

We are looking forward eagerly to Mr Lonsdale Ragg's edition of the Italian version of the *Gospel of Barnabas* which should clear up many points.

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## AMBROSIASTER AND DAMASUS.

### 1. THE DEACON WITH THE PAGAN NAME. 2. RECTOR. 3. PAGANUS.

CIRCUMSTANCES having hindered for the moment the completion of a review of Mr Souter's *Study of Ambrosiaster* which I had hoped to contribute to the present number of the JOURNAL, I take the opportunity of publishing separately some fragmentary notes tending to shew how the writings of Ambrosiaster—the Commentaries on St Paul and the *Quaestiones Veteris et Novi Testamenti*—and of his contemporary pope Damasus mutually explain and illustrate one another.

#### 1. THE DEACON WITH THE PAGAN NAME.

Among the 3,000 corrections which Mr Souter claims to have made from the MSS in the text of the *Quaestiones*, few are more curious than the new form which is now taken by the reference to the name of a Roman deacon in the celebrated *Quaestio* CI, *De iactantia Romanorum Levitarum*. Where all the editions have printed 'quidam igitur qui nomen habet Falcidii', the true reading, as recovered by him from the older MSS, is 'quidam igitur qui nomen habet falsi dei'. But who was this deacon who bore the name of a pagan god? Mr Souter could only suggest (*op. cit.* p. 170) a certain Concordius mentioned in the *Liber Pontificalis*. Yet that name would, I think, have suggested associations with the Christian virtue of concord rather than with the pagan divinity Concordia: and a passage in the epigrams of Damasus supplies a more satisfactory answer to the question. On the new font into which that active and energetic pope drew off the waters of the Vatican hill were inscribed some verses recording his proceedings and naming his clerk of the works, 'the faithful levite Mercury'; see no. iv in Ihm's edition of the *Damasi Epigrammata, Anthologiae Latinae supplementum*, in the Teubner series, A. D. 1895—

cingebant latices montem teneroque meatu  
 corpora multorum cineres atque ossa rigabant.  
 non tulit hoc Damasus, communi lege sepultos  
 post requiem tristes iterum persolvere poenas.  
 protinus adgressus magnum superare laborem  
 aggeris innensi deiecit culmina montis,

intima sollicite scrutatus uiscera terrae  
 siccauit totum quidquid madefecerat humor,  
 inuenit fontem praebet qui dona salutis.  
 haec curauit Mercurius leuita fidelis.

## 2. RECTOR.

The mutual service which results from the combined study of Ambrosiaster and Damasus is not confined to the solution of this little historical problem: it extends to their use of language and especially of technical Christian language. I am not sure whether the common preference of 'levita' over 'diaconus' might not be adduced as an instance<sup>1</sup>: but my immediate purpose is to call attention to the joint occurrence in both of a word that never became as popular in Christian usage as 'levita', but seems to have been fashionable in Roman church circles of that particular generation—I mean 'rector'. In the general sense this is a word not unfamiliar in ecclesiastical Latin: but in the specific sense of 'ruler of the church', 'bishop', I do not at present know (nor can Mr Souter, whom I have consulted on this point, add any other parallels) of any author, with one exception, to bring into comparison with Ambrosiaster, and that one exception is Damasus. In a well-known passage of the Commentaries on St Paul (*in 1 Tim.* iii 15) Ambrosiaster speaks of 'ecclesia . . . cuius hodie rector est Damasus': and even if these words be, as has sometimes been thought, an interpolation—a view to which, however, the MSS give no support—yet an earlier passage in the same work (*in Eph.* iv 11, 12) approaches almost as nearly to the conception of 'rector' as the chief officer of the Christian hierarchy, 'adubi autem omnia loca circumplexa est ecclesia, conuenticula constituta sunt et rectores et cetera officia ecclesiis sunt ordinata.'<sup>2</sup> Now Damasus's use of the same word, whether in reference to himself or to his predecessors in the Roman see, is so exclusive that the latest editor marks one of the epigrammata as doubtful partly on the ground of the phrase 'antistes Christi . . . Damasus': compare the following instances—

Epig. vii (ed. Ihm, p. 10) ll. 6, 7:—

presbyter his Verus Damaso rectore iubente  
 composuit tumulum sanctorum limina adornans.

<sup>1</sup> I now learn, however, from Mr Souter that, outside *Quaestio* ci, Ambrosiaster always uses 'diaconus' and not 'levita'.

<sup>2</sup> The following further instances are collected by Dr Joseph Langen of Bonn (p. 23 of his dissertation 'de Commentariorum in Epistulas Paulinas qui Ambrosii et Quaestionum biblicarum quae Augustini nomine feruntur scriptore': I owe the reference to Mr Souter), *in Rom.* xvi 22, *in 1 Cor.* i 2, vi 5, xi 20; *Quaest.* cii and (in the earlier edition of the *Quaestiones*) N. T. LXI.

- Epig. XIV (p. 21) ll. 1, 2 :—  
 par meritum, quicumque legis, cognosce duorum,  
 quis Damasus rector titulos post praemia reddit.
- Epig. XLII (p. 46) l. 3 :—  
 ornauit Damasus tumulum, cognoscite, rector.
- Epig. XLIV (p. 47) ll. 1-3 :—  
 martyrīs hic Mauri tumulus pia membra retentat,  
 quem Damasus rector longo post tempore plebis  
 ornauit supplex cultu meliore decorans.
- Epig. XIII (p. 20) ll. 1, 2 (apparently of pope Xystus II) :—  
 tempore quo gladius secuit pia uiscera matris  
 hic positus rector caelestia iussa docebam.
- Epig. XXIII (p. 29) ll. 3-5 (of Felicissimus and Agapetus, deacons  
 to the same pope) :—  
 hi crucis inuictae comites pariterque ministri  
 rectoris sancti meritumque fidemque secuti  
 aetherias petiere domos regnaque piorum.
- Epig. XLVIII (p. 51) ll. 1, 2 (of pope Marcellus) :—  
 ueridicus rector lapsos quia crimina flere  
 praedixit, miseris fuit omnibus hostis amarus.
- Epig. XVIII (p. 25) ll. 7-9 (of pope Eusebius) :—  
 integra cum rector seruaret foedera pacis,  
 pertulit exilium domino sub iudice laetus ;  
 litore Trinacrio mundum uitamque reliquit.

These parallels enable us to appreciate better the remarkable title found in a single MS of the Tome of Damasus—i.e. the anathemas against Arians, Macedonians, and Apollinarians, appended to the Nicene Creed by a Roman council probably in A.D. 380—'Fides conscripta a rectoribus episcopis cccxviii.' The difficulties of reconstructing the original text of the Tome are considerable: after much study of it I have been led to pin my faith almost entirely on a group of four Gallic authorities of the eighth and early ninth centuries, **F** (consensus of two sister MSS, **F** = Paris lat. 1451, and *f* = Vatic. Reg. 1127), **R** (Berlin Phillipps lat. 84), **Pi** (Paris lat. 1564), and **Col.** (Cologne bibl. capit. xxxiii), and of these **F** has the title 'Incipit fides apud Niceam conscripta(m) ab episcopis credentibus cccxviii', **R** 'Incipit expositio fidei a trecentis decem et octo episcopis in Nicaena synodo facta', **Pi** has nothing, and **Col.** has the title quoted above 'Fides conscripta a rectoribus episcopis cccxviii'. I should not like to assert that 'a rectoribus episcopis' is original: it is perhaps more likely that 'a recte credentibus episcopis' is right, which is the title prefixed to a similar form of the Nicene Creed, found in connexion with the treatise *de Fide orthodoxa*

*contra Arrianos* now generally attributed to Gregory of Elvira: but in any case the 'rectores episcopi' of the Cologne MS seems to take us back to the near neighbourhood of Damasus and the phraseology that prevailed in his days.

### 3. PAGANUS.

Special attention has been devoted of late to the history and meaning of the word 'paganus'. In its modern sense it emerges, like 'rector', rather suddenly in the usage of the Roman church during the latter half of the fourth century. It is found in the *de δμουνσίῳ recipiendo* of the converted grammarian M. Victorinus Afer: a law of Valentinian has it in the year 370 (cod. Theod. XVI ii 18): but Ambrosiaster is the first author to employ it freely—Mr Souter supplies me with the following references: *in Rom.* i 23, iii 19, *in I Cor.* v 7, viii 5, x 13, xiv 24, 25, *in Gal.* iv 9, *in Eph.* v 8, *in Phil.* i 18-21, *in Col.* ii 18, 19; *Quaest.* LXXXI, LXXXII, CXIV (of which the title is *CONTRA PAGANOS*), CXV.<sup>1</sup> And this use of 'paganus' is a fresh point of contact between Ambrosiaster and Damasus, for the word occurs in two of Damasus's councils. In the letter sent by a Roman council—about the end of 378, according to Coustant—to the emperors Gratian and Valentinian II we read (Coustant 526 § 7):—

'Per Africam rursus sacrilegos rebaptizatores nutu Dei praecepistis expelli: sed ab expulsis Claudianus est ordinatus et ad perturbandam urbem Romam quasi episcopus destinatus. qui contra scripturae praecepta diuinae, contra iura euangelica, uacuos omnes mysteriorum atque, ut eius uerbum exprimamus, paganos fuisse uel praeteriti temporis dicat episcopus uel praesentis'.

And in the Tome of 380, referred to in the previous section of this Note, the same group of MSS, of which I there spoke as alone preserving in many cases the original language of the document, read on two occasions 'pagani'—'in perfidia iudaeorum et paganorum inueniuntur', 'quomodo heretici aut iudaei aut etiam pagani dementes'—where all the others which I have collated, some twenty in number, substitute 'gentiles': and I do not doubt that 'pagani' is right. But it is clear both from the alteration in this case into 'gentiles', and from the special manner in which the council of 378 introduce the word, that it was still an unfamiliar and unusual term before the end of the fourth century.

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<sup>1</sup> Even the abstract noun 'paganitas' appears in the same writer; Mr Souter cites *in Eph.* ii 14 and *Quaest.* cxiv.