

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

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

'LEGEM et Prophetas cum Evangelicis et Apostolicis litteris miscet' is Tertullian's summary definition of the Church's procedure in regard to her sacred books, whether of the Jewish or of the Christian covenant<sup>1</sup>: and we have noted in the course of the preceding articles<sup>2</sup> that this bipartite arrangement of the contents of both Old and New Testament is very characteristic of the earliest period, and is indeed apparently earlier than any juxtaposition of the two Testaments as two single wholes. The last article was devoted to the consideration of the 'Evangelicae litterae', the four-fold Gospel: we have now to ask what is meant by the other class of writings in the Christian Canon, the 'litterae Apostolicae'. We might naturally have supposed that, as the Apostles correspond to the Prophets, so the 'Apostolic literature' would be the letters of several Apostles, or at least of more than one—something, in fact, like the whole body of Catholic and Pauline epistles as we have it now. But in the original tradition of the Christian Church, though the 'epistles' are plural, the 'Apostle' is singular: the one Apostle is related to the several letters much as the one Gospel to the several Gospels. And that one Apostle is of course St Paul.

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

<sup>1</sup> Tertullian, *praescriptio adv. haereticos* § 36.

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

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Quoted already in the last article, p. 162 n. 2.

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

codex (Paris gr. 107), and H<sub>2</sub>, the fragments of a Mount Athos MS that reproduces the fourth century edition of Evagrius Ponticus: of the Catholic Epistles with Gospels and Acts we have the Graeco-Latin codex Bezae, and of the Catholic Epistles with Acts and Apocalypse the Fleury fragments of the Old Latin known as *h* (Paris lat. 6400 G).

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

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

been absent from Marcion's text, we shall find that their absence can be explained by the same dominant motive that prevailed in his treatment of St Luke. The Galatian and Roman epistles are, beyond the rest, those in which St Paul unfolds his great argument against the ultimate validity of the Jewish Law; and so far they would naturally stand high in Marcion's favour. In both, however, the Apostle repeatedly draws lessons from the character and history of the patriarchs, and especially of Abraham the father of the faithful<sup>1</sup>: but to recognize in the personages of the Old Testament the servants of the good God, or types of His Son, or examples for Christian people, was just what Marcion on his principles could not do. Carefully therefore and systematically 'heretical industry erased all mention of Abraham'.<sup>2</sup>

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

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

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

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

<sup>3</sup> Burkitt *Gospel History and its Transmission* pp. 316-319.

<sup>4</sup> *ib.* p. 323.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>1</sup> Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Colossians, Titus, 1 and 2 Timothy, Philemon.

<sup>2</sup> Corinthians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Galatians, Thessalonians, Romans.

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

to the Laodiceans is nothing else than our Epistle to the Ephesians.<sup>1</sup> Even in the *minutiae* of titles, says Tertullian scornfully, Marcion was 'diligentissimus explorator', and changed the 'ad Ephesios' of the Church into an 'ad Laodiceanos' of his own—as though it mattered a bit to whom it was written, seeing that the Apostle wrote to all what he wrote to any.<sup>2</sup> But if Tertullian was not interested in these details, we are: the more so, when we find that, though Marcion remains the only witness for the form of the title *Πρὸς Λαοδικέας*, he is supported, in the absence of any express mention of Ephesus in the first verse of the epistle, by Origen, by the 'ancient copies' known to Basil, by B, by the first hand of *ℵ*, and by the second corrector of the cursive MS known as Paul 67.<sup>3</sup> All these read, not *τοῖς ἁγίοις τοῖς οὖσι* ἐν Ἐφέσῳ καὶ πιστοῖς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, but *τοῖς ἁγίοις τοῖς οὖσι καὶ πιστοῖς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ*—'to the saints that are also faithful in Christ Jesus', or else, as Origen explains it *ad loc.*, 'to the living saints and believers in Christ Jesus'. With the disappearance of ἐν Ἐφέσῳ in *ι 1*, all trace of the destination of the epistle is lost, other than the heading *Πρὸς Ἐφεσίου*: but as this heading is retained by all our witnesses apart from Marcion, it is hardly likely that Marcion really found either ἐν Λαοδικίᾳ in the text or *Πρὸς Λαοδικέας* in the title. It is more probable that, with the authorities cited above, he found no place-name at all in *ι 1*, that he therefore rejected the *Πρὸς Ἐφεσίου* as a heading not justified by the text of the letter which followed, and by a brilliant combination with Col. iv 16 identified the now anonymous letter which so closely resembled the letter to Colossae with the letter which the Colossian Church was exhorted to borrow from Laodicea in exchange for its own.

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

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

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

<sup>3</sup> It was in Westcott and Hort's edition that attention was first called to the importance of this late witness, 67\*\*. The MS itself (Act. 66 = Paul 67 = Apoc. 34) is Vienna gr. theol. 302 saec. xi.

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

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

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

two such redoubtable, albeit friendly, antagonists as Lightfoot and Hort.<sup>1</sup>

Tertullian, when he arrived at this epistle—it stood fourth, we remember, in Marcion's 'Apostolicon'—professes that he is tired of proving the same thing over and over again, and, in fact, devotes to the Romans less space than he had done to the much shorter epistle to the Galatians. We cannot, therefore, reconstruct the whole of Marcion's text, even in outline, by means of his description: but we do learn (*a*) in general, that Marcion's excisions were more serious in this epistle than in the rest<sup>2</sup>; (*b*) in particular, that the phrase 'tribunal of Christ' (Rom. xiv 10) occurred 'in clausula' 'towards the close'. Origen is more explicit than Tertullian about Marcion's omissions at this point. In his *Commentary on Romans*, as rendered into Latin by Rufinus, he tells us not only that Marcion cut out the final doxology of chapter xvi, but also that from xiv 23 onwards 'usque ad finem cuncta dissecut' <sup>3</sup>—which is naturally taken to mean, in connexion with Tertullian's phrase 'in clausula', that the whole of chapters xv and xvi were absent from the Marcionite recension. But there is no doubt that so serious an excision (it extends to sixty verses) would require some explanation: for even if individual phrases, like xv 4, 'all that was written aforetime was written for our instruction', or xv 8, Christ 'a minister of the circumcision', might be abhorrent to Marcion, these could have been easily enough pruned away from the text on his ordinary method without any necessity for recourse to heroic measures.

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

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

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

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

<sup>3</sup> *Comm. in Rom.* x 43 (Delarue iv 687).

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

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

(c) Clear though slight traces of a reading in i 7 according to which the words ἐν Ῥώμῃ were omitted: the direct evidence is that of a single MS only, the Graeco-Latin G<sub>2</sub>, but it is reinforced by the indirect evidence of a marginal note in a Bodleian cursive of the eleventh century,<sup>1</sup> τὸ ἐν Ῥώμῃ οὔτε ἐν τῇ ἐξηγήσει οὔτε ἐν τῷ ῥητῷ μνημονεύει, 'the phrase "in Rome" he mentions neither in the exposition nor in the text'—where the suppressed nominative appeared to Lightfoot to refer to some commentator, τὸ ῥητόν being the *lemma* or passage of Scripture text prefixed to each section of a commentary, ἡ ἐξήγησις the commentary itself.

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

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

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

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

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

#### (C) THE ACTS.

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

#### (D) THE APOCALYPSE.

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

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

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

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

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

But the problem was in fact worked out, as we should expect, as much over concrete cases as over abstract principles. Three books came into practical consideration as candidates for admission under this head to the Christian Canon, the Apocalypse of John, the Apocalypse of Peter, and the *Shepherd* of Hermas. All three find a place in the list of canonical books appended to the Graeco-Latin codex Claromontanus of St Paul (D<sub>2</sub>): and as this list is accompanied by a 'stichometry' or estimate of the number of 'verses' contained in each work,<sup>1</sup> we learn that the Apocalypse of Peter was a short book of no more than 270 stichi, and thus the piece of it recovered with the piece of the Gospel of Peter must be no inconsiderable fraction, perhaps as much as half, of the whole work. If what is still lost was not more edifying than what has been found, we need not greatly regret its imperfection. The *Shepherd* of the Roman Christian Hermas is a sort of allegory in three parts, Visions, Commandments, and Parables, under cover of which the writer conveys to his fellow Christians at Rome the exhortation to repent and return to their first works, and the promise, for this once, of complete remission of all, even post-baptismal, sins. It is ignorant and prolix, its theology is slipshod, but for all that there is something in its childlike naïve sincerity and in its moral appeal which recalls the atmosphere of the Galilean Ministry, and which no doubt contributed, together with its claim to be a Divine revelation, to give it the popularity and importance which it enjoyed in early times. It is not only cited as Scripture by Irenaeus, and apparently by Clement of Alexandria and Origen, but it is part—incomplete only because of the incompleteness of the MS as we have it—of the Bible as contained in Codex N.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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