, then, to assume, as in the previous case, that the excision of the prayer is polemical. Will it still be said that such a position is impossible, in view of the variety of the documents attesting the omission ? Observe that the united testimony of B and D, flanked by Old Latin and Egyptian versions, is now made stronger by the accession of the Lewis Syriac and probably by the Diatessaron. I admit the strength of the combination ; and that it makes the omission very early : but let us remember that we do not yet know the meaning of these combinations, either chronologically or geographically. They have, in all probability, some historical and geographical meaning : but until we know more of what that meaning

is (as we were able to explain evidence in the Docetist omission of Luke xxii. 43-44 as being Alexandrian) it seems to me to be quite an open question whether the verse Luke xxiii. 34 is not to be allowed to stand. For we have at all events proved anti-Judaic sentiments, in the Asiatic churches, to be very widely prevalent: and if they be prevalent they may very well have operated upon the text at an early date, and so produced the peculiar omission. It will be remembered that the indirect evidence for our Lord's prayer on the Cross is very early, for it is hardly possible to disconnect it from the prayer of St. Stephen, recorded by Luke, and the prayer of St. James the Just, related by Hegesippus. So far as these parallels have any validity, they are at least as ancient as any combination of ancient MSS. can be. It must not, however, be assumed that the prayer on the Cross has its first form and origin in the Canonical Gospel, simply because there are suggestions of extreme antiquity about its tradition. It may, after all, have come into the text of Luke from an uncanonical source, such as the Gospel according to the Hebrews, as I suggested in the Angus lectures, in which case the textual evidence for its omission would have its face-value: all that I am urging at present is a plea for a suspense of judgment, on the ground of the extraordinary evidence which we have brought forward for the existence of an early and violent anti-Judaic polemic: for it is precisely such a polemic as is sufficient to explain the extrusion of the prayer from the text of Luke. If the new hypothesis be considered artificial or insufficiently supported, in the view of unprejudiced people, then we must fall back upon my earlier hypothesis as stated above. In any case, the general argument has been much strengthened for the explanation of striking textual variations by means of corresponding situations in the history of the Church, in which such variations would naturally

and perhaps inevitably arise. So we will leave the matter at present as an incomplete demonstration: the main points of the discourse may be tabulated as follows:—

Character of Error.

Ebionite substitutions of “Elect of God” for “Son of God,” or conversely.

Marcionite omissions of references to our Lord’s birth and bringing up at Nazareth.

Excision of the Agony in the Garden (which is, however, shown to be both medical and Lucan).

Excision of the Prayer on the Cross.

Ecclesiastical Situation in which error arises.

Such a situation as arises in debate between Jews and Christians, with Justin’s *Dialogue with Trypho* for a special case.

Such a situation as must have arisen in discussion between orthodox Christians and Marcionites, both in Marcion’s lifetime and later.

The reason is that the passage would be intolerable to the Docetists, with their phantom, non-suffering Christ.

The excision is suggested to have been provoked by anti-Judaic polemic, arising very early in the history of the Church, and involving an actual abrenunciation of all fellowship with the Jews.

Of these four cases of depravation, the last appears to be chronologically the earliest, but they may all four, probably, be referred to the first half of the second century.

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