

## [1] PREFACE.

The present effort towards the elucidation of the Pauline problem is due to the initiation of Mr. F. F. Arbuthnot, M.R.A.S., editor of the Oriental Translations (New Series), and the encouragement of one or two other friends. I desire specially to thank Mr. Arbuthnot for the generous recognition of my labours in the cause of literary and historical science which I find in his writings.

It will be understood, of course, that I have merely attempted to write, within moderate limits, a suggestive treatise ; for to exhaust the Pauline question would be to exhaust the question of the origin and development of Christian Letters as a whole.

Let me add one word. I have applied the simplest analytic tests in the study of literary material ; but it leads to results that are, I freely admit, astounding to myself, no less than to the learned world in general. I am not surprised that the imputation of madness should be made against me by hasty thinkers ; but I trust that calm and thoughtful readers will accept what I have written as a credible, though always corrigible, statement of literary facts.

E. J.

# [3] THE PAULINE EPISTLES

RE-STUDIED AND EXPLAINED

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# [9] THE PAULINE EPISTLES.

## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTION.

I AM writing this brochure on the Pauline Epistles at the suggestion of some friends, who are interested in my researches, and who desire to see the unusual opinions which I have set forth either confirmed or confuted. They have, I believe, given a certain measure of assent to the general principles of historical investigation which I have laid down ; but they are of opinion that I should descend into further details, and show, if I am able to do so, that what I have alleged concerning the whole system of Church literature is true of some particular part of it—say the Pauline Epistles.

These are celebrated compositions. They have long been supposed to be the productions of one of the most remarkable men who took part in the foundation of the Christian Church ; and this some 1,800 years ago. I, on the contrary, assert that these long-inherited notions of our education are entirely illusory and false. I maintain that the Pauline Legend and Epistles date from the Revival of Letters in Europe; that the Epistles were in all probability not the composition of one man, but the product of several pens, and that their contents should be used to throw light on that remarkable period when the great Church organisation was breaking asunder, in consequence of internal dissensions.

The unpleasant part of my task is this: I must contradict incessantly the statements originally made by the publishers [10] of these writings, which were received without effective contradiction, and are still held, almost by the whole world. It is impossible to approach the probable truth until this contradiction shall have been decisively made ; and I can hardly hope to carry any readers with me, save those who have been, like myself, harassed by the obscurity which envelopes our past, and who desire to set their minds at rest upon one of the gravest questions that can occupy the minds of serious thinkers.

The question of the Pauline Epistles is a large question. For, although the documents themselves are of no great bulk, they allude to, and they rest upon, a mass of other documents of the Jewish and the Christian Churches.

Everyone is aware that the legend of Paul's life and Epistles could not have been written until the collection of Biblical books in use among the Jews was known. Everyone is aware that there are allusions in the legend to Rabbindom and its writings. If, therefore, to speak in general terms, the Rabbinical writings were not known until the beginning of what I have called the Age of Publication (c. 1500 A.D.), so nothing of the Pauline writings could have been known till that same epoch.

Again, the Pauline writings are essentially part of the original scheme of the New Testament. The general facts about the New Testament, therefore, determine the

general facts about the Pauline writings. And, once more, we hear of the " New Testament " at the same time that we hear of the Old Testament. Paul, consequently, bears, as it were, on his shoulders, the whole system of writings that have emanated from the Jewish and the Christian Churches.

Thus we are necessarily thrown back upon those general facts with which I have endeavoured to deal in other writings. I shall be unable in this place to adduce the whole mass of evidence, both negative and positive, by which I am convinced that our ancestors were in the mere twilight of literary knowledge about 400 years ago. I will invite my readers to believe that I have made a most anxious investigation of this subject, and am quite certain that the beginning of Biblical knowledge cannot really be traced to an earlier epoch. And, even at the epoch to which I refer, the reading and writing class must have been most limited indeed. It is a very dim and far-off time.

[11] At the outset I am anxious to fix in the minds of my readers the conviction that we are profoundly ignorant of times comparatively near to our own, much more therefore of times more remote. It must be clear, it seems to me, to every truly thoughtful person who turns the subject over in his mind with due attention, that it is through the tradition of our immediate ancestors we can alone know aught of what was "in their time, and in the old time before them." We cannot, as it were, bound over their heads, or reach beyond them after a knowledge that was denied to their curiosity.

The present age is one of general and growing illumination, compared with the last century. By the aid of Mr. Lecky's pages you may realise how gross was the general ignorance. Henry Fielding, in the critical chapters of his great novel, teaches you to regard him as the first genuine naturalist or realist historian of humanity that had yet appeared, and pours contempt repeatedly upon history and chroniclers in the monkish sense of the words. The seventeenth century is much darker than the eighteenth, and the sixteenth than the seventeenth. But it should be pointed out that what characterises the sixteenth-century historical literature is an enormous propensity to lying in all its forms of monstrous inventions and exaggerations on the one hand, of suppression and concealment of the truth on the other.

I shall point out in these pages that it is from books bearing date after 1500 we may, and must, be convinced that our dreams of " primitive " and " mediaeval " Christianity are vain ; that the beginnings of literary publication, and of the Christian Church and its letters, are really one problem to those who understand the elementary facts of the case.

Let me now call attention to some salient points in the evidence which tends to prove that, whatever may have been the previous fate of books in ages more remote, very few could have been extant in any part of Europe 400 years ago.

Let me render from the Latin a passage from a writer who says that he was studying and writing in London during the reign of King Henry VIII. Of the early Tudor period he expressly says:

" In those times Perfect Letters, both Latin and Greek, [12] shut out from Italy by nefarious wars, exterminated, expelled, poured over the Alps, through all Germany, Gaul, England, and Scotland. The Germans first introduced them into their towns, and, having been the most illiterate of all in former times, are now the most learned. To the French, English, Scotch, not to speak of others, the same boon was imparted

by the Almighty. For letters alone make our good deeds eternal, and preserve the memory of our name. Therefore many great men and most noble ladies everywhere began to assist the studies of good arts and disciplines. That these might the more earnestly be cultivated among the English, Margaret, Henry's mother, a most holy woman, at the exhortation of John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, a man of the highest learning, grace, and integrity, built at Cambridge, in a noble and celebrated place, two splendid houses, in which she instituted two colleges of disciples, and dedicated one to Christ Saviour, the other to St. John Evangelist ; and she gave large funds for their living. Also, in that academy, John Alcock, Bishop of Ely, a father of illustrious piety and virtue, was a little while before founder of a college which he consecrated to Jesus ; that, under his leadership, they who gave themselves to the culture of good disciplines might not err, but might pursue the right path, and receive the true reward of. glory and praise which he promised to well-doers. About the same time, also, William Smyth, Bishop of Lincoln, led by the example of Margaret, founded a college of youths at Oxon, who should be devoted to good disciplines, and exercises in letters, in the hall commonly called Brasyn Nose, so named because there a brazen figure, with immane face, stands before the doors. Also Richard, Bishop of Winton, did a similar work at Oxon, and he called it the Corpus Christi College. The same stimulus of virtue and glory stirred up John Colet, dean, as they say, of St. Paul's, to the desire of propagating good letters of that kind.

" He, adorned partly by the virtue of his mind and soul, partly by the integrity of his life and morals, was held among his fellow Englishmen almost as a second Apostle Paul, because by nature saintly and religious from his early boyhood; he betook himself to the study of divine letters, and chose Paul for his preceptor, and so studied Paul, both at Oxon and Cambridge and in Italy, that when [13] he returned home a finished scholar he began, in his native city of London, to read the Pauline Epistles, and often to preach in the temples. He lived as he taught, and so men acquiesced in his excellent precepts.

"A most temperate man, he lived on one meal a day. He thirsted not for honours or wealth; but the riches he fled from pursued and overtook him. It so happened that, of two and twenty children whom his father, Henry Colet, had by his Christian wife, a noble lady, John alone survived, and became his father's sole heir. Then John, seeing that many of his fellow citizens, by the mere habit of their nature, turned out grave and modest men, thought that they would be much much more excellent if they should receive a good education. Therefore, he resolved to assist, at his own expense, the youth of London to acquire learning. He founded, in that part of St. Paul's Churchyard which looks to the east, a splendid school, and appointed William Lily teacher, and a second to instruct the ruder boys. Good Lily, as Horace says, *was integer vitae scelerisque purus*. Having studied the Perfect Letters some years in Italy, he returned home, and was the first Englishman to teach them in England to his countrymen. Before him Cornelio Vitellio, an Italian, of Corneto, in Tuscany, of a noble stock, was the first of all to teach good letters to the boys at Oxon. John Reighey and Richard Jones followed Lily as masters. The masters were endowed with yearly stipends from Colet's property<sup>1</sup>.

I might leave this striking passage to speak for itself, were it not that its teaching and that of kindred passages have been so much neglected. I am bound to infer from them : (I) That there was practically no literature in our country before the Tudor



period - no teaching, reading, or writing class ; (2) that letters did gradually come to us from Italy during that period, but that no exact date, not even of the foundation of St. Paul's school, is ascertainable that we must consequently content ourselves with the vague date, "about 400 years ago," of the epoch when literary culture was beginning in our island.

Is there a particle of evidence contradictory of the impression to be derived from the above passage? Not [14] one solitary particle that I have ever been able to find. On the contrary, I have discovered a number of evidences of the greatest value, of the most decisive nature, confirmatory of the statements made so guilelessly, as it seems, by Polydore Vergil.

I am perfectly aware that the stories about " King Alfred," or " King Henry Beauclerc," and so on, will recur to the reader's mind. Suffice it to say, that these very tales which have induced so much illusion as to the rise of literary culture in our country can be proved from this same writer to have been the monastic fabrications of his own time, and to have gradually come to light during the Tudor period.

I shall now have to assume, with my readers' goodwill, that letters of any kind, and consequently Biblical letters in particular, were only beginning to be cultivated here during the Tudor period-very slightly even then ; that the evidence for this statement is quite massive; and that for a contrary opinion no scintilla of evidence exists, or ever has existed. It is false dates, it is the superficial study of the books which were coming to light during the Tudor period itself, which have caused the great prevailing deception in this important matter.

Let me add that what is proved in regard to our own country is proved in general for North and West Europe, according to the statement of Polydore above quoted, confirmed by a weight of evidence respecting the monastic literature which I have closely studied, but cannot in this place adduce.

It may be asked by those who follow the vulgar opinion: Have we not evidence, in "Gildas " and in " Bede," of culture flourishing in the most remote times in different parts of our islands ? The answer is, that those writings are in reality part of the great collaboration of the literary monks of the order of St. Benedict ; they have been antedated in accordance with their fabulous system, and have been ascribed to imaginary persons. No one can doubt that this is the truth who closely scrutinises the catalogue of monastic works ascribed to "John Boston, of Bury St. Edmund's," and other lists brought to light by John Leland, librarian of Henry VIII.,<sup>2</sup> who is stated to have [15] made a literary tour of the island during the period 1533-1539.

Our scholars have laxly accepted the dates assigned to " Gildas " and to " Bede;" they have not examined the style and contents of those writers, with a view to ascertain whether there was any internal probability in the system of their tales. Hence the great illusion which besets the learned world in reference both to the nature of Christian letters, and the epoch at which they began to be diffused in England.

Not to confuse my readers with too many details, I would beg them to keep in mind the date 1533 as one of the best landmarks in chronology I am able at present to point out. In that year Polydore is stated to have addressed Henry VIII., pointing out that next to nothing was known of English history, and disparaging the few monkish writings on the subject which had come into his hands. The same year Leland is alleged to have set out on his literary tour through the monasteries, which

occupied him till 1539. If these dates be trustworthy, the results of his investigations show that the whole scheme of Church history must have been laid down and brought, as it were, to a short first edition during about the period 1500-1533.

But the bad dating of documents is the great scandal of the student. I cannot write in the smooth and confident manner of the handbooks which are in general use, because I know from repeated experiments and tests that we have not a "fifteenth-century" date that can be trusted, and that a great number of "sixteenth-century" dates are false. But I may insist in perfect confidence that not in Italy itself could Church literature have been commenced before the close of that dark age we call the "fifteenth century."

## [16] CHAPTER II.

### POLYDORE ON THE ORIGIN OF CHRISTIANITY.

I MUST return to the question of the Pauline Epistles. It is impossible to determine what form they had assumed in Colet's time, or what his exact teaching may have been. In fact, I hold it impossible to suppose that the full Pauline Epistles, as we have them, could have been taught in England at the time to which Polydore refers. There can have been extant, in my opinion, only the little book of Sentences, called " The Apostle," which is so frequently alluded to in Church books, out of which the larger Pauline Epistles were gradually evolved.

The difficulty of the student is, as I have said, that he can find nothing but bald, meagre statements, and dates so fallacious that no more than a rough value can be ascribed to them.

Let me refer in illustration to another writing under the name of Polydore Vergil, " On Inventors " (*De Inventoribus Rerum*), the greater part of which is also alleged to have been written in London during the time of Henry VIII. It seems as if it were earlier than the English History, because the English History refers to it; and yet the dates given in the work on Inventors appear to prove a later time of writing—after 1533. I mention this matter because it is one of the hints to the reader that he may not expect to discover any precise record of literary events during the reign of Henry VIII. And that, again, is a reminder of the extremely loose, indistinct, and vaguely reminiscent manner in which the " History " of the time has been written.<sup>3</sup> [17]

Well, the little work on Inventors (I hope to translate this book for English readers) is very important for the purpose of my present exposition. Here is a writer, one of the foremost of the Revival of Letters, who tells us that no one has written on the subject since the time of Pliny! No one has had anything to say on the subject of the progress of human culture during the vast period Of 1,400 years and more! How can the meaning of such a statement be realised ? I venture to say it never has been realised by the learned world. And it is one of a thousand facts which may convince an open mind that our chronology is a dream, a reckoning of an imaginary time-interval —an interval never registered —between the days of Pliny and the days of Polydore.

But now the latter part of this little work is devoted to the "Beginnings of the Institutors of Christianity," and I invite the particular attention of my readers to the extreme thinness of the story at so late a date, and yet to the air of novelty with which every particular is imparted, as if to a small learned Latin-reading class, who as yet have no clear idea of what Christianity was, or how it had come into existence. In truth, I cannot conceive any competent student pondering the contents of this small pamphlet, and comparing it with the sources on which it is based, without coming to the conclusion that this writer, dating himself near the time of the Council of Trent, is sufficient of himself to dispose of the whole theory of the antiquity of Christianity, and to show that the Christian priesthood and its letters are recent institutions in the world.

Let me quote a few things that bear on the Pauline question.<sup>4</sup> The first chapter, " On the Beginning of the Church, and the Christian Religion," quotes " The Apostle," Eph. v., as calling " Christ the Head of the Church." After this, Polydore seldom

quotes the Apostle, though he quotes from a number of the writers who appear on the list of the " Illustrious Men," to which I will hereafter refer more particularly.

The second chapter is " On the Origin of the Christian Republic and its Wondrous Increase from the First, and the Martyrdom of the Apostles Peter and Paul."

[18] Polydore tells the tale briefly in accord with the Acts of the Apostles, and Eusebius ; and one can hardly avoid the suspicion that either the books were not in a complete state, or that they were so little known and read that it was desirable to epitomise them for his public. He shows that the leading thought about the Apostolic pair was that they had both " laid the first foundations of the religion, and had obtained the crown of martyrdom." And who is the "witness" for the truth of this legend? None other than " Tertullian," one of the most audacious rhetoricians of the " illustrious " list —in other words, of the secret monastic faction who conficted rather than compiled the whole story of Christian origins, and passed it off upon the world as a system of "Testimony" from times inconceivably remote.

"Tertullian against Marcion," book iv., is quoted for this well-known ejaculation : " Let us see what milk the Corinthians imbibed from Paul, by what rule the Galatians were corrected, what the Philippians read, the Thessalonians, the Ephesians, what also the Romans next sound, to whom Peter and Paul left the Gospel signed with their blood."

Polydore quotes also another passage from the same writer, by which he says it appears beyond doubt that the two Apostles were the "Authors of the Religion among the Romans." A few texts are further quoted on various points from "The Apostle," and that is all. There is nothing whatever to show that the Pauline Epistles, as we know them, had any special value or weight for the writer. On the contrary, the writers on whom he mostly relies are the Latin Doctors of the " illustrious list." And there need not have been any Greek writers at all in his hands —for all the use he makes of them Latin texts suffice ; and it is one of many incidental proofs that Latin, not Greek, is the proper and original language of the Church. So far the extremely meagre, cold, uninteresting, and, it must be added, early, account of Paul and his writings in the Historian of Inventors.

I would now ask the candid reader to consider with me the striking evidence which this writer bears, as it seems, on the face of it, unconsciously, to the fallacy and delusion of supposing that the legend of Paul had come down to him [19] through an immense interval of time. A man who has anything like a real perspective of past time before his imagination does not, and cannot, bound over vast intervals without an effort. He does not *see* the events of a thousand years ago as distinctly as he sees those of his own time. Yet this is what Polydore appears to do, and what many of us, in our ignorance of a true chronological perspective, are in the habit of doing.

For example, in a late chapter on heresies and schisms, this writer enumerates (1) that of Simon Magus; (2) that of the Nicolaitanes ; (3) that of the Ebionites, etc. Of schisms, these —(1) that of Novatus, 255 A.D.; (2) that of Arius about 89 years later; (3) that of Damasus of the same age. But here, instead of saying to himself, "This rivalry of Damasus with another for the Pontificate, with violence and arms, happened a long 1,200 years ago ; we cannot know much about it ; times have changed," he actually says, " This foul strife of the Pontiff's has widely increased

even to this day, because the ambition of honours has invaded the priesthood more and more from day to day."

The reason for the coincidence between the sanguinary legend of Damasus and the actual deeds of the sixteenth-century popes is that the lists of the popes and the legends of their lives were executed about the same time with the rest of the Church literature, and upon the allegorical principle. History was made designedly to repeat, in an imagined past, the events of the real present. And thus the gratification of the readers, and other useful purposes, were subserved. Notions of time and of probability were so feeble that the absurdity of supposing that any writers could trace popes through 1,200 years, up to St. Peter, passed without question 1

Again, immediately after this Polydore again skips the interval between the schism of Damasus and that of Luther, as if nothing of that kind had occurred in the course of some 1,200 years ! Here the only connection he mentions of Paul with Luther is in the passage in which the apostle writes to Titus, to lay down the penalty to be inflicted on leaders of heresies: " Flee the man who is author of sects, after one and a second admonition, knowing that he is overthrown who is of his party, and sins, condemned by himself."

[20] And there follow more quotations on the same point from Chrysostom, from the " Nicene Synod," and this on the authority of the sixteenth-century writer, Platina, the papal librarian.

Luther, then, who quotes certain voices of Paul as oracular in favour of his opinions, is here condemned by the Catholic priest through another voice of Paul. It is one of the illustrations of the fact that there are many voices behind the mask and person of Paul !

But let me give another example of the chronological artifice and illusion which it is too all-important to correct. Our writer tells the legend, in part from the Acts of the Apostles, how the Eunuch of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, was baptised by Philip, and converted the queen herself, with her whole family and part of her people, to the Christian religion, "so that it always flourished in that nation."

Does our author ask himself whether the tale is probable, or whether such a survival of Christianity in Ethiopia could be traced through some 1,500 years? Not at all; he is immediately reminded of something that occurred in his own time : when Clement VII. received the promise of faith and obedience from the legate of the king, Francis Alvarez. So long has Christianity been making its way to Abyssinia!

The question arises, had Polydore and other writers any sense for *dates* and their value at all? Or were they conscious that they were repeating fables certain to be detected by posterity? The truth is partly of one and partly of the other kind, as it seems to me. They must have dates; otherwise there would be no backbone to the long story— no semblance even of a perspective of the past. But the enormous gaps which were left in the scheme of 1,500 years expose the artifice of it. And no one who studies these tales in the same way that he studies the foreground and the distances of a picture can fail to perceive in time that all the figures and all the scenes described in this little work on the origins of Christendom are absolutely of one period, and are due to one effort of collaborating art.

The point on which I am dwelling is, I am persuaded, curious and novel to the majority of readers. For want of attention to it, the greatest blunders have been

committed [21] by our modern historians and critics. Let me, therefore, explain a little further.

Historical literary art should always be compared with pictorial art, if we are to avoid illusions. It is evident that a mistake on canvas is much more readily discovered by a spectator than a similar mistake is discovered by the readers of a book. It is easier to fill the mind with the contents of a crowded canvas in the course of half an hour's attentive study than it is to fill the mind with the figures and scenes of a story which demands a day for its perusal. The effort of attention is much longer and more painful in the one case than in the other. And, again, few readers have that vividness of imagination which enables them to realise the contents of the book as they can realise the contents of the canvas. So that many a person who would detect a glaring fault in the picture, and would say at once, " This is not life-like, this is not true to nature," might pass over precisely the analogous fault in the book without recognition. From this cause great errors have arisen in the study of the literature before us.

Everyone, in gazing at the works of the early masters of painting, becomes aware of faults which must displease a modern eye, however they may be atoned for by great excellences of a certain kind. In particular, they had not a just knowledge of perspective, or of light and shade. Imagine a picture by one of these painters where a number of saints and doctors are arranged in tiers, facing the spectator; where each countenance in the background is equally distinct with those in the foreground ; where all wear very much the same expression, are clothed in the same habit, and evidently belong to the same class. You recognise the ideality of these portraits; you note that they have not been drawn directly from the life, but from a certain fund of ideals in the artist's mind, and that a certain limited period of human activity in art is here represented.

I say that things like these can readily be learned by spectators of ordinary intelligence, who visit the great galleries ; but they have not yet been learned, and they are more difficult to learn in reference to the kindred art of Church literature. It is, therefore, most important to insist that Church letters and Church painting are parallel, analogous, and contemporaneous phenomena, which mutually [22] explain and illustrate one another. In various ways the painter may be made the critic of the historian, and the historian the critic of the painter.

Now, had Polydore been the thorough critic (which in his time and situation he could not be) of the Church letters, he would have seen that there was not a true perspective of the past to be found in the writers from whom he compiled ; and, further, he would, on close inquiry, have found that the reason was that these writers were all of the same period, of the same library, not one of them a " witness," not one of them other than an artist in fiction. But, had he known the full truth in these matters, it was not for him, as a priest of the Church, to impart his knowledge to the world. As it is, his work has undergone the censure of the Inquisition.

It would, in my opinion, be quite unsatisfactory to treat the Pauline question without endeavouring to overcome the prejudices and illusions which our education has begotten in us with reference to Church institutions as a whole. It must be firmly insisted on the current notion that we can *see our way* through so many centuries of past time is really baseless. And, in stating this for the first time with so much

emphasis, I am merely, with as much thoroughness as I can, following up clues which were in the hands of some of my predecessors.

For example, the late Dr. Edwin Hatch, of Oxford, said that " many institutions and elements of institutions which have sometimes been thought to belong to primitive Christianity belong, in fact, to the Middle Ages." My comment upon this is that both " Primitive Christianity "and " Middle Ages " are figures of speech, not phrases of science. If, for an earnest though not a radical student, like Dr. Hatch, the "primitive" resolved itself into the "mediaeval," the meaning is, that many hundred years must be deducted from the alleged age of the institution. But it will be found, in turn, that the supposed Middle Age institutions resolve themselves into modern institutions; and I mean by modern, in common with previous historians, those which can fairly be dated from the Tudor period.

Dr. Hatch says: "In the minds of many persons, no doubt, the past centuries of Christianity seem to be all alike shrouded in a common mist, and the institutions of one age [23] are not distinguishable from those of another." And why is this so ? Simply and solely, as I have been explaining, because the literary pictures or frescoes from which we derive these misty impressions of indistinguishable ages were composed during one short period, by one class and faction, who, with all their devices, had not subtlety enough to represent a growth of Church institutions, during an alleged space of time so vast, in a manner agreeable to our knowledge of the laws of human life.

The same clergyman event far towards admitting that Church institutions rest on utility, not on positive Divine command. Then the little book of Polydore's is understood, in which Christianity is treated as an invention, it will be understood that there is nothing whatever in these institutions which is not traceable to human art, and explainable by the laws of human art. There is nothing mysterious in the system, in the proper and ecclesiastical use of that word ; but an *obscurity* must ever hang over the secret doings of the real founder or founders of the system, before the time came when it was to be published to the world.

It will be well for me to refer to the little work of Polydore as a neglected text-book. It is so brief, so easily mastered, it makes little demand on the time and attention of the student. It contains allusions to all the books which are positively necessary for the understanding of the question of Christian origins. On the other hand, the omission of very much literature, which has been supposed ancient, together with the slightness of the whole narrative, are striking proofs of the modernity of Christianity.

The truth is that this book, instead of being too late a book for the study of the Pauline question, is, in the opinion of the Church of Rome itself, too early a book ; for we are told that the only edition approved, after purgation by the Inquisition, is that of Gregory XII, 1676.

Let me beg my readers to fix in their memory this thought: the germ of the great Pauline legend is a *pure invention*. That Peter and Paul were joint Roman martyrs and founders of the Roman Catholic religion is the principle of the whole mythology. To discuss whether Peter ever was in Rome, and, if not, whether his inseparable brother could have been there, is to mistake the whole question. We have to [24] deal with something much more interesting than a mixture of fact and fiction in the ordinary

sense. It is from first to last a system of pure allegorical mythology that has been constructed about the names of Peter and of Paul.



## [25] CHAPTER III.

### BEGINNINGS OF THE PAULINE LEGEND.

I SHALL now endeavour to trace out the legend of Paul and his Epistles from its inception. But it is obvious that, in a *brochure* like the present, I cannot enter upon a mass of details on which large volumes continue to be written. I can only ask my readers to accept my report of the evidence as conscientious and truthful, so far as my means of knowledge extend, and request the more studious among them to follow up my references and indications, that they may test and verify, or correct, my conclusions for themselves.

I must now deal with the references to Paul in the Eusebian literature —that is, the Church History and the list of "Illustrious Men." And here a series of literary falsehoods must be sharply contradicted. It is in the Latin List of Illustrious Men, or Catholic writers, that the name of Eusebius occurs.<sup>5</sup> This list was published during the Age of Publication, commonly called the "sixteenth century;" and there is absolutely no vestige of proof that this key book to Church literature (for such it evidently is) was composed, or could have been composed, long before that age. It is certain that in its present form it was not in the hands of Polydore. It is alleged that Eusebius was bishop of Caesarea, and was connected with literary men in that city 1,200 years before Polydore's time. That is sheer invention and falsehood. The real authors of the Eusebian books were the literary monks of the West, and the city to which they were related was, above all, Paris. Perhaps St. Germain's Abbey was their headquarters. It is alleged that they were written in Greek and rendered into Latin. That is also false, for they prove beyond all doubt to have [26] been written in Latin, and were badly rendered into Greek. The reason the monks had for stating their great falsehood about the Greek original of the History and the New Testament was that they wished to give the lustre of that association with the greatest of the learned languages to the Church, and to support another falsehood —viz., that the early Church was planted in Greek cities. It may be confidently said that these allegations are demonstrably false in the full sense of that phrase.

I have entered closely upon this question in a special series of published papers; and, in my inability to treat it in this place, I may here refer my readers to the very valuable work, in English, entitled "Palmoromaica," ascribed to the Rev. John Black, and published early in this century, wherein the acute and learned author puts forth a variety of cogent arguments against the Greek and for the Latin original, which may easily be strengthened, and which are powerfully suggestive in the direction of my own researches and discoveries.

Let me, then, beg my readers to assume with me that the Church History is in reality antedated by more than 1,200 years ; that it is, in fact, a sixteenth century book in any case not older than that period ; that it is used, as far as we can ascertain from the dates given us, for the first time by the historian of Inventors about the year 1533. But, again, I must warn against implicit reliance on such dates. That caution being understood, I have not the slightest fear of misleading them. The Greek edition of the History is stated to have been published at Paris by Stephens about the year 1544. There are some earlier dated Latin editions.

To any reader of taste for style, the Greek, and all translations made from the Greek, are simply detestable; and, to any reader of taste for what is more important,

the facts of life, veracity of speech, and rectitude of purpose, the book is still more detestable, whether in the better Latin or in the bad Greek. It is a system of fictions, for the most part inelegant, stupid, and revolting, built upon the Creed ; the Creed itself being a series of invented propositions, the authority for which is said to be none other than the Latin writer of the History himself ("Rufinus"),

I must leave my studious readers to peruse the Church [27] History for themselves, which is no more formidable a task than the reading of the work on Inventors. Let me merely make my own brief report. This unknown monk pretends to be a man of research into very scanty records of the past. That means, as we have already seen, that at the beginning of the sixteenth century there were no records of Christianity extant. He is not a man of research at all, except in the sense in which many novelists and romancers are men of research for the purposes of their constructions. This writer is, in fact, simply a theological romancer, and only in that sense can be called an historian at all. But in the sixteenth century you can hardly find any but that species of story-tellers, in whose writings can only be discovered certain deposits of *general* facts and relations, but no particular well-defined facts on which we depend in the same sense that we depend on the reports in the daily newspapers.

But I must come to the question of Paul. This wonderful being is not yet fully evolved out of the consciousness of the confictors of Church History. He is an apparition, vague, shadowy, unsubstantial ; there is none of that flesh-and-blood life-likeness, that glow of feeling, that impression of an all-vigorous and enthusiastic personality, that one has learned to associate with the name of Paul. A few sentences will repeat all that this feeble fictionist has to say of his life career :

1. "Paul first persecuted the Church, but afterwards became an Apostle." That is the short plot or argument, which, as we shall see, other hands were commissioned to work out in the elaborate and captivating romance of the Acts of the Apostles. It is just in this way that artists in fiction set to work. They catch their happy thought : it is a contrast, a conversion, an improbability such as readers love. If we meditate the brief plot, we see that it contains possibilities of great interest. At the same time, we cannot but detest the animus against the Jews which dictated the course of the historical romance.

2. Later comes the statement, " From Jerusalem, as far as Illyricum, Paul made a journey, preaching the Gospel." This is given four times over.<sup>6</sup> Now, why in this poor [28] meagre History (so-called) does the monk want to repeat himself on this point so often ? I cannot conjecture, unless it be that he desires to give an emphatic hint to his coadjutors that must not be forgotten. In any case, it is merely a continuation of the plot or argument of the romance; of which we see the elaboration in the narratives of the missionary journeys in the Acts of the Apostles.

3. "Paul founded the Corinthian and the Roman Church (with Peter) and the Ephesian Church." Again, a continuation of the plot, by which preparation is made for the lofty position Paul is to assume as a great founder of Church institutions along with his brother apostle Peter. The scheme is to bring them from the East to Rome, which is nothing but part of the great scheme to represent Christianity as an Oriental birth, whereas it is Occidental ; and, again, to make an early start from Rome itself as the determined metropolis of the Christian world, in the designs of these writers. It by no means follows that they wrote in Rome itself.

4. " Paul in a certain Epistle makes mention of his wife." In the same connection it is said that Peter and Philip were wedded. But it is altogether a blunder to suppose that the writer had any epistle known to us under Paul's hand at the time of writing. He appears to have written this short chapter, like many other passages, by way of tentative precedent in favour of the married life of at least some orders of the clergy. In Luther's Bible Paul is made to plead for matrimony. Polydore also defends a wedded clergy.

5. "Paul, after having fulfilled the Gospel of Christ from Jerusalem to Illyricum, afterwards suffered martyrdom in Rome under Nero."<sup>7</sup> Another bald line of plot destined to be expounded in other writings. They have at last brought the apostle to the city where his career is destined to terminate, and his invisible influence to begin.

The Eusebian thinks it well to give his "authority" for this little chapter on the geographical distribution of the Apostles. Who is it? No other than " Origen," one of his fellows on the list of the "Illustrious;" really, one of his secret collaborators.

[29] I cannot forbear to point out how ridiculous are the blunders which our clerical writers have made, either in their ignorance of this literature, or in their desire to defend it. They assume that this "Eusebius" is writing 200 years or more after the New Testament writers. That is the primary blunder. They then assume that he must be following the New Testament writers, though every page shows that this is impossible. That is the next blunder —a consequence of the first. And here, where he quotes an alleged fragment of " Origen " about Paul, they say Eusebius has alone preserved this fragment, and they proceed to insert it in Origen's works ! A third blunder; or rather it is one comprehensive blunder they have made in supporting an utterly impossible theory of Church Letters, instead of attending to the curious phenomena themselves.

The explanation that I have given removes all difficulties and covers all cases, so far as I know. Here you have a knot of men, or round table, presided over in all probability by one or two or a few directors. They have plotted, and are executing a system of fiction. The method is to write down short sentences, to place them in imaginary mouths, to call them " testimonies," to put dates to them, and then to quote them as if they were authoritative and external to themselves. The whole thing is perfectly transparent to the attentive student. Any writer of even moderate skill in fiction could construct a story with a considerable number of characters, who should all be made in one way or another to be interested in a set of ideas or in a common story, whether as believers or as unbelievers, supporters or opponents. A great impression may thus be produced upon the reader, even though he is aware that he is dealing with fiction. But where, as in the case of this Church History, the representations made have been announced as the greatest and most awful truths, and a mighty organisation has been supporting them, the impression has become all but irresistible, for any except the awakened and sceptical inquirer.

If my readers cannot at present follow me in my assertion of the late origin of Church literature, at least they will understand, if they follow me in these particulars, that the current and common theories of that literature are absurd, and must be abandoned. But let me now briefly give the [30] statements of the Church History in reference to the alleged literary activity of. Paul, and the Epistles which these monks chose to place under his name.

Now, here the remarkable statement arrests attention and it is twice made —that Paul's Epistles were *very, short*. One of these passages is to the effect that Paul, the most able of all in literary discipline, and the most sufficient in opinions, "committed no more than the briefest epistles to writing, though he had a multitude of matters —yea, unutterable things to say, as he had attained to the visions of the third heaven, had been snatched up to the very paradise of God, and had been deemed worthy to listen to the unutterable words thence."<sup>8</sup>

I must entreat my readers not to fall in with the false notion that this passage is an echo of a passage in the Epistles as we have them. That is the reverse of the fact. I must repeat, every chapter of this Church History proves that it is written as an introduction to romantic books not yet fully written, or more than in their inception, and which had not yet been designated by the name of the New Testament, though a similar term is employed.

Now, everyone knows that a similar passage to the above is found inserted in our second Epistle to the Corinthians, chapter xii. —a passage shockingly written in point of grammar, and every principle of good taste, even as the passage in the Church History. But it will be found, on comparison, that the one passage is not copied from the other, though both are evidently from the same mind. It is impossible to draw any other conclusion than that the two passages, substantially one in meaning, though variant in form, are from *the same workshop of monastic fiction*.

We now come to another passage in a chapter on what are called the "testamentary writings" or books; which phrase prepares the way for the designations, " Old and New Testament," not yet, as it seems, invented. Now, here again it is the great "Origen " who is called upon as a mock witness to the literary activity of Paul. They name this imaginary illustrious man Adamantius, or again Chalkenteros, the " brazen bowelled ;" and Hardouin has detected the jest in these appellations, as hinting allegori[31]cally the hard toil which these literary monks had undertaken in support of their lies and fabrications. For my part, my heart softens a little towards them when I see them smiling at one another, and deriding the credulity of the world!

Well, they make their " Origen " say, respecting the Epistles of the Apostles : " He that was made sufficient to become a minister of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the spirit, Paul, who fulfilled the Gospel from Jerusalem, even in a cycle as far as Illyricum, did not write to all the Churches which he taught ; but to those to whom he did write he sent a few lines."<sup>9</sup>

Again, if the reader will compare for himself the passage in 2 Corinthians iii. 6, he will see that the *thought* about the " minister of the New Testament " is the same; but there has been no copying in the ordinary sense of the word. It has been *arranged* that Paul shall be so described ; and in the Epistle which is contained in the book called "The Apostle" he is duly made so to describe himself. The expression, "New Testament," does not here mean a collection of books, but is equivalent to new covenant.

Now, why is it so emphatically said that there were only very short Epistles of Paul extant ? The intelligent reader who studies the book for himself, and refuses to allow his mind to be bewildered by misguided editors, sees at once that this Church historian, or these monkish romancers, cannot by any possibility be speaking of the Pauline Epistles in our hands. If the book called "The Apostle" actually existed, it

must have been a very thin affair. If, on the other hand, it was in process of compilation, it was designed that it should be of very small bulk, and it seems as if a warning were given against accrediting any larger epistle as Paul's. I have a suspicion that it was known that some writing was going on destined to be placed under the name of Paul, which it might not be convenient to recognise as genuine.

So far, then, the design is evident : to fix the Ideal of Paul in the minds of the faithful as a very extraordinary and very wonderful person, who had had the most astounding adventures in heaven, had seen and heard things denied to [32] the eyes and ears of ordinary mortals, which he could not possibly relate when he came back again. A truly great man, so rich beyond comparison in intellectual power; yet so unwilling or so reluctant a penman, he left only a " few lines" behind him ! Let us see if there is any further light on this literary riddle and profound practical joke.<sup>10</sup>

It is stated that Paul's Epistles were fourteen in number ; but doubts are cast on the authorship of that to the Hebrews, and rambling talk upon this subject is put into the mouth of the imaginary "Origen." Those who have studied the peculiar arts and crafts of these literary monks (but they are few) may be aware that they never throw doubt upon their own compositions without a motive. When they trouble their readers' minds about the genuineness of this or that document, they mean to trouble them. The design, on the part of the masters of the literary situation, is to make books of great importance, or to discredit them as it may be convenient, which policy has been so characteristic of the Catholic Churchmen to our own day.

Not content with throwing doubt on the Hebrews, they must need set down "apocryphal acts" to the name of Paul; they must invent a sect who disliked Paul and rejected his Epistles —nay, two sects who did this. So that in the end we are thoroughly puzzled to know what this incomprehensible person was like, and what were the notes he scribbled to his Churches. Is it not time that cultivated readers should inquire into the purport of all this intolerable nonsense and absurdity ?

To understand the design of these tricksters, we must interrogate ourselves, and ask, What is the impression that is produced upon our imagination if we take these tales to be true ? Is it not, as I have before said, that this Paul was the most obscure and incomprehensible of men and of writers that ever lived ? And does not this lead to curiosity and bewildered study, and results which bring no satisfaction and no repose? Yes ; nor can I acquit the monastic faction of the deliberate intention thus to dazzle and divert and bewilder the world. But we must lay some blame on our own weakness, our soft and yielding credulity!

Now, after all, can this little Apostle or book of Paul's [33] Epistles be produced? Perhaps it can, or something like it; and there may have been several enlargements before they reached the bulk in which we possess them. The reader who follows me in the study of the Church History will certainly be convinced that not a word of it is based upon the New Testament; that, on the contrary, there are many things in it not to be found in the New Testament at all. The New Testament *is* based on the plan laid down in the History; and both on the Symbol. And, in reference to the Pauline Epistles in particular, I think I can give a rough idea of the original slight draft of the Pauline matter. One cannot but be reminded of the parturition of the mountain and the birth of the mouse.

*Epistle to the Romans.* ——"According to my Gospel." The Church historian ascribes this phrase to Paul in order to allege that when he used it he alluded to Luke's

Gospel. Accordingly we find the phrase thrice inserted in the New Testament: Romans ii. 16, xvi. 25, and 2 Timothy ii. 8.

"The sufferings of the present season are not worthy to be compared with the glory to be revealed unto us." This passage occurs in the Church History in connection with a tale of persecution under Verus. It is not quoted from Paul, nor alleged to be. But we find something very like it in our Romans viii. 18.

Then the thrice-repeated phrase about journeying "from Jerusalem round about to Illyricum" we find reproduced in Romans xv. 19.

Lastly, the Church historian says that, in the salutations at the end of the Epistle to the Romans, Paul makes mention of "Hermas," alleged author of "The Shepherd;" and, sure enough, "Hermas" duly makes his appearance in Romans xvi. 14.

Positively it appears, from the absence of any other reference, as if they had written under the heading, "Epistle to the Romans," little but this allusion to Hermas, whose alleged work, they say, is disputed. Hermas' name is also on the list of the "Illustrious."

It may appear ridiculous to those unversed in these studies to say that the first thing to be done in sketching an Epistle was to insert some proper names. But it is done in other cases, and evidently for the purpose of keeping up the illusion. They must have a sufficient number of *proper*[34] *names* of alleged companions of the apostle, otherwise the historical theory is not kept up. The like is still more true of the History, which is crowded with them.

Thus the historian gives the hint, in a chapters 11 on "The Disciples of our Saviour," how some of the names are to be introduced into the books of the New Testament, which have yet to be written.

He says there is no list of "the Seventy" extant; but "Barnabas" is said to have been one of them, and his name will be found in divers places in the Acts of the Apostles, and especially in Paul, when he writes to the Galatians. Another was Sosthenes, who wrote to the Corinthians along with Paul. We duly find those names in our Epistles: Galatians ii. 1, 1 Corinthians i. 1. We have all been deceived by them, unaware that they have been *pleaded there* in compliance with a scheme of literary fiction. Strip these names away, and what are the Epistles worth?

*I Corinthians.*—But my present business is to impress upon the reader that this first Church historian most certainly knew nothing but a few lines of the Pauline Epistles, or of any of the "testamentary" books. He calls Paul to witness that, "after the resurrection, the Saviour was seen by Kephaz first, then by the Twelve, and, after them, by more than five hundred brethren at the same time; of whom some had fallen asleep, but the greater part were still living at the time he composed these things. Then he was seen by James, who was one of those called brothers of the Saviour." He adds that, besides these, Paul, as if in imitation of the Twelve Apostles, he being also an apostle, continues: "Afterwards he was seen by all the Apostles."

The ordinary reader, abetted in the delusion by clerical apologists, supposes that this must be quoted from 1 Corinthians xv. 5. It is absolutely not so! The Epistle is not named, and the comparison of the two passages again excludes any other opinion than that 1 Corinthians has been built up around this slight fabric of personal names, and primarily in order to imbed and *preserve* those names.

In the last book of the History we find the saying, "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard," etc., referred to as a martyr [35] hymn. It is *not* quoted from any source

whatever. We find it inserted in 1 Corinthians ii. 9. There is something *like* the expression, "coveting earnestly the best gifts," in a passage in the historian ; but again *no* allusion to any Epistle.

*2 Corinthians.*—It is the like case with regard to a Corinthians. One of the main objects here, as I have already pointed out, was to imbed the favourite phrase of the Pauline legend: "From Jerusalem round about to Illyricum." Very little else can have been written of that Epistle.

The monks put into the mouth of their wondrous "Origen" the saying, that the style of the Epistle to the Hebrews has not the peculiarity of the Apostle,, who confessed that he was "idiot in speech" (rude of speech) —that is, in phrase —while the Epistle to the Hebrews is of better Greek composition. Accordingly, we duly find this alleged confession inserted in a muddled passage (2 Corinthians xi. 6).

At first sight it looks as if they, must have had the Epistle to the Hebrews already written ; but that is *not* the case. And one can only infer that the task of writing that Epistle had been assigned to a Greek scholar a little more skilled than the rest of the Epistlers. These things must have been written with a smile.

We read in another place in the History: "I am in danger of really falling into much folly and Stupidity, being forced to relate the wondrous dispensation of God concerning us." The Greek is shocking ; but the unwary reader thinks he listens to an echo of something in Paul (2 Corinthians xi. 1, 17, 23). Again, it is absolutely, *not* so; the words are put into the mouth of a certain bishop. I will not trouble the reader with his name and alleged date, When we hear these echoes, we must try to detect the quarter whence the sound first came. It came neither from this nor that fantastic figure-head, but from the voices of these literate monks, who were more intent upon crowding the memory with a mass of alleged apostolic names than upon anything useful or edifying to the public.

*Epistle to the Galatians.*—I come to the Epistle to the Galatians. The phenomena are quite similar. In a chapter which romances on the career of the Apostles after the Ascension, the historian concludes : " After these Paul, the vessel of election, not of men, nor through men, but through [36] revelation of Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead, is shown to be an apostle; deemed worthy of the calling through a vision and the voice from Heaven according to the revelation."

You find these pretensions put into the mouth of Paul himself in Galatians i. 1ff and elsewhere. But the Eusebian passage is one of the most important, being the brief argument of the whole Pauline career, as it was arranged for development by various scribes in the secrecy of the cloisters.

Again, the primary object in composing this Epistle was to imbed a part of the great system of romance disclosed in the so-called History. They want to fix the ideal of James the Just in the minds of the religious. Therefore they say: " Paul makes mention of him they say not where writing: Other of the apostles I saw not, except James, the Brother of the Lord."12 You find this sentence duly set down in an Epistle, Galatians i. i9. It is hardly correct to say that it has been inserted in the Epistle. The Epistle, as usual an incoherent composition, has been framed to embody the historical sentences. The like remarks apply to the mention of " Barnabas" in the second chapter, and to Kephas, who is described expressly in the History as a different person from Peter.

In the romance of the " Martyrs of Palestine," bound up with the History, the saying; "The Jerusalem above is free, which is our mother," is attributed to Paul, without reference to *any* Epistle. We find it with an addition in Gal. iv. 25.

*Epistle to Philippians.*—I come to the Epistle to the Philippians. The remarkable theological sentence occurs twice in tales of martyrs, " Christ, who, being in the form of God, did not think equality with God a thing of rapine 13 (again most crude Greek); but there is no allusion to Paul's authorship ; on the contrary, it is assigned to other writers. We find it *repeated* under the name of Paul, Phil. ii. 6. It is simply a blunder, due to ignorance of the facts, not to see that the passage is *original* in the Church History—that is, in the mind of the monastic theologians. 14

In the chapter of the first succession of the Apostles, and in one on Clement of Rome, we find, as usual, the evidence [37] of the plot. This is the romance or pseudo-historical sentence which has to be attested by the great Paul: "Clement himself, appointed third bishop of the Church of Romans, is witnessed by him to have been fellow-labourer and fellow-athlete of Paul."

You duly discover that Paul is made to say this, Phil. iv. 3 ; but the "fellow-athlete" is left out. Whatever you may remember or may forget of the contents of this Epistle, you will not be likely to forget Clement ; and, if you remember Clement, you have in mind the grand theory of the Roman Apostolic Succession. How charming to discover that what seems a passing allusion, or one of Paley's " undesigned coincidences," is really studied, for this very purpose of impressing the Roman idea upon you. And what a curious thing that Clement should have written a "great and wondrous " Epistle<sup>15</sup> to the Corinthians, which has not found its way into the canon. However, there is no more to be said about the Epistle to the Philippians, except that it cannot have been written at the time of the Eusebian writer, with the exception of the solitary sentence about "Clement and the rest of my fellow-labourers, whose names are in the book of life."

*Epistle to the Colossians.*— Precisely the same phenomenon presents itself in the case of the Epistle to the Colossians. Our monks write down a very brief plot of the trial of Paul by Felix and by Festus, to be developed by the artists of the Acts of the Apostles, and of Paul being led prisoner to Rome. They then add this sentence : " Aristarchus went with him, whom he justly calls his fellow-captive *somewhere in the Epistles.* " We duly find that Paul is made to own Aristarchus, Col. iv. 10. But actually the romancing monk at the time of his writing has not a line more of the Colossians written; he has not decided in which of the schemed Epistles that allusion to Aristarchus is to be written, which aids the believer to accept the theory of Paul's Roman adventures. There is nothing more to be said of the Epistle to the Colossians than that, like the rest, it has been advertised before a solitary line of it was written. Many of the monastic books have been advertised as written which never were written at all.

[38] *Epistle to Timothy.*—Nor is there the slightest sign that the First Epistle to Timothy has been written. There is a phrase something like "thinking godliness a means of gain," but in quite another reference.

*2 Epistle to Timothy.*—The Second Epistle appears to have been the first planned. And once more the design was to make it confirm, as it were, in that vague, allusive way which made so much impression on Paley and others, the romance of Paul's life and suffering. The Eusebian—I mean the literary director of the scribes—says : "



Paul, held in bonds, composes the Second Epistle to Timothy, signifying at the same time his former defence and his immediate decease. Receive his testimonies of these things: 'In my *first defence*,' he says, '*no one was on any side, but all deserted me (may it not be reckoned to them !); but the Lord stood by me and strengthened me, that through me the preaching might be felled, and call the nations might hear, and I was rescued out of the lion's mouth.*'"

The Eusebian then tells us that the lion means Nero he knows *more* than Paul is made to say in 2 Timothy iv. This chapter is remarkable for the *designed* coincidences with other parts of the system of fiction. There is introduced the name of Linus, the object being, as before, to fix in the reader's mind the idea of the Roman Apostolical Succession.<sup>16</sup> Compare the chapter in the Church History (consisting of three and a half lines) with 2 Timothy iv. 21. In some of the MSS. of the Church History there is this addition, ascribed to the pen of Paul : "Salutes thee, saying, Eubulus and Pudens and Linus and Claudia."

The Eusebian director is master of the situation. He knows what to tell his servile scribes to do. He reminds us of a celebrated French novelist of our time, who was said to have dictated to seven amanuenses at once. "The plot, the historical setting, is the main thing," we hear him saying. "You can fill up the Epistles with any theological and ethical padding you will ; the more obscure and self-contradictory the better. All will enhance the impression that Paul was a wonderful, a very wonderful, a stupendous and incomprehensible man." But the clever director laboured under some disadvantage, because, though he [39] had some good Latin scribes, he had not a good staff of Greek scribes, and perhaps he did not understand Greek himself.

I have already referred to the fact that the phrase which the director is anxious to make Pauline, "According to my Gospel," was written under the heading of Second Epistle to Timothy, as also under the heading of "Epistle to the Romans," with the object of advertising Luke's Gospel. Paul and Luke are ever inseparable !

But I have not done with the wonderful fourth chapter of Second Epistle to Timothy. Our Eusebian director, so anxious about his Apostolic Succession, *will* have some more names put into the Epistles. Paul must have "followers," otherwise he will be a Nobody! Therefore the Idol of the monasteries must be made to point to other little idols surrounding him. In other words, Paul is made to witness to Crescens (or, in Greek, Kriskes), who was sent into Gaul (or *the Gauls*, in Greek). See, my readers, 2 Timothy iv. 10. It is, perhaps, a Frenchman, or a man much interested in France, who puts this little brick into the structure.

*Epistle to Titus.* —And now about the Epistle to Titus. I must simply say that our Eusebian literary director has not got this Epistle written ; certainly not. Dictating some nonsense about Polycarp,<sup>17</sup> he observes : "Paul said, a heretic after one and a second admonition reject, knowing that such an one is perverted, and sins, self-condemned."

Duly this has been written down as the basis of the Titus Epistle ; and I have already hinted that the first heretic to whom we can suppose the saying to have been applied was the author of the Lutheran schism, There is nothing more to be said of the Epistle to Titus.

After this review, I may add that perhaps the innocent-looking, unoffending fourth chapter of 2 Timothy, with its string of names of the alleged friends of Paul, offers

one of the best clues to the understanding of the whole question. Here is Paul, the Roman martyr, writing in an affecting (or affected) manner of his approaching decease, and giving a list of the names of his friends to his beloved Timothy Demas, and Crescens, and Titus, and Luke, and Mark, [40] and Tychicus, and Corpus ; also of his enemy, Alexander the coppersmith, whom he execrates; again, of his friends, Prisca, and Aquila, and Onesiphorus, and Erastus, and Trophimus, and Eubulus, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, together with an uncounted number of "brethren."

We must fairly acknowledge the dramatic ability displayed in all this. The hero of a drama must attract to himself all manner of distinguished and undistinguished persons ; must be well loved and hated well; he must, in short, be a personality, and a very interesting personality ; otherwise the play will be a failure.

The plot of the Pauline legend has been so contrived that a variety of lesser lights appear to sparkle round this great luminary of the ecclesiastical firmament. Books have been written for the mere purpose of ascertaining the personality of these minor characters, so incidentally named in the Timothean Epistle. Although the Pauline Epistles cannot for a moment be compared in point of interest and value with splendid works which were produced not far from the same epoch —the works that pass under the name of Dante and of Chaucer —how much greater pains have been taken to magnify the personality and to extend the renown of Paul!

How little do people reflect on the immense power of the greatest literary organisation in our world of the West, the organisation that we call the Church, either to exalt its favoured personalities, or to depress and to cover with ignominy its detested foes !

Expunge the names of Paul and his friends from these Epistles, and attend merely to the matter ; what have you but desultory, rambling, incoherent sentences upon mystical matters, which do not read well in Latin or in French or in English, and very badly in Greek ; and which, in any language, it is doubtful whether any man of taste has ever perused with pleasure!

I have not exhausted the teaching of the first Church History on the Pauline question, because my programme confines me to the Pauline Epistles, and the legends of Paul's life in the Acts must be treated as an independent literary production. I will therefore simply say that the student who examines the Church History with the object of ascertaining the nature of the interesting legends called [41] Acts of the Apostles will discover that this work of art has been planned strictly in accordance with the principle of the Creed and of the Service Book, in order to establish and confirm, by a variety of personal narratives, the idea of a personal Saviour and his disciples, who are alleged to have been the founders of that magnificent Christian Empire, which *I know* to have been the creation of certain bands of men of the sword and of the pen, whose origin I cannot possibly trace higher than the epoch of about four hundred years ago.

There is no older Christian book that I can discover than the Church History. But the nature of the book has hitherto been misconceived, though it has been again and again in part discredited. It is the foundation-stone of the whole system. The New Testament has been written upon its lines. It is the proper introduction to the New Testament. It is simply a work of theological art, the object being to assert the Creed and support it by alleged ancient "testimonies," which prove to be a string of

inventions. Persons, places, times, all are fictitious. When we dispel this cloud of romance, and ask for the home of the romancers, we find ourselves in one of the great monasteries of the Order of St. Benedict, possibly that of St. Germain's or St. Denis (Dionysius the Areopagite), Paris. The occurrence of the name Germanus in the History is curious, and seems to me to hint of the former abbey. But certainly same monastery of the West was the workshop, and certainly there was a "Round Table" of literary directors, and a circulation of the same books and ideas in all the monasteries of the order. Paul, his life and letters, are distinctly the creation of this literary faction. And the work was going on during the early Reformation time.

To sum up so far. I have detected and disclosed to the reader the first edition of the Pauline romance. He must be martyr-founder of the Roman Church. He must be a converted Jew, not necessarily learned, but wondrously converted, by no human means, by vision and voice from heaven. He must have been into the third heaven itself, and must have heard unutterable things. He must have been a missionary preacher from Jerusalem to Illyricum. Yet he must have written very little; but he must have [42] made many allusions to persons, his companions and disciples ; he must have in this way established the dogma of the Roman Apostolic Succession.

My opinion is that the monks could not, under the controversies which prevailed, write any theology under the patronage of the extraordinary man whom they had created, adequate to his alleged wonderful faculties; and that with timidity they guarded themselves by the statement that Paul had written only a few lines. It would be always possible to say to sectarians, "This is not Paul's writing!"

One cannot refrain from a smile at the little devices by which it is made to appear that Paul was not much of a penman. In one case an amanuensis, "Tertius," a third person, as one might say, is alleged, Rom. xvi. 22. In another place Paul is made to say expressly that he has written, on a private affair, "in his own hand" (Phil. I. 19); as if he was not used to such effort!

And this notion is kept up by the statement in another place, that he has written to the Galatians in *large*, and presumably clumsy, letters, like a rustic 1 (vi. 11).

Modern critics apologise for the ragged and incorrect style of the Epistles on the supposition that Paul *dictated*. They were intended to do so ; but the fact that such hasty and ill-digested compositions were ever allowed to be published in the name of the Church is that which needs explanation.

It is cleverly hinted by the monkish artists that he did add something as a token to every dictated Epistle, 2 Thess. iii. 17. And it is further hinted (2 Thess. ii. 2) that spurious letters were forthcoming in his name, which made such a practice necessary.

Other examples of this device are to be found in 1 Cor. xvi. 21-24 and Col. iv. 18.

Suppose this to be the intended explanation of the statement that Paul wrote only a few lines, the motive is still generally the same —to excuse the wretched composition of the Epistles, and to find a way of escape from the sharp edge of criticism directed either against the style or the matter.

## [43] CHAPTER IV.

### PAUL THE "ILLUSTRIOUS MAN."

I MUST now direct the attention of my readers to another small book, which is of equal importance to the first Church History, but which has never been properly studied and understood, so far as I can ascertain, by my predecessors in this field of inquiry.

I refer to the first List of " Illustrious Men " set forth under the names of " Jerome " and of " Gennadius." In speaking of this List, I must either raise the whole question of Church literature once more from the beginning, or I must ask my readers to assume with me that it belongs, like the Church History, to the Revival of Letters. I will take the latter course.

In fact, every argument I have used in respect to the modernity of the Church History applies with equal force to the List of " Illustrious Men." Every part, both of the external and the internal evidence, proves the book to be the production of the same monastic faction, to which in substance, though with designed variations, it corresponds.

It has been pointed out by historians like Ranke, l'Aubigne, and others who have dealt with the early sixteenth-century literature, that there were sceptics in the seats of culture, who denied that Church Story " rested upon genuine testimony," and who asserted that it was a contrivance of "saintly trickery." It appears to have been in recognition of these opinions that the Preface to the List of the alleged " Illustrious Men " was written.

No matter for the moment when the List was drawn up. The Preface must be disgusting to every man of taste. No one with an ear for sincerity in the tone of thought could be deceived by a manifesto like this. When the monks' manner is once understood, you will recognise here an [44] indirect confession of all that I have alleged on other grounds, to the effect that the Church had *no* literature at the time of the Revival of Letters, and that it was necessary to *construct* a literature on lines laid down in some old Latin and Greek writers, especially in a list of illustrious writers ascribed to Suetonius.

It is admitted that nothing of the kind has been before attempted except by "Eusebius Pamphili" in the ten books of his Church History. The catalogue of orators in Cicero's " Brutus " has also been used as a model.

It is indirectly admitted also that there are certain persons who deny that the Church had any philosophers, eloquent men, or doctors; but these persons are, in compliance with the system, referred back to the alleged fourth century, and are called "Celsus, Porphyry, Julian, mad dogs against Christ." All the tales about these alleged adversaries have come from the same mint with the rest. The literary monks felt that it would never answer their purpose to tell a one-sided tale, or fail to show how the system had triumphed over opposition in the alleged ancient times.

It is indirectly admitted that there were those who accused "our faith" of "rustic simplicity;" and this catalogue is to be flourished in the face of the learned world to show the large number of great men who founded, built up, and adorned the faith. The whole may thus be regarded, in connection with a mass of other evidence, as a statement of facts, though in false form, in relation to the books in the monasteries

during the early Tudor period. It corresponds nearly to what I have found, by very careful examination, of the report of John Leland's literary tour, which is said to have been made during the period 1533-1539.

Now, upon this List the fifth name is that of " Paul, formerly Saul." Thus in the name, and in other particulars, we have a new edition, with variations, of the brief romance of Paul. It is neither copied from the Eusebian Church History, nor from the New Testament, nor from any other source. It is simply an expansion of the plot laid down in the Eusebian system. The writer calls himself, no doubt for some purpose of identification among the faction, Eusebius Hieronymus, or Jerome. The plot has now assumed this form: —

[45] " Paul apostle, who was before Saul' was outside the number of the Twelve Apostles ; he was of the tribe of Benjamin and of the town of Judaea, Giscalis. When it was taken by the Romans, he removed with his parents to Tarsus of Cilicia. Sent by them for the study of the law to Jerusalem, by Gamaliel, a very learned man of whom Luke makes mention, he was taught. But, after he had been present at the murder of the martyr Stephen, he received letters from the pontiff of the temple to pursue those who had believed in Christ, and proceeded to Damascus. Compelled by revelation to the faith which is described in the Acts of the Apostles, he was translated from a persecutor into the Vessel of Election. When first Sergius Paulus, pro-consul of Cyprus, had believed at his preaching, he got his name from him, because he had subjected him to the faith of Christ; and, taking Barnabas with him, he travelled through many cities, and, returning to Jerusalem, was ordained Apostle of the nations (*gentium*) by Peter, James, and John.

" And because in the Acts of the Apostles there is a very full description of his conversation, I will only say this, that after the passion of the Lord in the year xxv. — that is, in the second of Nero, at the time when Festus, procurator of Judaea, succeeded Felix, he was sent bound to Rome, and, for two years remaining in full custody, he disputed against the Jews daily, concerning the advent of Christ. But you must know that, in his first satisfaction, Nero's rule not being yet strengthened, and he not breaking out into the great wickedness related of him in story, Paul was dismissed by Nero, in order that the Gospel of Christ might be preached also in the parts of the West, as he himself writes in the Second to Timothy at the time when he suffered ; and, concerning his bonds, he dictates the Epistle :

" 'In my first satisfaction no one was with me, but all left me; may it not be laid to their charge! But God was with me and comforted me, that by me the preaching might be fulfilled, and all nations might hear; and I was delivered from the mouth of the lion,' most manifestly signifying Nero as the lion, because of his cruelty. And in the following :

" 'The Lord delivered me from every evil work, and made me safe in his heavenly kingdom,' because, that is, he felt [46] his present martyrdom imminent ; for in the same Epistle he had premised: —

" ' For I am now being immolated, and the time of my resolution is at hand.'

"And he therefore, in the fourteenth year of Nero, on the same day with Peter, was beheaded for Christ's sake, and was buried in the Ostian way, after the Passion of the Lord XXXVIII."

This Latin legend is, as a legend, complete and satisfactory, and gives hints for expansion in the Acts of the Apostles, which must, in my opinion, have been in

course of composition at the time, under the supervision of the literary director. There is no mention of Giscalis in the Acts; and the striking and all-impressive legend of the martyrdom is designedly omitted from that book, which ends in a manner strangely abrupt. The conjectures by way of explaining this phenomenon have all been futile. The simplest explanation that suggests itself to my mind is that some mere pressure upon the compilers, some haste to complete and publish, may have led to the omission of the legend, which, if told at all, must be told in an elaborate manner. The first hint about the preaching in the West has been supported by an allusion to Spain, and there is a Catholic legend which represents Paul as coming to England, and looking down upon London from the height of Highgate Hill.

Paul the Martyr, and Paul the Vessel of Election, is still the ideal ; and the opinion is confirmed that the short passage alluding to the trial and martyrdom was written under the heading of Second Timothy, with the view of fixing that idea in the minds of the faithful. But the omission of all mention of Nero and the martyrdom from the Acts is one of those accusing facts which should have long ago led thorough critics to suspicion that something was wrong in the whole system of the books. However, the main point I desire to insist upon is that the long, elaborate Pauline legend of the Acts has been built upon the foundation plotted in a desultory fashion in the Church History, and given more compactly in the List of Illustrious Men.

But now, what does this literary director say concerning the Epistles?

[47] Paul "wrote nine Epistles to the seven churches : to the Romans one, to the Corinthians two, to the Galatians one, to the Ephesians one, to the Philippians one, to the Colossians one, to the Thessalonians two ; besides to his disciples, to Timothy two, to Titus one, to Philemon one. The Epistle which is addressed to the Hebrews is not believed to be his, because of the dissonance of style and of language; but whether of Barnabas, according to Tertullian, or of Luke the evangelist, according to certain others, or Clement, afterwards Bishop of the Roman Church, who, they say, arranged and adorned the SENTENCES OF PAUL in his own language, or, indeed, because Paul wrote to the Hebrews, and, because of hatred to himself among them, cut off the title of his name at the beginning of the salutation—he wrote as a Hebrew in Hebrew, that is most eloquently in his own speech—Clement turned those things which were eloquently written in Hebrew more eloquently into Greek, and this was the cause why it seems to differ from the rest of Paul's Epistles." A very involved sentence!

"Some read the Laodiceans, but by all it is exploded"? The two Eusebii are, then, closely coherent in their statements on this point. They take a positive delight in keeping the minds of their readers in a state of oscillation on this Hebrews question. They want you to believe it Paul's; and yet to believe it to be of another authorship. It may be they were guarding themselves against criticism and detection by appearing to make this frank avowal, that " God only knows who wrote " the Epistle. It has, no doubt, that effect upon the unwary reader. It may be they feared the censure from some learned Jewish scholar "This book never was written, nor could be written, by a genuine Hebrew !"

Yet it may be nothing more than the desire to keep the reader in a state of suspense and trouble which has dictated all these deliberate inventions, as they undoubtedly are. He knows nothing at all of monastic ethics who is not aware that

prevarication is essentially part of them. Paul himself, as we shall see, is held up to admiration as a grand prevaricator. Absolute statements are never to be made ; the yea-nay or shilly-shally principle is ever to be followed. " Did Paul write Hebrews?" " Yes and no." " What do [48] you mean ?" "The style is not his, but the thoughts are ! Yet, perhaps, somebody else was the author; God only knows !"

Meantime one advantage derived from these devices was that the interest, the wonder, and the mystery surrounding the literary Paul were always kept alive and growing. Luther would not have the Pauline authorship of Hebrews; and there was no overt criticism until Luther's time. But no one is said to have asked the radical question, Was there any such person as Paul, except in the artistic consciousness of the monasteries? Consequently profitless debates on this question have gone on to the present day.

There are no quotations from this Epistle in the Church History, but there are just three passages which *resemble* passages in the Hebrews ; and of one of these Paul is said to be the author, without further reference. The actual framer of the Epistle appears to have desired to insinuate that Paul was the author, by introducing the name of Timothy in the last chapter.

With regard to the name of Saul, that has been borrowed from the Old Testament, as appropriate to the ex-persecutor. He is said to be a Benjaminite for the same reason, and because Benjamin " in the morning ravined like a wolf." The desire to make Paul a thorough Jew, and yet a thorough Roman, is apparent in other additions. But every attentive student must perceive that this brief notice would not have been necessary if the Acts, in their present bulk, had been generally known, and the silence about Giscalis had been remarked.

If we compare this cold, brief notice of Paul as an Illustrious Doctor of the Church with the elaborated pictures of the Acts, we see that there has been for some reason great interest felt by the artists in labouring this ideal. On the List Paul is no more illustrious than any of the rest ; while in the New Testament his commanding personality is made to dominate the whole Christian world. Clearly it is the Roman interest which here operates. The Church cannot get on without the Martyr-Founders, Peter and Paul. And, when once she had determined to make Paul the greatest of early doctors, the most eloquent and profound of all, there arose the necessity to devote a fuller attention to him, or a less attention to other of the " Illustrious." But there are [49] hints that at one time it was designed to make a great ideal of James as bishop of Jerusalem ; for his romance seems more affecting in its early sketch than that of Paul. In short, when we say that Paul is the Ideal of Rome and of the West, we point to the all-paramount influence of the Latin or Roman Catholic Church. The life, Westward career, and the death of Paul in the metropolis are an allegory, not of the true story of Church origins, but of that which the monks wished us to believe was the true story. of those origins.

I have now dealt, I hope sufficiently, with the two important key-books to Church history, and the system of what I call the monastic Round Table. It is from want of knowledge of these key-books, and the relation in which they stand to the New Testament, as containing the sketch-plot of the great ecclesiastical romance, that modern critics have entirely failed to touch the roots of the Pauline problem.

Substantially they are *one* book, and yield evidence of the probability that the primary scheme was the offspring of *one* inventive brain, who directed the execution

of the earlier parts of it. It is quite true, as our scholars say and know, that these books are "the indispensable mine of materials for the history of the Canon, and the rise of the particular books in it." But they are mistaken both as to the date and the nature of these key-books. They are Renaissance books ; there is not a particle of ancient testimony in them ; they reveal throughout a system of art and craft, which has been so strongly buttressed up by endless repetitions and. variations that it imposes upon those who do not reflect that simple, straightforward, unvarying statements need no such repetitions to commend them to our judgment and our conscience. The Canon is not a monument of witnessed antiquity, but of modern monastic artifice.



## [50] CHAPTER V.

### THE STRUCTURE OF THE PAULINE EPISTLES AS SEEN IN THE MISSAL.

LET me now briefly indicate that the structure of the Epistles fully bears out all that I have hitherto written on the mode of composition adopted by the monks, and revealed so plainly in the Eusebian works.

Let us take the Epistle to the Romans. It begins with the word Paul; it ends with a long string of names of saluted persons —Phoebe, Priscilla, and Aquila, and so on, with appended hints of little personal romances about them, which excite curiosity, and all tend to enhance our sense of the grandeur and all-attractive power of the great apostolic personage. The artists, with their intense anxiety to secure this effect, have overdone their work. There are haste and clumsiness discernible, as in many other parts of the books. But, at all events, the effect is secured. Paul, with his troop of disciples and friends, is present to our fancy, and the illusion is complete! The like phenomena present themselves in following Epistles. The great object is to secure the hinted *story* in the vague imagination of the reader, to offer allusive glimpses of the great man on his travels " from Jerusalem round about to Illyricum," the host of friendships he had formed, the vast authority he had acquired ! But the work is not well done. In Galatians these allusions are made in so obscure and slovenly a way, they are perfectly shocking to taste; and the reader who comes freshly to the perusal will exclaim, "No sane man could ever write an alleged letter like this." It is not a letter at all; it is a sort of cento of texts on different subjects woven into the mythological frame-work. More and more the utter nonsense of the opinion that books concocted in this fashion could have come down in constant use during a period of [51] one thousand years is felt ! In truth, the evidence which the whole printed Bible gives of hasty and illiterate composition is of itself one of the deadliest arguments against its antiquity. There must have been extreme eagerness on the part of the literary factions interested to rush their work, in order to secure some advantages of power and profit to themselves.

But now to return to the Romans. The historical setting secured, and the Roman Church duly recognised by the great apostle, with all its distinguished members, the next object is theological. It is to introduce the Creed, which is done by means of the short Lection i.1-6. There are many forms of the Creed, or Symbol, shorter or longer; they are frequently and on principle introduced ; and the repetition of which some readers of the New Testament complain is the essential art of the composition. It must be remembered, if we are to read these Epistles with any judgment, that they fall asunder, on analysis, into short lections (or lessons), which have been written to explain and illustrate the anniversary feasts of the Church and the dogmas they commemorate. The Missal is the key to the Epistles.

*Vigil of the Nativity.*—Thus we find that this Lection i. 1-6 has been written for the Vigil of the Nativity or Christmas day; the thought of the Advent of the divine son of David according to the flesh being present to the minds of the faithful.

*Ember Saturday.*—Again, the Lection Romans v.1-5 has been composed for Ember Saturday. " Brethren, being justified by faith, let us have peace with God through Our Lord Jesus Christ," etc. The thought of the day is the outpouring of the spirit,

based on Joel ii., and the Lection becomes emotional and musical in the Introit. "*Charitas Dei difusa est in cordibus nostris, Alleluia!*"

The following verses 6ff do not read well as a continuation of this glowing outburst, which in fact they are not. They are a confused piece of theological reasoning, which irritates by its obscurity and want of coherence.

*Feast of St. Ignatius.*—The Lection or short Epistle viii. 35-39 is a truly poetical outburst, a short hymn; but it does not seem to be clearly connected with the foregoing train of thought.

It is quite in its proper place on the feast of St. Ignatius, [52] bishop and martyr (one of the saints of the Benedictine system), where we find this martyr's song given as the Epistle of the day.

*St. Andrew's Day.*—The Lection x. 10-18 is the Epistle for St. Andrew's day, and is another musical passage perfectly appropriate to the praises of a preacher and ruler in the Church. But Romans x. does not read well as a continuous argument.

*Trinity Sunday.*—In chapter xi. there is no particular coherence of the hymn-like outburst in vv. 33-36 with the preceding argument. But it is perfectly suitable as an Epistle for Trinity Sunday, which reminds the faithful of the mysterious nature of the Godhead.

*First Sunday in Advent.*—In chapter xiii. the Lection vv. 11-14 is very ill-jointed to the preceding; but it is perfectly suited as an independent Epistle to the associations of the first Sunday in Advent (omitting the latter member of verse 14).

Chapter xv. 4-13 is another original independent Lection or Epistle for second Sunday in Advent, complete in itself. Verse 14 does not continue well.

*St. Agatha.*—In 1 Corinthians i. 26-31 there is a Lection hardly connected by strict logic with the preceding verses, but perfectly appropriate to be read on the feast of St. Agatha in its allusions to the weaker instruments or vessels of divine grace.

1 Corinthians iv. 1-5 is a Lection for the Fourth Sunday in Advent. The rest seems like rambling talk, in which, however, care is taken to introduce the names of Apollos and Timothy, with hints of apostolic sufferings.

1 Corinthians v. 7-8, on the old and new Leaven, is perfectly suitable for *Easter Sunday*, with its associations of a new year and a new moral beginning.

*Corpus Christi.*—The notable Lection 1 Corinthians xi. 23-29, which contains the alleged apostolic tradition of the Eucharist and the doctrine of transubstantiation, seems very badly fitted in the place where it stands. And again the impression is that the passage has been amplified to fill up space. It is suitable to the solemnity of *Corpus Christi, caro cibus, sanguis potus!*

In 1 Corinthians xv. 1-10 the object is to introduce a form of the Creed, and to represent Paul in accord with the [53] Eusebian plot, as a "witness" of the resurrection. But how abrupt is the transition from the last verse of the preceding chapter; and how weakly followed by an attempt sophistically to *argue* what is said to have been *proved* by testimony.

2 Corinthians i. 3-7 is a Lection or little Epistle perfectly suited to the Mass of One Martyr and Bishop. But it is followed by a vague, rambling series of allusions to the theory of Paul's travels in Asia and Macedonia, etc., with mention of his companions, which has the usual fabulous purpose in view. And the work is again most clumsily done, and is transparent sophistry, as we shall presently see.

*St. Lucy.*—The same kind of artifice is observably in 2 Corinthians, chapter xi. x. 17-xi. 1-2 is a Short Lesson for the day of St. Lucy, and is imbedded amid more strange ravings about Paul's apostleship, and his relations to Macedonia and Achaia, and Damascus, and his romantic adventures in earth and heaven. Never was such a rigmarole imposed on the world in the name of an illustrious man before or since ! And, if this were not enough, we have the Epistle to the Galatians inflicted on us; wherein, if any clear theological meaning can be detected or not, the pseudo-historical purpose clearly can be. But such has been the haste of the scribe, he has not taken pains to harmonise himself with his colleagues, who were busy with the Acts of the Apostles. How many different Pauls may be detected in this strange medley?

The Epistle to the Ephesians reads infinitely better, and one imagines that a man in many respects good and sincere might have written some of these sentences, Care is taken, as usual, to introduce Paul's name as author (twice), with some of his ideal companions.

*Feast of Our Holy Redeemer.*—A brief compendium of theology is Ephesians i. 3-9, which is an Epistle for the Feast of our Holy Redeemer.

*Vigil of the Ascensio*—Ephesians iv. i-6 is a brief description of the Catholic Church as one body. Verses 7-13 form the proper Epistle for the Vigil of the Ascension.

*Palm Sunday.* —Philippians ii. 5-11 was originally written for Palm Sunday and the Feast of the Finding of the Holy Cross.

*St. Paul, the First Hermit.*—In Philippians iii. 7-12 we [54] find a Lesson for the day of St. Paul, the first Hermit, who is connected with St. Maur; both of them creations of the Benedictines. The passage breathes eloquently of that spirit of self-renunciation, and longing for " perfection," which so thoroughly betrays the discipline of monastic life. Occasion is taken to join to this a short pretended autobiography of Paul the Apostle. His personality is forced upon us at every turn, with that of the faithful shadow, Timothy.

*Day of St. Timothy.* —Interesting is the Lesson or little Epistle written for the day of St. Timothy himself (January 24th). See I Timothy vi. I I-16. Here the opportunity is taken to introduce the mythology of the Creed, as it were incidentally : "Christ Jesus, who, before Pontius Pilate, witnessed a good confession."

*Christmas Day.*—The Lesson, Titus ii. 11-15, introduces a brief condensation of the Creed, with iii. 4-7, for reading on Christmas Day.

*Feast of SS. Peter and Paul.*—But it is the study of the service for the annual Feast of SS. Peter and Paul which teaches us the motive and the manner of these *sentences*, which were developed into *little -Epistles*, these little Epistles being developed into the *larger Epistles* as we now have them. One of the key-phrases to the meaning of the day is, " Thou shalt make them princes over all the earth." The prayer recites how by these martyrs " religion was begun." The key-word to the ideal of Peter is, " Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church," uttered in the Gradual, repeated in the Gospel and in the Communion. All the Petrine mythology is built upon that theory, which employs a pun for its justification (*Pierre*).

*Commemoration of St. Paul.*—In the Commemoration of St. Paul on the following day, June 30th, the Introit is the saying, " I know whom I have believed," etc., which has been inserted in 2 Timothy i. 12. The prayer recites his teaching of the multitude of the Gentiles. The Epistle is formed of the Lesson, Galatians i. II-20, which is one of the numerous fictitious autobiographies that these artists are so anxious to put into

the mouth of Paul, with allusions to Jerusalem, Arabia, Damascus, and his fellow apostle, Peter, ending with the sanction, "Before God I lie not." Some further sentences of the kind occur in the Gradual.

[55] *Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul.*—Again, on the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul, the legend is read from the Acts ix. 1-22. The Gradual glorifies "The great St. Paul, the Vessel of Election, who deserved to possess the twelfth throne, Preacher of Truth, and Doctor of the Gentiles in faith and truth." He is inseparably associated with Peter, the holder of the keys of the kingdom of heaven.

After a review of the laborious efforts made to establish the idea of the joint founders of religion in Rome, the omission of the martyrdom from the Acts appears the more startling and inexplicable. However, it is clearly not a later, but an earlier invention ; and the study of the Eusebian works and of the Missal gives us a far better insight into the evolution of the whole Pauline system than the exclusive study of the New Testament can possibly yield.

We see what the process of gradual construction has been. It was arranged that there should be fourteen Epistles, and that one should be held of doubtful authorship. It appears to have been at first arranged, perhaps from motives of haste and urgency, that the Epistles should be very short. We can detect that they were so, consisting merely of slight autobiographical hints, allusions to persons and places, intended to create illusion, to make the impression that Paul was a most extraordinary man.

But the matter grew ; the statement about the very few lines was omitted ; the autobiographical matter was increased ; and theological and ethical matter suitable to the feasts was interspersed among it ; and so the strange congeries known as the Pauline Epistles came into being. And the whole has been ill done, in every respect of literary care and propriety ; so that for a student to attempt to read through these productions as he would any other collection of letters, to ascertain what the writer is really driving at, is one of the most painful, irritating, disappointing, and hopeless tasks in the world. The structure is that of clumsy patchwork, not that of rational coherent thought.

I have shown, however, that this false structure may be dissolved by the analytic method, which discovers a number of little independent Epistles, and refers these to their proper places on the anniversary feasts of the Church, and which discovers also the few leading symbolical sentences, [56] which contained the ideal of Paul as the inseparable fellow of Peter in the foundership of the Roman Church. I am certain that it is impossible, except in this way, to understand and to account for the extraordinary phenomena of these notorious compositions.

To sum up on this head. When we attend the Mass, and listen to the Gospel and the Epistle of the day, we feel that the whole authority of the Roman Catholic and Apostolic Church inspires and dictates every utterance; and every utterance of "the Lord" or of "the Apostle" is the more impressive in proportion as it is vague, sonorous, musical.

But if, not satisfied with listening we desire to *see* and *read* for ourselves, then, although the reading be obscure and difficult, we are still imposed upon by the vague idea of the marvellous man with his marvellous autobiography, who could not be expected to write with the same lucidity and common sense that one expects in ordinary men.

In short, listening must be *alternated* with reading, if we would fully understand how theology has been interwoven with history in the legend of Paul, and in the Pauline Epistles.

## [57] CHAPTER IV.

### THE PAULINE EPISTLES ANALYSED BY THE AID OF CASSIAN.

BUT let me further illustrate the way in which the ethical portions of the Epistles have been built up on the system of Sentences. For this purpose I use a very important work, ascribed to one of the mock "Illustrious" — "The Collations of Cassian," a work recommended for monastic reading in the Rule of St. Benedict, that "summary of true Christianity," as Bossuet says, and by a perfect chorus of the same faction. I hold it to be impossible that the work could have been composed before the early Tudor period; and in all probability the bulky form of the present book and its good Latin indicate the later sixteenth century. My copy is dated from the Vatican, 1588.

This work was appointed to be read at meal-times aloud in the cloisters; and it gives us a very clear insight into the discipline and habits of the monkish mind.

We perceive that the collection of ethical texts ascribed to the "Blessed Apostle" has been written for the purpose of serving as basis to a system of life, which is here fully explained in these Collations, or Dialogues, which are, as usual, ascribed to various imaginary persons, Abbots of imaginary times and places in the East.

As these matters are so new to the majority of my readers, it seems to me important to show that many sentences have been written under the name of the "Blessed Apostle," with a view to sanction and commend to imitation Apostolic mendacity, and which would certainly justify all those literary arts and crafts which I have been exposing in these pages. I am aware that many persons find it, as I have found it; hard to escape the prejudices of our education, and to understand how men who acquired so great an [58] odour of sanctity, so great a reputation for "charity," should have been so reckless of the obligation to veracity, which seems to be prior in right estimation to either.

I have shown my readers that the great literary Apostle is from first to last the creation of the monkish literary artists, and that their labour has been directed to the object of filling the minds of their readers with profound respect, admiration, and awe for the Person, well knowing that, if this were effected, the written teaching under the patronage of such a Person would be submissively received. I am writing, of course, not for those who accept something because a great man wrote it, but for those who find a great thing first, and argue a great author from it. Judged by this test, there is nothing really great in the Pauline Epistles. And when you join a monastic circle, and listen to these Collations, you find something better than the Epistles, as we have them in our hands. We have the mind of Paul, which he is made to say is the mind of Christ, unfolded from its germ-principles, and expanded into sermons, which have at least the merit of being easy and agreeable reading on the whole, though the habit of incessant iteration becomes somewhat tedious.

I am now to show that the venerable Apostle is made to sanction *mendacity* in the interests of "charity" and the salvation of men's souls. As this matter has never been brought before the general public, it seems important to dwell upon it sufficiently, so that there shall be no misunderstanding as to the real meaning of the custodians of Paul's Epistles, and their only authoritative expounders. I refer to Collation xvii., ascribed to one Abbot Joseph, who is supposed to lead certain visitor-monks to his

quiet seposit cell, where they spend the whole sleepless night, their hearts burning within them at his discourse. They then quit the cell, and proceed to a place of session one hundred paces off: And the conversation begins afresh among these dejected sleepless ones !

Conducted in high-flown rhetorical Latin; with due interspersion of professional Greek, the conversation is very amusing in its way. These students of the " Perfect Life " are in a situation where, if they keep the solemn promise they had made, in the presence of all the brethren, to return to their own convent, they will incur detriment of the [59] spiritual life. If, in the study of their " perfection," they remain in the society of the Abbot Joseph, they dread, on the other hand, the " abrupt perils of a lie." Here, then, men are placed in the most painful and impossible position in the world. They are students of the Perfect Life: that life demands fidelity to one's vows and promises; yet the suggestion is made that lying and faithlessness may be the means of greater profit to that very perfection of the spiritual life. Can any teaching be conceived more deliberately calculated and contrived to corrupt and utterly break down the merest instincts of good faith and veracity in the minds of these followers of the Apostle ?

Craftily and stealthily, the solution of the difficulty is gradually propounded. Says the Blessed Abbot: "Are you certain that you can gain *more* spiritual profit in this region ?" The reply is made by the other Abbot, the head of the wandering monks, that, grateful as they are for the services of their early teachers, who have excited in them an " egregious thirst of perfection," there can be no comparison between the benefits derivable from their old seat of tuition, and those to be gained in the society of the inimitably pure and magnificently perfect Abbot Joseph !

The Worthy Abbot, in reply to these exalted tributes, then proceeds to relieve the anxiety of his friends by undermining the obligation to make *definite promises*; or, if they are made, the obligation to keep them !

In the first place, " Perfect Men ought to define nothing absolutely." It is, in a general sense, a sound and convenient principle, that they should efficaciously keep their promises. For that very reason the monk should define nothing abruptly, lest he should be forced to fulfil an incautious promise ; or, recalled by the consideration of a more honest view, he should become a prevaricator of his promise. How is he to avoid shipwreck of conscience? He must evidently choose the greater advantage, or the least out of great evils. In this case, if they think that greater spiritual profit may be conferred upon them by their tarrying in this place than by returning to their own convent, and that they cannot fulfil their promise without the loss of great advantages, it is better for them to undergo the cost of a lie. The lie, once passed and done with, cannot be repeated, nor by itself generate other lies ! On the other [60] hand, by keeping true to their word, they go back to a lukewarm state of spiritual life, which will be to them a daily and interminable loss.

Oh, it is quite venial —nay, it is laudable —to change an incautious definition, if you are led thereby to a "healthier part." You must not think it a " prevarication of your constancy," but an "emendation of your rashness, when you correct a vicious promise." The Abbot then proceeds to justify the convenient system of morals by reference to Scriptural examples.

If the holy apostle Peter had kept his word, " Thou shalt never wash my feet ;" if he had not withdrawn this, he would have been condemned to eternal death ! We see

this again from the parable of the two sons bidden to go into the vineyard. What each of them *said* was of no profit; both broke their word, but one did so in a laudable manner. On the other hand, the bloody Herod kept his word and oath, and so became the slayer of the Lord ; and, by the vain fear of perjury, he incurred damnation and eternal punishment.

The *end* must ever be considered, and by that your course must be directed.

But some scruple is felt when the mandate of the Gospel is recalled: " Let your speech be Yea, Yea, Nay, Nay; what is more abundant than these is from the evil." How can the transgressor of so great a precept be justified ? How can a bad beginning turn out well in the end?

The subtle Abbot replies that all depends on the *purpose of the doer*. The *effect* of the action is not to be considered. Some have been condemned for actions out of which good has sprung ; and, on the contrary, some have attained to the highest justice through blameworthy acts. Your view of the necessary and holy *end* sustains the necessity of the blameworthy *beginning*. In short, good beginnings have not profited bad authors, nor have bad deeds been nocuous to good authors.

How useful the deed of Judas, which brought about salvation, and yet "good for him if he had not been born " ! How guilty the treachery of patriarch Jacob ; yet he obtained thereby the perpetual heritage of blessing: he was not merely excusable, but laudable! These principles are insisted . upon with the greatest emphasis and iteration.

[61] "They are what the world has commonly called Jesuitical, perhaps unfairly so, since they are found in the works of an elder order, the teachers of all the rest.

There can be no doubt that they have been applied in literary work. The Apostolic sentence is cited, " Thoughts accusing one another, or defending one another in the day in which God shall judge the hidden things of men " (Romans ii.).

And this is explained to mean, as before, that it is the purpose or destination of mind which either rewards or condemns the man. The sentence, " Piety, which has the promise of the life which now is and of that to come" (1 Timothy iv.), is elucidated by the observation, that whatever is done for the charity of God and the love of piety, though it seems to begin with harsh and adverse principles, is not only worthy of no blame; but of the highest praise: Our Abbot has thoroughly imbibed the mind of the Blessed Apostle —that is to say, he is of one and the same mind with the created Ideal of his class. And we arrive at the climax of this reasoning —to wit, that:

"Our inner man, fed on milk from the tender beginnings of first principles, having advanced through divers ages to the more robust, and thence to the age and whiteness of the senses, and arriving at the perfect man and measure of the age of the fulness of Christ, has laid down boyish things: has that inner man, do you believe now, fallen into the variety of falsehood ; has he not rather attained the fulness of perfection ?" (Cf. Ephesians iv. 13f)

But may not our conscience give occasion to "the weak " to lie ? And do not we read in the Prophet, "Thou shalt destroy all them that speak lies," and "The mouth that lies destroys the soul "? So questions the other Abbot. The reply is, that the truth of the Scripture is not to be changed because of scandal to " the weak ;" that occasions cannot be wanting to those destined to perish, or who wish to perish. The



question is really evaded; and the Abbot enthusiastically resumes his praises of saintly mendacity.

The saints, he says, have used lies, even as hellebore is used in diseases of the body. Rahab, harlot and liar, has earned eternal blessing. If she had not lied, she would never have been inserted in the authors of the Lord's Nativity and the Catalogue of the Patriarchs. Delilah, on [62] the other hand, by exploring the truth and telling it, earned perpetual perdition.

But the objection is again raised : This might be done under the Law, but dare we do it under the Gospel ? Does not the Apostle say, " Lie not one to another " ?

And the reply is that not even under the old covenant was there a Licence of Lying, and yet many venially usurped it. How much more under the new dispensation may this licence hold !

The Apostle teaches: "Let no one seek his own, but the good of another," and " Charity seeks not her own, but others' good ;" and of himself, " I seek not what is useful to me, but to many, that they may be saved." (Cf. I Corinthians xiii., Philipians ii.)

With extreme pertinacity the Apostle is made to teach the necessity of telling the truth, if we desire to be useful to *ourselves*; the necessity of falsehood, if we should condescend to the use of *others*, and " with the weak become weak, that we may profit the weak."

Then the Abbot, with untiring iteration, points out that the Apostles were of his opinion about the frequent *noxiousness of truth*. Certainly the teaching Abbots have made Paul say anything that suits their purpose. For example:

" I became to the Jews as a Jew, that I might make gain as a Jew; to those who were under the law as if I were under the law, though I was not under the law, that I might gain those who were under the law; to those who were without law as if I were without law, though I was not without the law of God, but in the law of Christ, that I might gain those who were without law ; I became weak to the weak, that I might gain the weak : I became all things to all men, that I might save ail" (1 Corinthians ix. 20-23)

Then we are shown how the flexible Apostle, consistently with this profession, habitually "changes his definitions," and deliberately shifts his policy to the need of the occasion. For example

" Lo ! I, Paul, say to you that, if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing" (Galatians v. 2).

And yet in the case of Timothy he is made to assume, as it were, "an image of the Jewish superstition," by circumcising him (Acts xvi.).

His relations to James and the other elders over the [63] same question are another example of the same pious shiftiness.

The Apostle is made to say: " I, through the law, am dead to the law, that I may live to God" (Galatians ii. 19) ; and yet they cause him to be purified according to the law, and to offer vows in the temple after the Mosaic rite (Acts xviii.).

The Athenians were " without the law of God ;" and here the all-accommodating Apostle is made to preach a sermon, in which he refers to the altar inscribed to an unknown God. He is made to talk about their religion as if he were " without law," and then to insinuate the faith of Christ. He is made to suppress all his knowledge of

the divine law, and to quote a verse of a Gentile poet rather than a sentence of Moses or of Christ.

He is made to *indulge* those who were unable to practise continence (I Corinthians vii. i-6), and to feed some on milk, not on solid food, saying that he was among them in weakness and fear and much trembling (1 Corinthians ii.-iii.). He is made to approve those who eat and those who abstain (Romans xiv.). He who weds a maiden does well, and he who does not does better ! (I Corinthians vii.).

He is made to treat the justice of the law in which he had lived as dung that he might gain Christ, and yet is made to comply with legal observance with an insincere heart !

Again he is made to say, " If I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a prevaricator " (Gal. ii.); and yet where, consulting his own *mind and intention*, he finds that truth is noxious, he acts the profitable lie !

Every pains is taken by the Abbot to show how irrational are the obstinate scruples in some minds about the obligations of the given word. The Doctor of the Gentiles is made to teach the monks, and through them to teach us, the propriety of dissimulation as well as of simulation. He is made to speak of the greatness of his revelations under the person of another: " I know a man in Christ (whether in the body or out of the body I know not, God knows) caught up to the third heaven; and I know a man of this kind that he was caught into Paradise, and heard ineffable words, which it is not lawful for a man to speak" (2 Corinthians xii.).

[64] There remain some other Pauline feats in these arts of deceit, dodgery, and prevarication, which our Abbots have delighted to write in their *Apostle*.

"Paul, the Vessel of Election, writing to the Corinthians, promises his return by an *absolute definition*, saying, I *will* come to you when I shall have passed through Macedonia. For I *will* pass through Macedonia; but I *will* remain with you, or even winter, that ye may bring me on my way wherever I go. For I am unwilling to see you only in transit, for I hope to remain some time with you" (I Corinthians xvi. 3-7).

He is made to recall this intention in 2 Corinthians i. 15, and to confess that he had not kept his word, and to defend himself against the charge that he was guilty of levity, or acting upon the Yea-Nay principle. He is made to imprecate, and call God as witness to his soul, that it was to spare them he had not come to Corinth. He is compared to the angels who changed their minds on the visit to Lot ! (Genesis xix.).

My readers may be wearied and disgusted with these things ; yet they are most necessary to be understood, if the truth about this extraordinary series of alleged Letters is to be understood, which contain so many Apostolic precedents for the Apostolic life of the monasteries, loosely arranged and tacked together under the form of Epistles, and connected with a personal narrative or biographical romance.

To conclude on this head. If the student picks out from the Epistles and arranges together all the significant alleged autobiographical statements of Paul, he can but derive from them the impression that, if there really was such a person, he was the most inconsistent and incomprehensible man that ever wrote. If he adds to this study the legends in the Acts, the bewilderment will increase, and the problem must be abandoned as utterly defying solution.

But if he studies the earlier and later sources indicated by the monastic faction itself, where the gradual rise of the whole legend is hinted, he will be of opinion that the incomprehensibility of the Ideal Person arises from the fact that his creators had

themselves fixed upon the design to be "all things to all men," always under the condition that there should be subservience to their rule. Their one [65] endeavour is to fix the names of CHRIST and of the APOSTLES in the minds of men, by means of all arts of expansion and variation, designed coincidences or designed contradictions in the books. All this cajolery about Paul, *splendide mendax*, is a remarkable effort of wit of a certain order; and the Apostle of Contradictions and Mendacity will doubtless continue to be evoked by all the sects so long as the Christian Church shall remain in existence.

## [66] CHAPTER VII.

### FABRICATED TESTIMONIES TO PAUL.

THE further study of this subject will serve to show what great pains have been taken by the monastic literary faction to establish the fame, and to protect the Epistles, of this great imaginary Doctor of the Gentiles. One cannot but admire the success with which they appear to have studied human nature, and to have created a multitude of illusions, into which the learned world has so readily fallen.

I proceed to show how they ascribe to others of the mock "Illustrious List" a number of mock "testimonies" to Paul and his Epistles, always begging the reader to bear in mind that what we have to do with is a literary Round Table—in other words, with a collaboration of literary men, all working in one library and upon one scheme, laid down for them originally, as it seems highly probable, by one master-spirit in fiction.

Paul is made by them to allude to an Oral as well as a Literary Teaching—2 Thessalonians ii. 15 ; and this illusion—Word *or* Epistle—no doubt haunts the minds of many persons : it is the dogma of the Catholic Church ; but the truth is that the whole Christian system is *solely* the work of *literary men*. He is made to require obedience to his epistolary commands (2 Corinthians ii. 9, vii. 15), while Peter is made to refer to the obscurity of Paul's Epistles, and to warn against their abuse (2 Peter iii. 15).

*James*.—James, who stands second on the Illustrious List, is made to allude in his Epistle to the teaching of justification by faith, and partly to correct it. The attentive reader of the New Testament will be aware how, under the old opinion, these hints and short allusions have contributed to deepen the impression of the great influence of Paul. It [67] is the strength of the artists' position among the credulous, and those, from any cause, incapable of study and criticism. But it is the weakness of the position to the true critic, because the fall of the idol Paul involves with it the fail of the whole Apostolic theory.

*Barnabas*—You cannot think of Barnabas of Cyprus without thinking of Paul: if Paul goes, Barnabas also vanishes; and *vice versa* !

*Luke*.—Luke, the medic of Antioch, hangs on Paul, as the "companion, of all his peregrinations," and to whom Paul is made to allude, along with his Gospel, in sentences expressly framed for that purpose: "The Brother whose praise in the Gospel is through all the Churches ;" "Luke, the most dear physician, salutes you ;" "Luke is with me alone." It is most important to note, because it has never been pointed out before, that those sentences have been planned in Latin, to be reproduced in Latin in the Epistles.

Again, as we have seen, Paul is made to say in his Epistles, "According to my Gospel;" and this is done expressly to sanction Luke's volume, and his Gospel as having been learned from the Apostle Paul, and also from the rest of the Apostles. And Luke is made to *echo* this statement in his preface. It is added that he wrote the Gospel from hearsay—an audacious statement for all those who are aware, from its mere structure, that it consists, in its basis, of a number of little Gospels or Lections designed to illustrate the feasts of the Christian year.

*Hermas.*—The tenth name on the List of the Illustrious is Hermas, and to him Paul is made to allude in the Epistle to the Romans.

*Seneca.*—The eleventh name is that of Seneca. And there is just as good reason to set him down among the friends of Paul as there is in the case of any of those just named. The words of the compiler of the List of the "Illustrious" are quite definite :

"Lucius Annaeus Seneca of Corduba, disciple of Sotion, and uncle of Lucian, the poet, was of most continent life. I would not place him in the Catalogue; of Saints, if I were not provoked thereto by the Epistles which are read by a very large number of persons, of Paul to Seneca, or of Seneca to Paul. In these, being teacher of Nero, and most powerful of that time, he says that he wishes to be in the [68] like place among his sect that Paul holds among the Christians. Two years before Peter and Paul were crowned with martyrdom he was put to death by Nero."

In all the older editions of Seneca a pair of empty little Epistles, duly forged for the purpose of establishing this connection, have come down to us. No one now believes in them ; but how suggestive is the fact ! It should of itself have led to the discovery of a multitude of similar forgeries in the old Latin writings. In this case there was probably some desire, not only to support the fable of Paul's connection with Nero, but to cast lustre upon his name by association with the beautiful writings of the stoic sage.

*Clement.*—The fifteenth name on the List is that of Clement, of whom Paul is made to say, on the usual system of Sentences : "With Clement and the rest of my fellow labourers, whose names are written in the book of life." And Clement, in turn, is duly made to write to the Corinthians, those troublesome folk, and bid them take up the Epistles of Paul 1

*Ignatius.*—The sixteenth name among the mock "Illustrious" is that of Ignatius, who appears to be made to write some vague allusion to Paul in his Epistle to the Ephesians. But the Ignatian Greek is most vile, and the Ignatian Epistles were really composed in Latin.

*Polycarp.*—Polycarp is the next or seventeenth on the List. He is made to write an Epistle to the Philippians, and to allude to Paul's Epistle to the same folk. He is also made to adduce 1 Corinthians vi. 2 with the reference, "as Paul teaches."

It is, however, part of the mistaken view of the subject, arising from the acceptance of the false chronology, to suppose that the alleged "Apostolic Fathers" quote from and build upon the Apostles. The discovery of this it was which led me first to see the enormous fictions that had been at work in the Christian literature, for it is absurd to suppose that Paul, after making a vast reputation as a literary man in the *first* century, was afterwards almost lost in oblivion in the *second* century. And the like applies to the deeds and sufferings of Christ himself, and to the whole fable of the origins. After all, these mythologists have made some great blunders in their system.

The alleged "Apostolic Fathers" are made to repeat [69] some of the same Lectures or little Epistles that we find placed under Paul's name, with variations. Thus Clement repeats the episode on charity (1 Corinthians xiii.), and several other things which remind of the same Epistle, and of some others, the details of which will be found in the handbooks, and which I have not space to adduce fully here. Nor is it necessary.

It is very probable that Clement and the First Epistle to the Corinthians may have been composed by one scribe from brief phrases and hints supplied by the direction. The evidence is dead against the ordinary theory of copying and imitation.

Take the richest theological Epistle ascribed to Paul that to the Romans. Positively these so-called post-Apostolic men *do not know it*. They have merely some faint echoes of its contents; which is a very different thing. And it is the merest sophistry to confound them, or to talk of "Reminiscences," where there is no proof of anything of the kind. I must distinctly warn my readers against this fallacy of the handbooks and introductions to the New Testament, the only thorough cure for which is to read these "post-Apostolic" men for themselves. They will then discover that these writers, assumed to be following in the steps of their forerunners, and to be diligently perusing their writings as we have them, are doing nothing of the kind. They are dreaming, rambling, and raving; but they *do not know* that romantic figure of Paul that is known to us, nor yet his alleged writings as we have them.

In the interests of devout belief, it would be well that none should ever read this so-called "second-century literature." But, in the interest of literary science, it should be denounced as a discreditable falsehood on the part of any scholar, who has studied that literature, to assert that the writers know anything of the tremendous events which are described in the Canonical Gospels and Acts and Epistles as having taken place in the preceding age. No student who follows the path of science can possibly, when this matter is understood, adhere any longer to the ecclesiastically "orthodox" opinion of Christianity.

The reader may inquire, How came the fabricators so to blunder in their construction of the "Apostolic" and "post-Apostolic" literature? The answer may be found in the [70] study of the two key-books of the Eusebii, and in a number of catalogues following them, all parts of the same scheme. A host of imaginary writers was created to stretch through the long ages; and those who are alleged to cover the period of, say, the year 70 to the year 392 have all had writings attributed to them, which had been produced during a very short period, and by one set of scribes. It was evidently necessary to bestow the greatest pains upon the first or Apostolic age in this scheme, because that was the imaginary age of Origen. Hence the earlier names on the List, the names of the evangelists and apostles, have had writings ascribed to them beyond all the pretended later in importance; and these have been elaborated with a care denied to the "post-Apostolic" men. It was found necessary, and it was determined, to write not only the little Gospels and the little Epistles for the Service Book, but to provide what should appear as a new Law, or a New Covenant or Testament independently, in ampler bulk.<sup>18</sup> But in executing this work, which was the secondary stage in their labours, they forgot they were thus making the scheme top-heavy, as it were. The head is highly developed, but it has a most ghostly kind of body to support it!

Had they calculated upon intelligent readers, they would have felt the necessity of enlarging the "post-Apostolic" men *pari passu* with the "Apostolic" men. Barnabas and Hermas and Clement and the rest ought not to be left so deeply in the dark, after the brilliancy that has been made to flash upon Paul! It is beyond expression ludicrous, when you inquire of an Ignatius, or a Polycarp, "what interesting traits have you to narrate of those great Apostles and their writings, and those Epistles which you are so fond of alluding to?" to listen in reply to their maunderings and

mutterings, as if they were in a dream, or moving about and groping in a world half realised. You demand a fact or two, and you are offered a theory, a creed expressed in language the most flatulent and vague that can be devised. The truth is, that the outlines of this creed and theory are at the bases of both the alleged "Apostolic" and "post-Apostolic" writing, and can be clearly detected ; but the [71]Apostolic writings, as we have them in the New Testament, are later than the "post-Apostolic" writings as we have them. Consequently, the notion that our New Testament is the earliest source for Christian origins is absurd ; and equally so the notion that our Pauline Epistles are earlier than those of Clement, Ignatius, and the rest. The converse is nearer the truth.

The student will perceive that, if the wretched stuff which is labelled "post-Apostolic" had been put together and called a "New Testament," it could hardly have escaped contempt and derision, because it is so feeble and wandering, so uncertain in thought, and so detestable in style, especially in the Greek version. But, though the Pauline Epistles and other parts of the New Testament are not written in very good Latin, and have been turned into very bad Greek, there can be no doubt that, as a whole, the New Testament, crowded as it is with story, with incident, with teeming hints of a grand movement in the world going on, has made a profound impression on the imagination of mankind.

What would you say, my reader, if I had a wonderful book relating the life of your own father, stating and identifying you as his son ; and I, deeply interested, were to seek you out for further information, and discover that you had never seen or heard of the book in question ? "I lived in my father's home to the age of manhood," you say ; "but I knew nothing of these wonderful adventures and these wonderful writings of his. I assure you he never suffered or did these things !" What conclusion could possibly be drawn from such a revelation, except that a literary hoax had been practised upon us ? And, painful as it is to me still to write the words, it was one of the greatest hoaxes ever perpetrated, to set down a romantic tale about Paul and his Epistles, of which his own alleged spiritual children actually knew next to nothing !

I hope the familiar illustration will make clear to the learned no less than to the popular mind what the state of the case with reference to this "post-Apostolic" nonsense is. As you cannot find the Paul you know in these men, so neither can you find him in any following imaginary age, until you arrive at what we know to be a real epoch, however hard it may be to date it correctly—the epoch of the [72] Revival of Letters. That age is really the age of both "Apostolic" and "post-Apostolic" men.

But let us return to the List of the "Illustrious Men." The monks have studied in another way to extend the fame of Paul and his Epistles—namely, by representing that swarms of heretics lived after the time of Paul, the most eminent of whom, however, they make bear witness to him. One of their great feats in this way is in the invention of the great heretic Marcion.

*The Heretic Marcion.*—They first pretended that "Justin," philosopher and martyr, wrote notable volumes against Marcion, which they have never produced. They add that "Theophilus of Antioch" also wrote a book against "Marcion," which also they have failed to produce ! Again, one Philip, a Cretan bishop, put forth a splendid book against "Marcion," of which the same must be said ! One "Modestus" did the like ! They make their "Irenaeus" allude to the remarkable volumes that have been

written against this Marcion ! They make one " Rhodon," an "Asian of Roman education," write another leading work against Marcion, in which he must show how the Marcionites differ among one another !

Our learned men have been deceived by all this placarding of Marcion, as they were intended to be. But the curious fact remains, that the very man among the " Illustrious," under whose name a long work against Marcion has at last been handed down to us, has not ascribed to him in the List any work against Marcion at all! This man is their notorious " Tertullian " !

All this offers another illustration of the system of trickery by means of which curiosity is excited, a work is advertised beforehand, and the minds of readers are prepared to expect some fresh wonder in the world of orthodoxy and of heresy. But meantime no such sect as the " Marcionites " has ever been discovered, except in the brains of these fabricators, any more than a sect of "Wiclifites " or " Lollards " has been discovered from any independent source.

The purposes however, of all this machination is patent enough to the truly critical student. The desire is to represent that the Catholic Church had always been surrounded by heretics, that she had always triumphed over them, and that these very heretics had in some sense acknowledged [73] the Creed, however they might have travestied it, and the Catholic and Apostolic books, however they might have endeavoured to alter them in their own interests.

Thus another imaginary confirmation has been added to the system of invention, and once more the learned world has fallen into the snare spread for its feet.

Here, again, I must refer my readers for the full details to the handbooks, always warning them against the misunderstandings of the credulous compilers. When you read in the imaginary " Irenaeus," or "Tertullian," that the heretics "confess the Scriptures, but change the interpretation," or that they "add to, and take away from, the genuine instrument," this is simply what these secret plotters would have you believe, and what they have succeeded in making the learned world believe. In this connection they continue to insinuate their theory of the " inflexible canon of truth," "the truth of the Christian faith, and the truth of expositions," and the denial to the heretics of the possession of the true Scriptures. You detect beneath it all the strifes of the early Reformation. But what mere pedantry it is, in the eyes of the literary critic, to assert that there is any important substantial difference between the books used by one Christian sect and those used by another !

These secret monks, conscious that they are wholesale forgers, divert attention from their craft by freely charging their crimes upon others. They delight, again and again, to point out what they call by the quaint name of " Apocryphal" writings — writings which they advertise, and which they *mean to be read*, not in public, but in private, because they serve to excite curiosity, to amuse, and to enhance the value of those which are alleged to be canonical and true.

One of the most remarkable advertisements of this kind bears reference to Paul. The confictor of the List of the " Illustrious " tells us, in his chapter on Luke, that

"The περιόδοι Paul and Thecla, and the whole fable of the Baptised Lion, must be reckoned among the Apocrypha," because Luke knows it not. And then it is added that "Tertullian, near those times, tells that a certain presbyter in Asia, a great admirer of the Apostle Paul, was convicted before John of being the author of the book. He confessed that he had done it out of love for Paul, and he was deprived " !



[74] A curious way to show love for a person, by writing things about him as unlike as possible those which are said to be true and canonical ! But the monk winks and smiles, while he writes; and any good Catholic young lady who reads the *novel* will be impressed once more with the nobility of the virginal state, and perhaps may sigh on laying it down, "Ah ! 'tis but a *novel*; and now let me read the truth about Paul !" These little literary devices would be entertaining enough if they were not so mischievous. But the reader who wishes to understand the question should ask: Where were the libraries, the monasteries, in which so much forgery was going on which was not detected at the time ? Those who have gained any insight into the strict discipline by which the literary cohort were governed, will perceive that the intrusion of forgers into a band of genuine writers in the monasteries is hardly conceivable.

No ! there is only one explanation of these curious phenomena: the whole Pauline legend is the creation of art. And, as the Apostle has been surrounded by troops of friends, this representation must be balanced by the introduction of enemies and rivals. Hence the theory, that in the days of Paul himself there were Jewish Christians who rejected Paul as an apostate, together with his writings and those of Luke, and who adhered to Matthew's Gospel alone.

This statement is made several times by the writers "against heretics," who are, of course, simply a department of masked literary monks. Further, it is said that these heretics had an Apostolic history of their own, in which James played the leading *role*, and there was much matter inimical to Paul. The Clementines (long recognised to be a forgery) actually represent James as the supreme authority in the Church ; and Paul, under the mask of Simon Magus, is combatted by Peter !

It has been a great mistake to receive these tales seriously, as if there were any valid fact at the bottom of them of an objective kind. They are distinctly part of the design. The Eusebii reveal the principle that there *must de heresies* for the purpose of sifting the truth from error, and for the manifestation of the glory of the Catholic Church. The artists of the New Testament repeat the same thing. The rivalry of the Apostles is designed. James is placed second on

the List of the "Illustrious "after Peter, and a romantic story [75] is told of his martyrdom. In the one Epistle designated by his name he is made to allude in terms of censure to Paul's doctrine of faith. And the existence of parties is hinted at who own Apollos, or Kephas, or Christ, as their leader. While learned men were sent wandering among these thickets and thorns, the monastic order remained, and has remained to the very present day, master of the literary situation : neither the orthodox, nor any branch of heretics, whether ecclesiastical or non-ecclesiastical, have been able to emancipate themselves from their overpowering influence.

In pursuance of their system, the Pauline artists have set up the figure of the heretic Marcion, who, in contrast to the last-named sect, is represented as rejecting the authority of the original Apostles, and as adhering to Paul as the true master. I have already pointed out that this Marcion legend is relatively late, and placed under the name of " Tertullian." It appears to mark a time when the fame of Paul was growing in the literary world, and it was desired to enhance it, and at the same time to perplex the subject with fresh difficulties. So Marcion is made to dwell on the phrase, " My Gospel," and to argue that Paul knew of only one, not definitely named, some rudimentary Luke-Gospel. Marcion is made to accept only Pauline Epistles,

and is accused of taking out of these only what suited his views. He is accused of having mutilated them all, with the exception of the Epistle to Philemon, because of its brevity ! He is accused of rejecting the Pastoral Epistles, because of their anti-gnostic tendency. And so he came at last to confine himself to ten Pauline Epistles exclusively; Galatians, I and 2 Corinthians, Romans, I and 2 Thessalonians, Laodiceans (Ephesians), Colossians, Philippians, and Philemon:

I can only repeat my previous remarks on all this. It seems to be indirectly proved, from this machination, that these artists in fiction must have had a task of great difficulty before them in attempting to force these Letters upon the world. There must have been a sufficient number of men of true learning and taste during the Age of Publication, who were aware that these Letters were not genuine, and that the Church system was of recent origin. They were probably strong enough to make their tacit resistance felt. But the monks had organisation of a kind which [76] honest men cannot have; and organisation triumphed. By this long and bewildering declamation about heretics, who had raised every objection, and had been fully refuted, they answer the adversaries of their own time; and a great advertisement has been given to a system of books, in which all parties are induced to seek, and all to find, their own peculiar dogmas. In course of time all opposition is silenced by the deafening clamour of these Biblical men. They are suffered to have their own way ; and the defeated world has at last been cowed into the belief that there must be some great " basis of fact," as they say, beneath all these tales about Paul, his elders, and his disciples, his troops of friends and of foes.

So there *is* a basis of fact beneath it all, just as there is a basis of fact beneath the slight tales told of William Shakespeare ; but the *kind* of fact can only be ascertained when you have ascertained *who* were the tale-tellers, and what their interests really were, in creating the Apostolic Ideal.

To show my readers how absurd the received notions about the Pauline Epistles and the rest of the New Testament books truly are, this very "Tertullian," with all his volubility, and his declamation about Marcion, does not show that he has the Pauline Epistles, as a closed collection and in a fixed order, in his own hands. On the contrary, the attempts of our old-fashioned critics to discover the number or the order of the books in him have altogether failed. The like remarks apply to the " third century," and to every age preceding that of printing and publication.

But I hope I have sufficiently shown, to all attentive readers, the futility of attempting to extract truth by the old-fashioned method out of a system of writing in every respect fictitious, in reference alike to time, to places, and to the names of authors.

The Pauline writings were not composed either in Syria, or in Africa, or in any places named; but in all probability in some of the Italian monasteries ; and the system was carried on through other monasteries of the order, particularly in France; and it is through the hands of the French Benedictines of St. Maur that the work of their elder brethren has been handed down to us.

The attentive reader will perhaps at this point exclaim, [77] "Oh, what a tangled web men weave, when once they practise to deceive !"

It is indeed so. Once assume the real personality of any of the alleged " Illustrious," and you are inevitably committed to the whole List. You cannot dispense with the great Latin master and teacher of Cyprian, with the declaimer called Tertullian. But

when you examine the List to ascertain what is said about this long-winded inveigher against Marcion, you find no mention of the book at all ! You are then involved in another fable, and the Pauline investigation leads you into the Tertullianic investigation.

Let me make short work of this matter by explaining once for all the Tertullianic fable. In the great Dictionaries of Church writers, under the names of Photius and Suidas, there is no mention of Tertullian at all —a clear proof of the very late origin of the fable. The chapter about him in the List of the " Illustrious" has been cunningly devised so as to convey several false impressions. In the first place, the monks would have us believe that his father was a proconsular centurion of Carthage ; that he flourished under Severus and Caracalla ; that he wrote " many volumes, which I pass by, because they are known to most people"! The truth is, that here is one of a number of *previous* advertisements of works that have been planned.

Further, it is said that he lapsed into the Montanist heresy, and in many books made mention of the new prophecy ; and that he " specially wove many volumes against the Church," on Pudicity, on Persecution, on Fasts, on Monogamy, on Ecstasy; that he was reported to have lived to decrepit age, and to have published many opuscles, which are not extant !

Thus the most striking of the tracts that have been handed down to us under the name of Tertullian are entirely ignored. But curiosity has been excited. The man is described as of " keen and vehement genius ;" and doubtless a writer of that kind, a clever and most audacious fellow, had been enlisted to aid in the nefarious work of falsehood. I can only infer that, if anything was known of the Tertullianic tracts about the middle of the "sixteenth century," it cannot have been *before* that time; and that all the declamation about the diffusion of Christianity in the [78] alleged " second century," and about the Pauline Epistles, must date from a late time, when all fear of detection was past.

I refer my reader again to the important little book of Polydore. This writer cites several well-known Tertullianic tracts, the "Apologetic," "On the Soldier's Crown," etc., which are not named on the List. If I could be quite confident that Polydore was writing about 1533, the problem would be solved.

## [79] CHAPTER VIII.

### JEROME AND AUGUSTINE: THE " ILLUSTRIOUS " BIBLICAL SCHOLARS.

I HAVE dwelt with emphasis upon many matters which my readers will not find explained in the ordinary handbooks. On the other hand, I shall pass lightly over details of pedantry and sophistry, which merely serve to divert attention from the leading facts of this literature.

I must show that " Jerome and Augustine " are merely so-called " Illustrious " names, marking the deeds of the monastic faction ; and that they, like the rest, are men of the Revival of Letters. The names of Jerome and of Augustine, with which we associate the canon, are distinctly *not* the names of men who were writing more than 1400 years ago ! Men will learn in time to smile at the absurdity of the notion, which I am obliged again and again to denounce, in the present ignorant state of thought on the whole subject. Instead of there having been a development of thought during that alleged immense period, all is at a standstill. " Cassiodorus," in the alleged Middle-Age textbook on Scripture, with his talk of the Seven Canonical Epistles of Paul, is simply " Jerome " and " Augustine " parroted. So are a number of writers, " Isidore of Seville," " Ildefonse of Toledo," and others, all of them fictitious personages, invented in support of the system by the monks of the Revival.

It is said that " the Middle Age did not possess the power to take an independent position as against tradition ; nor had it the means of testing the tradition." Men who write in this way do not the least understand their own position; for how can the Modern Age get behind the alleged Middle Age? The same writer, Weiss (1886), continues : " Nay, the Middle Age had not the power to conceive the tradition in purity !" What, then, must be the helpless[80]ness of the moderns ! — A number of " twelfth-century " writers seem to know less of the subject than had been known many hundred years before!

All this is manifestly absurd, and never could have been written by anyone who had ever thought out the question, with adequate research, of the transmission of books to our time. At last we arrive at the alleged Council of Florence (1441), in consequence of which the canon of " Augustine " is alleged to have been repeated. But the story of this Council is a fable, and the works of " Augustine " were certainly not known at so early an epoch as the year given as 1441.

The first part of that all-important catalogue of " Illustrious Men," to which I have so frequently referred, is dated 392. The last name is that of Jerome himself: the modest man ! What you are invited to believe, on the old theory, is that for the space of 1.1000 years men, following this writer and the little later Augustine, were discussing, here and there, in Italy, France, Spain, Africa, or England, the question of Paul and his Epistles on the basis of what *they* had said ; repeating their doubts, with some variations, but never succeeding in bringing the question to a settlement, or putting their minds to rest.

At length the Revival begins. Cardinal Caietan is supposed to appear as critic, but can do nothing but talk " Jerome," and throw doubts on the Epistle to the Hebrews. Erasmus does much the same, and raises doubts about other writings. So does Luther, on other grounds, in a way that superficial thinkers may consider audacious, and that, to closer thinkers, must appear impossible, because utterly inconceivable, had any canon been handed down, all hoary with antiquity, consecrated by the use,

the assent, the veneration, public use of 1,1000 years. I might rest my case on Luther alone ; but a mass of facts can be adduced in proof of the statement that the Pauline Epistles (in common with the whole of the Scriptures) are novel to the learned world in the early sixteenth century, and that opinion is forming about them during the whole of that age. With regard to the work on " Christian Doctrine," under the name of Augustine, I may despatch it very briefly. You will find Augustine advertised fulsomely in the second part of the List of " Illustrious Men " as a [81] wonderful writer of " almost countless works ;" but only *one* is named, " On the Trinity." If I have given my readers any insight into the principles of the fabrication, they will see that the case of " Augustine " is analogous to that of " Paul." He is made a great man of, is put upon a pedestal, and belauded to the skies, before, perhaps, a line has been written under his name. You will find indirect admissions of the principle in the monastic writings themselves. The " De Doctrina " is a relatively late book, compared with the Eusebii, and contains nothing of additional importance to the critic, though it helps to back up the system by more fables.

There is another book of which the like must be said " The Institutions of Divine and Secular Lectons," ascribed to Cassiodorus, who is alleged to be a "sixthcentury " monk of an Italian cloister. Our uncritical critics, insensible to the enormous falsehood of the chronology, have accepted this poor book as an alleged handbook in monkish use through the whole period of 1.000 years. I need hardly say that no one has ever tracked, or tried to track, the fate of the hook through that quite unrealisable and purely fantastic period. You find its contents to be the same with the Eusebii and Augustine ; and it is ridiculous to deny that all are of the same workshop, and of the same general period. There is a similar book ascribed to one Junilius, another Eusebian reproduction. We are, perhaps, not very far from the truth when we come to an introduction to the Scriptures by a Dominican, Santes Pagninus, dated Lucca, 1536, and the Clavis of M. Flacius, 1567, Basle, which also rest on the same Eusebian and Augustinian foundation. The evidence of the Decrees of the Council of Trent, and the work of the Dominican Sixtus of Siena, " Bibliotheca Sancta," 1566, and other numerous data, all point to the same conclusion with the results of my examination of the work on Inventors and Founders, where *no* account is given of the canon at all, and the narrative is pieced together solely from bits and scraps in the Writings of the alleged " Illustrious Men."

Let me invite attention to this text-book again. Polydore has only before him a slight version of the tale about Hieronymus or Jerome, showing that *our* List was not in his hands. He says that the monk was well educated in [82] Greek and Latin at Rome; that, for the sake of a holier life, he repaired to Judea, and learned the Hebrew tongue; that his writings on Divinity were accepted and approved by the Fathers as holy.

Then follows this remarkable criticism : " I know there are some who falsely assign that deed to the pontiff Damasus,. *who had died a very long tine before Jerome.* "

I am the first to call attention to this passage, which, once for all, explodes the whole Jerome fable, and proves it to be a recent invention of Polydore's own time. Moreover, it proves his ignorance of the tale which " Jerome " is made to tell of himself, that he had rendered the New Testament from the Greek; and, once more, it proves that Church chronology and history were *not yet fixed*, for the dates of Jerome

and Damasus are not yet agreed upon. The Preface to Damasus must be later than 1533.

Not all the critics in the world can explain the passage away, or venture to affirm that the Jerome fable is earlier than the Age of Publication. And the facts about the Council of Trent are equally decisive, to which I will hereafter refer, in some remarks on the Vulgate. Here I would merely point out that the tale about the Greek original of the New Testament is decisively contradicted by the Decree of the Council, no less than by the statements in Polydore. And, further, the mere reading of the Bible in Latin is only, according to the Decrees themselves, beginning in the monasteries about the middle of the " sixteenth century." The Decree of the Eighth Session, dated January, 1547, expressly directs that "in the monasteries of the monks, where it may be conveniently done, the reading of sacred Scripture is to be held. And, if the Abbots shall be negligent in this matter, the bishops of the places, as delegates of the Apostolic See for this purpose, are to compel them to it by opportune remedies."19

The question is now: Where had the Latin text of the Pauline Epistles, or of any part of the Bible, been written ? And the answer probably is: In some monastery or monasteries of the order of St. Benedict in Italy ; the oldest of the literary monasteries being that of Monte Cassino.

[83] I speak with a certain hesitation, because the desire of the monks has necessarily been to show that they took part in the Revival of Letters in Italy, before those Letters passed over the Alps into North Europe. There are, however, suspicions that Christianity did not first take root in Rome, but in the provinces ; and these are supported by the tale of an early African text set down under the name of " Tertullian." But the citations made by this great disguised Church Latinist closely agree with those in " Irenaeus," who is merely tile personal symbol of the literary activity of the monastery of St. Irenaeus at Lyons. And it is very probable that French Benedictines are really signified by " Tertullian."

Again, the tales in what I may call the Jerome-Augustine- Cassiodorus system are intended to mislead. It is essentially one false tale, to the effect that there was an " old translation, a vulgate edition," and that there was a vast number of books of this edition in circulation, each copy varying from all the rest, and that a number of vicious interpreters and unskilled translators had been busy upon them; that there had been an " infinite variety of them," that they " could not possibly be numbered." Those fables are flatly contradicted by the facts. For the *substantial coincidence* of all the earlier discovered Latin texts is the obvious fact; and the variations are trifling and immaterial, all of them apparently designed for the purpose of evading suspicion of that confederacy and collaboration which is revealed to every clear-sighted person. Among the samples of the Vulgate, which they would have you believe was scattered over the world, the Italian (*Itala*) is named by " Augustine." And the Italian has come to designate the oldest Latin Lections that have been discovered.

I shall now point out some of the monasteries of the order whence these Latin Lections, forming parts of the New Testament, were brought to light. They show that the Testament was a gradual formation. It is not correct to say that fragments are here broken off from the larger whole of Gospels, Acts, or Epistles ; but rather they are bits, destined to be fitted into the system of mosaic or patchwork.

Attentive study of all the evidence that has been collected will convince the student that out of a very few lines, as the [84] Church historian says, certain Pauline

Lectons were formed, and those Lectons were then gradually expanded into the Epistles as we now have them. Now, here the startling fact confronts us, that from the Italian monasteries very little of the Pauline writings appears to have come. The oldest MSS. of the List of "Illustrious Men " come from Verona and Vercelli (where the name of Eusebius appears to have originated), and from the Vatican. Two of the oldest MSS. of the Gospels also come from Verona and Vercelli; but the Pauline Epistles are wanting.

Let me now call attention to the famous literary cloister at Bobbio, in Lombardy. The codex from this monastery, now at Vienna, contains a few Lectons only preparatory to the Acts of the Apostles and the Catholic Epistles. It is wrong to call them fragments, as I have already explained.

But from the cloister of Bobbio comes another well-known document, called the "Muratori fragment," published by that scholar in 1740. The guesses of scholars about this parchment are quite worthless, owing to their ignorance of the system of monkish fiction. There is no beginning to this document, and the Latin is often fearfully bad and unintelligible. Under the influence of the falsehood about the "Greek truth and the Greek origin," it has been guessed that this Latin is a clumsy translation from the Greek. But the facts, as usual, are dead against this opinion. The monk puns on *fel* and *mel* in a way he could not do were he a translator, There are Scottish expressions in it; the monastery was tenanted by Scottish monks under the rule of St. Benet; and the language is the barbarous Latin, perhaps, of the early Tudor time. There is a notice alluding to the " Pastor of Hermas," supporting the falsehood about that mock-illustrious man. All this shows that we have tracked the members of the Round Table to one of their fortresses of fiction, where a part of the history of our island is said to have been written by the monk " Jonas."

We see from this document that the New Testament is in course of construction. It has only a complete notice of Luke and John among the evangelists. The writer adds the Acts, and then goes on to the Pauline Epistles, of which he considers the most important to be Corinthians and Romans, and briefly characterises their contents. He is at one with Jerome, and others of the faction, in stating that [85] Paul, after precedent of John, wrote to seven churches as representative of the whole Church. He gives them in the following order : Corinthians; Ephesians, Philippians Colossians, Galatians, Thessalonians, Romans.

He seems to feel it necessary to explain why Epistles addressed to particular Churches should be regarded as the common property of the whole Church; and the same with regard to the four addressed to particular persons. He says that they lay down the Church discipline, and, therefore, are held in honour of the Catholic Church and are sanctified. In short, he is in almost exact agreement with the rest of the faction, with a few variations. And his remarks are another confirmation of the opinion that the Pauline Epistles have been designed, and are in course of execution, with the object of recommending the Church theology and discipline in the setting of romantic personal narrative.

The only way to determine the probable age of this document is by determining the time when Letters began to be cultivated. That, again, leads to the question of the beginnings at Monte Cassino, which the Benedictines allege to be their oldest school. They themselves admit that they are all in the dark at the end of the fifteenth century; but the cloister suddenly appears to be ablaze with scholars in the sixteenth.

I can only infer that there, and in every cloister, there were but faint beginnings in literature from the modern epoch. And it is impossible to trace anything of these Epistles higher than the Benedictine beginnings. This seems all there is to be said about Paul in relation to the Italian monasteries.

I come now to France. In the Imperial Library of Paris is the Codex Claromontanus. This is commonly called a Greek-Latin MS. Let me rather call it a Latin-Greek MS., and warn my readers against any such nonsense as that it was written in "the sixth century."

Now, this book contains all the Epistles of Paul, with some little exceptions, which show how the fabrication of this literature was going on during the sixteenth century, as we call it.

It is very interesting to note that the whole of the little Epistle, Romans i. 1-7, to the end of the phrase, "beloved of God" — the Lection used for the Vigil of the Nativity has been omitted. The reader will observe that the Epistle [86] might just as well begin after the Salutation with the words, "First I thank my God," etc.

Then it is clear that several hands have been busy over this MS., adding and improving on some early model. The Lection, Romans i. 27-30, 24-27 in Latin, has been so added, also Corinthians xiv. 13-22. This Codex was only published by Tischendorf in 1852; yet it has been considered one of the most valuable MSS. extant,

From Paris also comes the Codex San Germanensis, now at St. Petersburg. The Abbey of St. Germain was one of the great haunts of the Benedictines. Possibly here, rather than in any other of their literary seats, we may conjecture, the Benedictine Round Table of literary abbots was set up.

Now, this MS. is essentially the same in Greek with the Claromontanus, but badly copied, which the reader, after all my explanations, will not be surprised to learn. It is full of blunders, and has what have been called some "monstrous readings" from the correctors — that is to say, the Greek is fearfully illiterate. The Latin is substantially the same as D. Again an evidence that Greek is not the original.

The Codex Augiensis, a Latin-Greek MS., bought from the monastery of Augia Major or Reichenau in Switzerland by Bentley, is now in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge. It was published by Scrivener in 1859. The Latin begins with Romans iii. 19. The Codex Boernerianus is merely a variation in some particulars of the same model. The latter book was once joined to the St. Gall Codex of the Gospels.

In addition to these, there are the Munich "fragments," so-called, of the Pauline Epistles, described by Tischendorf: More properly they are Pauline *sentences*, forming part of the basis of the Epistles.

After all the talk of these wonderful Epistles, it must come with a shock of surprise upon the student that the monasteries of the Continent can produce but so scanty a stock of even alleged ancient MSS., in Latin, of the Pauline Epistles. The Codex Bezae, or of Cambridge, must be regarded as one of the most important of the alleged Greek-Latin, in reality Latin-Greek, books. It is stated that Beza procured this MS. from the Benedictine monastery at Lyons so late as 1562, and that he presented it in 1582 to the Cambridge Library, which at that date must have been a quite insignificant collection. It is alleged that, in addition [87] to the Gospels and the Acts, it once contained the Catholic Epistles. But a mere brief Lection, to be found in 3 John, is all that now remains. The omissions are remarkable, It is the work of a



French Benedictine, ignorant of Greek, and so poor a Latinist that, in one instance at least, he has coined a Latin word out of the French ! The Latin is evidently the same with that of the old Latin books, with slight variations. I mention this Codex because it is one of the strongest proofs of the Latin original and the late origin of the books.

It seems, notwithstanding all the tales told us about the Revival Biblical scholars, Erasmus, or Luther, or Polydore, the Alcalà editors, the Fathers and Doctors of the Council of Trent, there is nowhere to be found a Latin MS. of the Bible of the complete Pauline Epistles that one can, with fair certainty, assume to have been in use before or during the Council of Trent. It seems to be an affair of sentences, texts, aphorisms, and nothing more.<sup>20</sup>

But let me now give some particulars about our own country, in regard to whose literary culture the same enormous illusions prevail as with reference to the Continent.

There is in the Bodleian Library a copy of the Pauline Epistles in so-called Saxon letters, ending Heb. xi. 34. But Anglo-Saxon letters are a sixteenth-century invention ; and it is impossible to trace the study of them higher than the Elizabethan scholars, or a hint of them in existence before the time of Henry VIII. The original text is simply the old Latin revised, and the arrangement of the Epistles shows dependence on the monks who write under the name of " Augustine." And much the same may be said of the Harleian MS., 1772. There is no ground whatever for assigning these books to an earlier time than the later sixteenth century.

I wish I could give the reader a precise account, or anything like it, of the number of copies of the Pauline Epistles in any crudest form during the reign of Henry VIII., [88] for beyond that reign it is impossible to ascend. I would beg the reader to dismiss from his mind the tales about Wicliff and about Tyndal : there is absolutely no evidence from the writers of the time, Polydore and Leland, that any translation of the Bible had been put forth under either of those names, or any name. The question is solely of the *Latin* text.

Now, our earliest English bibliographer is said to have been the Benedictine, "John Boston, of Bury St. Edmund's," who is alleged to have been a fifteenth-century man, though his date is uncertainly given. I have discovered that the work under this name could not have been a fifteenth-century production, because John Leland, the first who bore the title of *Librarius* in England, and who ransacked the religious houses, it is stated, during 1533-9, knows nothing of him, though he knows other Benedictine catalogues, and though he appears to have visited the cloister, and faintly mentions another writer, under the name of "John of St. Edmund's."

I am forced, therefore; to assign the catalogue in question to a time a little later than Leland. The evidence is in general agreement with that of the librarian. An extreme dearth of books of any kind throughout the country is revealed. At the same time, that imposing device of drawing up a string of imaginary names, and of advertising books under them, which are not yet to hand, and of actually *leaving blanks for the dates to be filled in afterwards*, is also plainly disclosed. It is a tell-tale book. And I have no hesitation in saying that the student who thoroughly examines this catalogue<sup>21</sup> will be cured of the idle fantasy in which we have been bred, that a great mass of books has been transmitted to us from early or Middle Christian Ages.

Now, this neglected catalogue contains one of the best accounts of the structure of the Latin Bible which has ever been handed down to us. It reveals to the critic what

is revealed in the writings of all the New Testament men, that the Books have been artificially constructed on a system of correspondence to the Old Testament.

To the Legal Books of the Old Testament, or Pentateuch, [89] correspond the Four Evangelists. To the Historical Books of the Old Testament, from Joshua to Job, correspond the Historical Books of the New Testament—viz., the Acts, the Epistle of James, the Second Epistle of Peter, the Third Epistle of John, the Epistle of Jude.

To the Sapiential Books of the Old Testament—viz., Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Canticles, Ecclesiasticus, and Book of Wisdom, correspond the fourteen Epistles of Paul, including Hebrews, and enumerated in the order in which we have them.

To the Prophetal Books of the Old Testament—viz., the Psalter, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, the Twelve Prophets, corresponds the Apocalypse. But the same writer has another division of the New Testament, where he distributes the books into three orders : (1) Evangelists ; (2) Apostles, which include *all* the Epistles, the Acts, and the Apocalypse; (3) Doctors, under which head are included the Decrees or Canons of General Councils, " from the times of Constantine." Reference is made to the fable of Nicaea, and the second symbol alleged to have been there adopted.

Next to the Old and New Testament, it is alleged that the Catholic Church has decreed the acceptance of the Scriptures of the four synods —of Nicaea, of Constantinople, of Ephesus, and of Chalcedon.

Moreover, in this third order of *New Testament books*, the writings of the Holy Fathers and Doctors of the Church —to wit, Jerome, Ambrose, Augustine, Gregory, Basil, Origen, Isidore, Bede, and many other orthodox, which are " so infinite they cannot be numbered," are named!

It is added : " Hence truly it appears how great fervour in the Christian faith they had, for the assertion of which they left so many and so great and memorable works to posterity. In these orders of books the agreements of the two Testaments clearly appear ; because, even as after the Law the Prophets, and after the Prophets the Hagiographa ; so, after the Gospel the Apostles, and after the Apostles the Fathers and Doctors, succeeded in order." Reference is made to " Hugo " and to " Gelasius," who are simply members of the literary faction.

This purely Benedictine account of the New Testament, alleged to have been drawn up in our country, is quite authoritative. It is supported by the whole order. It [90 indicates, more clearly than any document I have met with, not only the artificial structure of the books, but the fact that the Fathers and Doctors, *alias* the " Catholic Writers " of Jerome's List, as this monk designates them, *alias* the mock " Illustrious Men," or masked Benedictines of the Revival, are most certainly the New Testament men; and that no critical reader of Paul's Epistles has any right to dispense with their aid, or can possibly understand their purport apart from their elucidations of these " Fathers and Doctors."

If this Boston catalogue cannot be traced above the middle of the sixteenth century, it offers one more important item of proof for the opinion that the books were of quite recent composition. But I should add that there is no mention of the MS. till the time of Archbishop Usher.

## [91] CHAPTER IX.

### JOHN LELAND ON BRITISH WRITERS.

I COME now to the work of John Leland, in Latin, on British writers—a work the thorough understanding of which is necessary to any student who wishes to know the truth about the rise of literature in England. This ransacker of the monasteries must be himself ransacked from end to end, and the tricks practised upon him in the monasteries must be understood, if you would explain to yourselves how a young scholar, brought up at St. Paul's school, at Oxford and Cambridge, should have started on his tour, under the impression that a great number of valuable ancient books were lying in the religious houses, and yet should have only found; in the course of seven years' travel, perhaps enough to made up a moderate cartload !

The mere fact is that this bookman forbids us to believe that literary culture was advanced beyond its cradle-stage at the end of the reign of Henry VIII. It is impossible to say how many copies of the Latin Bible in a complete form were in existence, or where they were to be found, or whether they existed at all ! A " very brief " Bede's Church History, modelled on the Eusebian lines, existed, and Bede is made the mouthpiece of the Benedictines, that he may declare there had existed in remote times a library of the monasteries of SS. Peter and Paul, at Wearmouth and Jarrow, collected by the abbot Ceolfrid, which contained a copy of the "ancient translation," which he had brought from Rome; and that three "pandects of the new translation " had also been added by him.

There is just this grain of truth in the statement: the talk of the "old and the new translation" belongs to the same period—that is to say, the talk of the alleged old Latin [92] and the revision by Jerome is all a concoction, apparently of the later times of Henry VIII. There is not a particle of evidence which leads us to doubt the statement that, before the time of John Colet, neither the people of London, nor of any part of England, nor even the monks themselves, could have known anything of the Epistles of Paul. There is evidence that the stir and excitement caused by the Lutheran movement had been setting the monkish pen of the abler scholars busily to work, that the imaginary Wiclif faction, which really disguises the English Reformers, might be written down ; but no evidence that any part of the Bible was being extensively studied. They appear certainly more occupied with the sentences ascribed to " Lombard," or the writings under the name of " Thomas Aquinas," than with Paul.

However, I will endeavour to give my readers some details. It must be premised that the lists of scholars of the various orders have all been devised on the same imaginary plan, so that works which are being written, or have been merely planned, are antedated into earlier reigns. Thus it is said that Thomas Brome, a Carmelite, or White Friar, had been professor at Oxford, had come to London to preside over the College of Whitefriars, and had in the end become Provincial of his order. It is, of course, his own order which has made these statements. They say that he published commentaries on the Epistle of Paul to the Romans, that he flourished in the reign of Edward III., and died at Whitefriars Leland says he has learned this last fact recently from his epitaph. Where is the epitaph? Where are the commentaries? The statements seem circumstantial enough, only they are

contradicted by a mass of other evidence, and are explained by the fact that the Religious were everywhere making great efforts to establish their pretensions to antiquity and old learning.

It is alleged that Richard Lavenham, an Ipswich Whitefriar, wrote, among other things, on the Epistle of Paul to Titus, and that he died in 1388. But the statement is decisively contradicted by the absence of his name from other catalogues, in addition to other general negative evidence. For example, a book on Inventors is ascribed to him, whereas Polydore, as I have above said, declares that no one has written such a book since Pliny ! This mock-writer has [93] been himself invented for the purpose of publishing a fable about the origin of the Whitefriars themselves.

Another Carmelite, Stephen Patrenden, is also alleged to have been a famous professor at Oxford and in London, in the time of Henry V., and to have written a book on the Epistle of Paul to Titus. Again we have nothing but a forged catalogue to testify to anything of the kind. Robert Ross, another Whitefriar, is alleged to have written upon the same Epistle, about the same time. But the great Ideal of the Whitefriars is "Thomas Walden," whom they also plant in the reign of Henry V., and whom they make a champion of orthodoxy against the heretics, who are then said to have made a great stir in the land. He is alleged to have written commentaries on different parts of the Bible, and on the Epistles of Paul.

Leland distinctly states that the Whitefriars' Library is the best in London ; yet the books of vast value, which Walden is said to have bequeathed, have been "greatly diminished " ! This is one of a series of library myths, by which the great paucity of books has been excused !

Another Whitefriar, John Waterton (*Aquaedunus*), an Oxford Aristotelian, is alleged to have written commentaries on the Gospels, also on the " Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians," beginning with the words (in Latin), "By the grace of God I am what I am," also on "Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews," beginning with the words, " The Lord took me up."

He also is said to have flourished in the early fifteenth century; and once more a fictitious catalogue is the only voucher. It would seem that, at the time it was drawn up, only *one* Epistle to the Corinthians was recognised.

Leland gives no sign whatever of having read any of these commentaries; in fact, I can hardly suppose that he had done so, or that he knew much of the Epistles themselves, from the way in which he elsewhere speaks of them. It appears to me evident that the Whitefriars of London were getting up these commentaries under the influence of that movement which led to Colet's being called a second Apostle Paul in our land.

The compilers of the catalogues have not, however, ventured to make many of the commentaries on Paul very early in their scheme of imaginary past-time. Robert [94] Kilwardeby, a Dominican or Black Friar, is an Ideal of the "thirteenth century," and he is alleged to have written on the "Epistles of Paul to the Romans," and on the "Epistles to the Corinthians," as if there were more than one Epistle to the Romans, unless there is a misprint. W. Snottingham, a Franciscan, is also said to have "illustrated all the Epistles of St. Paul" (D. Pauli). John Redwall, a Franciscan, or Grey Friar, is said to have published "elucubrations" on Paul's Epistles.

Leland says that Richard Middleton (whose order is not named) was the author of certain commentaries on the Sentences, which had been published at Venice in the

year 1509. To this same alleged author are set down " fourteen books on the Epistles of Paul " ! Why were they not forthcoming ? Here is another illustration of the fictitious way in which the Lists were drawn up, a few things published to justify their statements, and the appetite of the public perhaps whetted for more 1

When we go back so far as the alleged times of " Bede," the inexperienced reader might be led to suppose that the knowledge of Paul's Epistles was indeed ancient in the Benedictine monasteries. But I must again remind him that Bede, with the rest of the imaginary luminaries, was not visible till the early Tudor period. There may have been some half dozen copies of the shorter Bede's Church History in the island during the latter part of Henry VIII's reign, but not more. This Church History is essentially of the same mint with that Eusebian Church History of which I have written so much. There is no evidence that the inflated Bede in our hands was written until the late sixteenth century. By about the year 1545 the monks have set down, under the name of this favourite Ideal, among other works, one bearing this beading:

" On the Apostle, whatever I have found expounded in the *opuscles* of S. Augustine, I have taken care to write all in order."

This reminds us of what is known from other sources; that there is a close connection between Pauline and Augustinian writing; but I must warn my readers against supposing that we can say exactly what bulk the Augustinian writing had acquired at that time. Another work is :

" Single Books on the Seven Catholic Epistles."

[95] Then " Alcuin " is another favourite Ideal of the French and English Benedictines and Augustinians in connection with their Charlemagne and his imaginary schools. To him must be duly put down "fourteen books on the Epistles of Paul." One of his friends in the same system of fiction is Claudius. Here, an instance I think without parallel, we actually hear of this Benedictine's commentaries on St. Paul having been recently printed and published. Leland also says that the commentaries of Matthew under the same name had been taken by him to the Palace Library of Henry VIII.

It is clear, then, that everything relating to Pauline knowledge was beginning in England, whether in Latin or in what the monks chose to call the Saxon tongue.

It should be noticed that, though Paul is once or twice called *Divus*, he is never, I think, called *Sanctus*; in the great majority of instances he is referred to simply as Paula proof that the appellation of Saint is of very late origin as applied to him.

I wish we could be at all certain of the date when the " Canterbury Tales," as we have them, were published, and began to be read. The evidence, as usual, is very slight and unsatisfactory. The chapter of Leland reads like one of the usual booksellers' advertisements in favour of works under the name of an imaginary person in an imaginary time, the value of which must be enhanced by the legend of his life. Assuming that Leland penned the chapter on Chaucer about 1545, then it seems that at that date author and work were alike novelties in the learned world. If, again, we could treat the date of Thynne's edition, 1532, as certain, we should be near the mark. But if we take as our test " When did these remarkable tales, containing, as they do, amid many other revelations, a reflection of the best literary culture that England enjoyed, begin to be read ?" we shall have to lower the date of the book. For we do not find anyone hinting, after Leland, that he has read the book,

until we come to the reformers of the times of Elizabeth and of James. They are said to have recognised that the poet was an advocate of their principles, knew all that they knew, and to have been surprised that he should see so clearly in the dark and ancient time in which he is alleged to have flourished. I should add that Polydore never says a word [96] about this truly splendid work of genius. And one is strongly tempted to suspect that the chapter of John Leland may be a late interpolation.

In any case, the future historian of English culture and English literature should by no means neglect to study the question, "When were these tales written and read?" I must content myself with the general observation that the book cannot possibly be more ancient than the Tudor period.

In the "Canterbury Tales" the quotations are numerous from the Pauline Epistles. Sometimes it is "the Apostle" who is quoted, sometimes Paul; in other instances no author's name is given, but sentences are dovetailed into the text, corresponding to those found in the Epistles. I may leave my English readers to make the detailed examination for themselves. They will note, how no difference appears to be made in many passages between the authority of Paul and of Seneca, or of Jerome and others; and how no chronological perspective obtains in the mind of the poet, who is undoubtedly one of the most learned men of his time. The old Roman times, or any following times, seem all to be shrouded "in a common mist," and one writer seems as near to him as another. He does not seem to care for dates; he thinks only of the "long ago," and time of old. All this hints what I have had so repeatedly to insist upon, that the chronological scheme of History which we have been taught, with the imaginary perspective which it has given to our fancy, must necessarily be of comparatively recent origin.

Another remarkable thing about this admirable poet is his entire freedom from literary superstitions. I have not noticed anything, in repeated reading of the "Tales," which makes the impression that he was slavishly addicted to any words he read, whether under the name of Paul or of any of the Evangelists and Apostles. He treats his authors in a free and smiling manner, as if he held to the principle that no name can recommend what is not good in itself, and that any words, good in themselves, should be relished, quite independently of the author to whom they may chance to be ascribed.

I must regard him as one of the first translators of the Bible—that is, parts, of the Latin Bible—into our mother [97] tongue. He is perhaps one of a small clique, others of which later wrote some similar translation under the name of Wiclif.

There are many hints of the recency of the books in the knowledge of the world. It is pointedly said of the doctor of medicine, who appears to be something like a shadow of Linacre, that his study was not much upon the Bible. Of Linacre it has been told that, though in Holy Orders, he had never read the New Testament until he was near to his end; and that, having perused the Sermon on the Mount, he flung the book from him with great violence, exclaiming that either it was not true, or we were not Christians!

The attentive student who rejects the glib statements of modern handbooks, which have been based on a series of fables, and looks into the matter for himself, will discover many proofs that the Biblical books floated into recognition along with the classics and the Arabian books of science, and overcame the latter in popularity because of the influence of the ecclesiastical corporation at the back of them.

With regard to the alleged Wiclif translation, I must observe that Wiclif is a purely mythical person, who was invented to explain by allegory, and to introduce the Reforming and Scriptural movement into our country. It began in the monasteries; and it seems to me impossible to deny on the evidence that, under cover of denouncing the wickedness of the arch-heretic, the monks interested were disseminating their ideas both here and on the Continent. When the translation was actually made it is impossible precisely to determine.

Only a few MS. copies are extant : the preface to the Authorised Version ignores Wiclif altogether ; the New Testament with a history of the English translations was not published until 1731 by the Rev. John Lewis. Here are enumerated "twelve Poule's Epistles, and seven smaller Epistles." The translation is based upon the Vulgate, not upon the Greek —another indication of the priority of the Vulgate.

All that I need say about the Wiclif myth is that it was a recent concoction at the end of the reign of Henry VIII. ; that Polydore gives a version of it, which is flatly and angrily contradicted by his contemporary, John Leland, who says that he has seen few of the rumoured many Wiclif [98] Latin books. As to his rumoured writings in the vernacular, he does not say that he has seen a solitary scrap of them

Again: it is necessary to contradict a string of tales relating to Tyndale, and Coverdale, and the Lord Cromwell, and the introduction of an English Bible during the reign of Henry VIII. With regard to the allusion in the English Chronicle under the name of Edmund Hall, the Latin writers give no sign of recognition of any such person, or of any such story ; nor do they betray the slightest consciousness of the existence of any translation of the Scriptures in the vernacular. So poor and scant is the evidence for the existence of any intellectual culture at all among the mass of the people : it can only have been a few texts rendered from the Latin in the pulpit, that could have obtained any lodgment in their memory, as we may see from the sermons in the name of Hugh Latimer.

Thus, after long wanderings, we come back to the statement about Dean Colet and his associations with Paul's Church and Paul's Epistles and Paul's school. And again I positively assure my readers, as the result of all my researches, that they will find it utterly impossible to trace Pauline knowledge in this country above his time.

## [99] CHAPTER X.

### THE VULGATE OR LATIN BIBLE.

IT is now necessary for me to say something more on the history of the Vulgate or Latin text, which, next to the Hebrew, is the oldest of our texts. The whole story falls within the sixteenth century, if, as I have said, we can place any confidence in a few leading dates.

I have shown that the whole inflated tale of the existence of a vast number of old Latin copies is contradicted by the paucity of the discovered MSS. And equally is the Jerome-system of Story a bubble, designed to sustain the like false opinion in the minds of the public. But, as the prepossessions of education are so strong in the minds of the majority of my readers, it may be well for me to adduce a few more evidences on this point.

The key to the whole mystery has been, as it were, accidentally let fall by Dr. Westcott, the present Bishop of Durham, who, in an article on the Vulgate in Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible," writes : "*The violence and bitterness of Jerome's language is more like that of the rival scholars of the sixteenth century than of a Christian Father.*" Dr. Westcott appears to allude to what a "Christian Father" ought to be ! As for these monks who masquerade as " Christian Fathers," there is not one of them who writes as a true gentleman would write, in any age of the world.

Add about 1.1000 years to the alleged date of Jerome, and you have 1492 of our era, which is not far, in my opinion, from the time when the collaboration of the Latin Biblical men actually began.

In this new romance the design is discovered of making a Pope (Damasus) patron of the Biblical men, in the way the Popes are said to have actually been their patrons during the sixteenth century.

[100]

Another design is to create the false impression, as we have seen, that a great number of Latin texts existed in different parts of the world, and that there was a " Greek Truth, a Greek Origin," to which reference must be made. As we have seen, the Greek is based on the Latin ; and both the pretended old and the new or revised Latin are the handicraft of the same faction, working during the same period, towards the establishment of a Canon. Free artistic handling is the only theory which explains the whole of the phenomena.

When they say that, in the Epistle to the Romans, xii. 2, their new Vulgate reading, " Serving the Lord," is preferable to the old Latin, "Serving the Time;" when they add in 1 Timothy v. 19 the words, "except under two or three witnesses ;" when they substitute in 1 Timothy i. 15 "faithful saying" for "human saying," these, of course, are studied improvements, on an original itself designedly different.<sup>22</sup>

But the alterations are, in the main, trifling, and I must refuse to dwell upon them as if they were of any substantial importance. Dr. Westcott admits that the alleged revision was "hasty and imperfect," and that in later times the line between the Hieronymian and the old texts became "very indistinct." The true explanation, I believe, is that the monks were eager to get their work done, eager to give colour to their fable of old texts; and in their haste have betrayed their fraud by not drawing the line broadly enough between the alleged " old " and the alleged " new." Both



abound in bad Latin; but there are cases in which the "old" has the better grammar of the two.

The little drama got up between the two imaginary Biblical men, "Jerome and Augustine," is part of the same device. It is pretended that the public are averse from a new translation, and that "Augustine" is carried away by their prejudices; but he is then made to "bend himself in entire submission before the contemptuous and impatient reproof of the veteran scholar"! Dr. Westcott considers this a most "touching instance of humility"!

In sooth, it is naught but a disgusting instance of affectation and grimace. And Augustine is made to adhere to [101] his "Italic text" in preference to the "new version," as if they were substantially different. Such are the pains taken to inflate this bubble, and thus to keep up the fiction that Latin texts had come down to the Revival 1,100 years old, and that these had been founded on some that were older still.

Then the monks invent another fable about Charlemagne and Alcuin, and their Biblical labours. But here again they are contradicted by the facts; for the few MSS. of the alleged "Alcuin revision" show the same text with that of the alleged older copies.

There now occurs a great blank of between 600 and 700 years in this impossible system of Story, during which little more tinkering with the text is said to have been done. But the next absurdity that confronts us is that with the so-called "sixteenth century," or Age of Publication, as I designate that period, the tinkering and correcting is said to begin over again:

Now, here again it is my tedious but inevitable task to contradict further fictions. We come to the printed Bibles; and once more I warn ordinary readers against the common statements of the handbooks. The magnificent Mazarine Vulgate is alleged to be the work of the Mainz printers Gutenberg and Fust. Its execution has never been surpassed by the later efforts of printers in their art. It is *undated*.

What deduction must we draw from the fact that a large number of undated printed books have come down to us? Surely this: that at the time they were printed the custom of dating had not become general; and, if so, a mass of dates assigned to MS. books, alleged to have been of immense antiquity, cannot be genuine. This splendid Mazarine Bible is *guessed* to be of about the year 1455, or only two years later than the alleged date of the erection of the Mainz press itself, the first in Europe! And in this infancy of the press we are invited to believe that the art burst forth in sudden splendour, never since eclipsed or rivalled!

Mr. William Morris, in a recent lecture, has used words to the effect that the art ran its brilliant course for about a century, 1453-1553, and then died out. Surely this is one of the great illusions of our common history. How can one possibly reconcile this theory with our knowledge of the [102] *fact* that every branch of art begins with crude efforts, and is slowly, and with incessant painstaking, brought to perfection? To me the theory is impossible on every ground; and I can only explain the origin of the splendid books which are adduced in support of the theory, as recent, perhaps of very modern, origin. But I would only call attention to the need of some effort to write a critical history of the Art of Printing.

I must also call attention to the fact that, after all the tales of "revisions and various readings," the evidence of the earlier printed Bibles refutes those tales decisively, by ignoring them.

I come to the name of Cardinal Ximenes, whose labours are dated in the period 1502-1517. I know not whether the dates be correct. In any case, the preface to the Complutensian Polyglott contains fresh falsehoods. It is alleged in this document that for the text a "very large number" of copies "of venerable antiquity" have been compared; but not a particle of proof has ever been adduced in support of this statement. Further, it is alleged that MSS. in the Alcala library had been chiefly used, more than 800 years old, written in the "Gothic letters," and in so pure a state that there is not a jot or tittle of mistake in them ! These are not exaggerations, but simply a series of gross falsehoods, as I hope my readers will by this time perceive to be obvious. You look into this Polyglott only to discover the impurity of a text, alleged to be based on these pure and perfect MSS. I am still following Dr. Westcott's article.

But this Bible is one of the most decisive proofs of the Latin original. The Latin text has the place of honour, and is compared to Jesus crucified between two thieves, the Greek and the Hebrew ! How could men dare to say such a thing if they had known and respected the talk of the alleged Fathers of 1,100 years before, about the "Greek truth and the Greek original"? How can Dr. Westcott or any other writer possibly make such tales hang together?

Then we come to the editions of R. Stephens, 1528-1532. He is said to have consulted *three* MSS. only, of "high character," and the earlier editions. "*But as yet the best materials were not open for use.*" Not yet, not yet ! after some 1,500 years of Christianity, not yet ? The reader perceives how the fraud is practically confessed at every [103] step of this story ; nor could Dr. Westcott, I imagine, possibly give any other explanation of his words than that Bible manufacture was going on in connection with the Stephens' press.

There is plenty more evidence to the same effect. Here are the names of a small knot of scholars, who are said to have been trying to correct the word of God, down to the assembling of the Council of Trent. Erasmus is the best known of them. We know nothing of his Latin MSS. ; but it is said they were not fit to be published ! According to the dates given, during 1516-1540 the fabrication of Latin MSS. appears to be going on, though not even then very rapidly. For Stephens' improved edition of 1540 he is stated to have had twenty MSS. at his disposal. All that can be said about them is that they must necessarily have been of recent manufacture. And of the sources of the *Biblia Ordinaria*, Lyons, 1545, nothing else can be said, for nothing else is known. The talk about old and oldest MSS. is continued, and at every step is contradicted by the evidence of the printed editions, to the effect that there is *no* antiquity in any of them !

I come now to the decrees of the Council of Trent, the first of which is dated December 13th, 1545.

In reading the Second Decree, we find that the Fathers have assimilated the contents of *some* Latin Bible. The Blessed Apostle James is the first quoted, and there are several Pauline sentences dovetailed into the text, but without allusion to their sources, or with reference to the Apostle. One of the best ways in which the student can understand the question is by marking in colour the Pauline phrases, and so

noting how completely the Fathers have absorbed the mind of Paul, or how Paul is simply the mouthpiece of the Catholic Church.

Here again we see how truly the "Pastoral Epistles" have been written in that form, for the mere purpose of ecclesiastical discipline. At the same time, *our* Epistles are not slavishly followed. "Bishops must be blameless, sober, chaste, ruling well over their own house," say the Fathers. In 1 Timothy iii. 1-4 there is the important addition, "Husband of one wife," and other matters.

In the next session the decree on the Symbol of faith or Creed quotes the Apostle for the saying, "The strife is not [104] against flesh and blood, but against spiritual wickedness in heavenly places" (Ephesians vi. 12). But the text is not *copied*.

The Creed is further described, in accord with the same chapter, verse 16, as "The Shield of Faith, in which all the fiery darts of the most wicked one may be extinguished." The helmet of the hope of salvation is to be taken, with the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. The full Creed (so-called "Nicaene ") is then recited. It is perfectly clear that the whole Church system of literature has been built up on the foundation of the Symbol of Faith, every information about which proves it to have been solely a recent work of monastic theological art, a structure of purely dogmatic propositions.<sup>23</sup>

In the next decree, on the Canonical Scriptures, it is boldly asserted that "our Lord Jesus Christ first promulgated the Gospel by his own mouth, then by his Apostles, as the fount of all and salutary truth and discipline of manners, and bidden to be preached to every creature." It is asserted that this truth is contained in "written books, and unwritten traditions which, from the mouth of Christ himself, received by the Apostles, at the dictation of the Holy Spirit, as if handed down, have come to us."

The example of the "Orthodox Fathers" is then cited, and an index of the sacred books is given, among them fourteen Epistles of Paul, in the order in which we have them. The books in their integrity, and in all their parts, are to be read in the "old Vulgate Latin edition."

In the following decree on the edition and use of the sacred books the Council alludes to "all the Latin editions now in circulation," out of which it is necessary to distinguish *which* is to be held authentic. The Council therefore declares that "*this same old and Vulgate edition, which, by the long use of so many ages, has been approved in the Church itself, is to be held for authentic, in public lections, debates, preachings, and expositions. None may dare on any pretext to reject it.*"

This "same old and Vulgate edition" is henceforth to be [105] printed as carefully as possible; and there must be no more printing of books on sacred matters without the names of authors.

Thus do the Fathers of Trent *make* history for the faithful by their arbitrary decree, in which they support, though in the vaguest and most indefinite manner, all those pretensions to antiquity on behalf of the Catholic Church and its literature which I have traced to the monastic collaboration.

Here the absurd assumption is made (as Bellarmine explains) that this "old Vulgate," so-called, which has been in use so many ages, is to be preferred to "recent, and, so to speak, *crude* editions." How came they to be *crude*, if this "old Vulgate" was everywhere in the hands of the faithful! The idea is nonsensical, and the whole story falls to the ground.

And then, after all, this "old Vulgate" proves to be mythical, and not forthcoming at all ! " The want of a standard text of the Vulgate," says Dr. Westcott, "practically left the question as unsettled as before " ! Another enigma of history! How could the Fathers of Trent venture, the reader may ask, to refer thus pointedly to a Latin book which did not exist at the time? In spite of every desire to find an historical landmark on which we may firmly rest, it is impossible to resist the suspicions which gather about these alleged decrees themselves. Are *they* too an afterthought ?

Bible-making is said to go on in the Low Countries; but near a generation elapses before the Antwerp edition of 1573-4 is put forth as a temporary "substitute" for the Tridentine edition, which is still not forthcoming ! The "recommendations of the Council were not realised," says Dr. Westcott. This is a misrepresentation. The decrees do not *recommend* a body of learned men to set about finding or framing a Vulgate Bible; they expressly define a book, which they allege to have been "ages " in existence. Yet in 1585, when, as we are told, the Fathers had mostly passed away, Pope Sixtus V. is made to express his indignation that the Decree is still *unsatisfied*! It has never been *satisfied* to this day !

Where are we to find our authorised text of the Pauline Epistles? It was in 1590 (we are told) that the Sixtine [106] edition was published, wherein we read that the Holy Father, of his own certain knowledge, by the fulness of Apostolical power, decrees and declares that *that* Vulgate Latin edition of the Old and New Testament, which was received for authentic by the Tridentine Council, " is without any hesitation or controversy to be considered *this very one*, which now, emended and printed in the Vatican Press, he publishes, that it may be read in the whole Christian Republic," etc.

The next story in this strange system is to the effect that Pope Sixtus had been rash and hasty, had improperly *emended* the books, and had brought the whole Church into great peril ! And then appears the pious fraud which is at the bottom of all this nonsense. It was proposed by Cardinal Bellarmine that the Sixtine errors should be corrected, and should be laid to the charge of the printers, and that the work should be credited to Sixtus. "This pious fraud," says Dr. Westcott, " or rather daring falsehood, for it can be called by no other name, found favour with those in power." And he points out that the fiction about Sixtus disgraces the front of the Roman Vulgate. We have arrived at the year 1592, and at the Clementine edition, which had itself to be revised in turn

I suppose all these tales were allowed to appear with the express object of keeping the minds of the faithful in suspense about the Scriptures. They are to be allowed no rest upon any edition, or upon any date. There is something wrong with all the Bibles : that is the impression left behind. And yet, when you look into the facts, you find that it is the merest pedantry and learned trifling to pretend that there is any important difference of sense between this edition and that.

It is hard to extract any truth at all out of such a system of falsehood. But I am forced to infer that, if any Council began to meet at Trent in 1545, it must have been a secret conclave, whose object was to provide for the discipline of a *nascent* Church. A large body of bishops and doctors could never have met, and have passed and published to the world a decree referring to a book which had been "many ages in existence," yet could not be found ! These decrees, which are simply stultified by the latter facts, and the discovery of the Vulgate by Sixtus V., would seem to be [107] a

fiction, I suppose, of Sixtus' time. There are curious things in connection with Father Paul's History of the Council of Trent which may favour such an opinion.

But even with the authorised Paul of the Roman Vulgate we have not reached our point of repose. After about a century's interval, the irritation begins all afresh with the Benedictines of St. Maur, the heirs of "Jerome," and all his tribe of "Illustrious Men." Martianay, Vallarsi, Sabatier, etc., were all of them monks, defenders of Jerome, collators of those foolish "various readings." Then about another century elapses, and we come to our own time, and the alleged discovery of "the original revision of the Sixtine correctors;" and another monument of pedantry is the work of Vercellone on the Vulgate.

I have dwelt upon these details by way of showing how idle is the opinion of those who think they can leap over the literary history of these late ages, that they can swiftly pass through a vast tract of "Middle Ages," and make themselves at home with "Jerome," or any of his imaginary preceding gang of "Illustrious Men." I wish also to show how moderate is the opinion that I have announced, to the effect that the Pauline Epistles cannot be traced in any form above the time of Henry VIII. and Martin Luther. And in what form they were extant at that time cannot now be determined. The testimony of the authorities of the Roman Church is not to be set aside; and their testimony, freed from self contradictions, amounts to this : that they had *no* accepted ancient Vulgate so early as 1546, and that the Vulgate, which is to be *taken as ancient*, is now about 300 years old !

I repeat : the critical history of the authorised Latin Bible is involved in the critical history of the Literary Men of the Order of St. Benedict; and this falls into two branches : the one relating to the elder or sixteenth-century Benedictines, the other relating to the seventeenth and eighteenth century Benedictines of St. Maur, who date their foundation from 1618, and who are the great conservators and defenders of the system.

If we allow that the monks did begin the composition of Lections for the service book about 400 years ago, it is hard to imagine what they could have been doing during near a century before the production of the Sixtine and Clementine [108] texts. If the date 1533 can be relied on, it is about then that their system begins to be known to the world. The next generation may have been one of feverish activity; and a vast quantity of alleged early writing must have been perpetrated during the seventeenth century, and possibly the eighteenth. The Latin literary history of the order bears date 1753; and during the long period of 200 years there was ample space for the construction of that vast literature based on the Symbol, which is so often spoken of with a kind of stupefied and ignorant admiration : so does size and bulk and system impose upon men, both in architecture and in literature. It is, indeed, a great monument of industry, of ambition, of the corporate spirit, of zeal for an idea, on the part of a number of disciplined and militant penmen. But at that point our admiration should cease, for it is at the same time an enormous monument of the propensity in human nature to deceive and to be deceived

## [109] CHAPTER XI.

### PAUL AS CATHOLIC APOSTLE: THE MOUTHPIECE OF CATHOLIC DOGMA.

AFTER the foregoing explanations, the candid reader will be prepared for the conclusion that the Catholic Church was comparatively a recent institution at the time of the Council of Trent, or at the time when the Decrees were framed; and that these Decrees, though in great part nominally founded on the Pauline doctrine, are in reality the expression of the opinions of the Fathers through the mouthpiece of the monkish creation. The Fathers are really the masters of Paul, while they frequently assume to be his disciples.

It is they or their immediate predecessors who have made him say that the Christian people are not to be "carried away by every wind of doctrine," and that it is the Catholic faith "without which we cannot please God" (Hebrews xi. 6). Compare the creed in Ephesians iv. 4-6.

It is they who make him teach their doctrine of Original Sin (Romans v. 12), and who then launch an anathema against all who shall dare to contradict him ; they who insist through the Pauline oracle that the only remedy is in the merit of the mediator who reconciled us to God in his blood (1 Timothy ii. 5, Colossians ii.), and who was made to us justice, Sanctification, and Redemption (1 Corinthians i. 30). It is they who make Paul assert that this merit is applied by baptism to adults and to children. "Ye that have been baptised have put on Christ" (Galatians iii. 27). They make him sanction the laver of regeneration.

To show how the Pauline words have been freely altered or combined for the dogmatic purpose: the Fathers say that "there is no condemnation to them who are truly buried with Christ through baptism unto death, who walk not after the flesh, but putting off the old man, and putting on the [110] new man, which is created according to God, have been made innocent, immaculate, pure, innoxious, and beloved of God, heirs of God, co-heirs of Christ." Here is a cento of Pauline sentences scattered in different places in Romans viii., vi., Colossians iii., Ephesians iv., Galatians iii.

Clearly, you need to interrogate the mind of the Tridentine Fathers if you would know the true mind of Paul. They appear ready even to correct their Paul. For concupiscence, they say, remains in the baptised. It is admitted that the Apostle sometimes calls this concupiscence sin (Romans vi.-viii.). But the holy synod denies that sin is truly and properly in the regenerate. Something, however, there is "of sin, and inclining to sin." A fine distinction

On the question of justification, the Fathers make Paul to say that all men have lost their innocence by the fall of Adam, and are by nature the "children of wrath." Once more they put their own decree under Paul's authority. Men were "slaves of sin, and under the power of the devil and of death" (see I Corinthians xv., Romans v., Ephesians ii., Romans iii. and vi.).

All reads smoothly in the Decree, for the student who has been bewildered by the analysis of the Epistles. Here is a short chapter made up of alleged Pauline sentences, which once more shows that the orthodox Fathers were near to the composers of those sentences : " It came to pass that the Heavenly Father, the Father of mercies and God of all consolation, sent his Son Christ Jesus, who, both before the law and in the time of the law, had been declared and promised to many holy

fathers —when that blessed fulness of time came, —to men; that he might redeem both the Jews who were under the law, and that the Gentiles who followed not justice might apprehend justice, and all might receive the adoption of sons. Him God set forth as the propitiator through faith in his blood for our sins, but not only for ours, but also for those of the whole world."

Here is a coherent set of propositions ; but the attempt to make *Paul say all this* in divers places has caused the obscurity and incoherence of the Epistles. The sentences have been distributed in 2 Corinthians i., Galatians iv., Romans ix., iii., v., Colossians ii., 1 Timothy ii., 2 Timothy i.

The justified are those to whom the merit of Christ's Passion is communicated — that is, to the Regenerate. And [111] Paul is made to exhort us to give thanks for this benefit to the Father (Colossians i.). It is the translation from the state in which man is born as a child of Adam, into the state of grace and adoption of the sons of God by the second Adam, Jesus Christ; see Galatians iv., Titus iii. But this translation, after the preaching of the Gospel, can only be by the *laver of regeneration*.

A variety of incidental points will occur to the reader of the Decrees, illustrative of my proposition, that it is the Catholic clergy who have produced Paul, not Paul who has produced the Catholic Church. The Fathers of Trent are represented as having written *like* our Paul, but not as having slavishly copied from any known edition of Paul. They write : " Conceiving faith from hearing, men are freely moved towards God, believing those things to be which are divinely revealed and promised ; and this in the first place, that the impious is justified by God through his grace, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; and while understanding that they are sinners, from the fear of divine justice by which they are usefully shaken, by turning to consider the mercy of God, they are raised into hope, trusting that God will be propitious to them for Christ's sake."

All this, expressed in lucid Latin, is, beyond comparison, superior to the hazy rhetoric of the Epistle to the Romans; and what beauty there is in this sentimental theology (and I am the last to deny its beauty) steals upon our minds in all its sweetness. Listen again to these eloquent words :

" Justification is not only the remission of sins, but also the sanctification, and the renewal of the inner man through the voluntary susception of grace and gifts. Whence the man from unjust becomes just, from an enemy a friend, that he may be heir according to hope of eternal life. Of this justification the causes are : the final, the glory of God and of Christ, and eternal life : the efficient, the merciful God, who gratuitously washes away and sanctifies by sealing, and anointing by the Holy Spirit of promise which is the pledge of our inheritance ; but the meritorious cause, his most beloved Only-Begotten, our Lord Jesus Christ, who, when we were enemies, because of his exceeding charity with which he loved us, by His most Holy Passion on the [112] wood of the cross, merited justification for us, and on our behalf satisfied God the Father; the instrumental cause, the sacrament of Baptism, without which none can obtain justification ; lastly, the sole formal cause is the justice of God, not that by which he himself is just, but by which He makes us just, with which, endowed by Him, we are renewed in the spirit of our mind, and not only are reputed, but are truly named and are just, receiving justice in ourselves, each one according to the measure which the Holy Spirit allots to each as he wills, and according to the proper disposition and co-operation of each."

Now let the reader compare the Pauline echoes to some of these phrases in Titus iii., i Corinthians vi., Ephesians i., ii., Romans v., iv., Hebrews x., I Corinthians xii., Ephesians iv., and observe how impossible is the theory that the orthodox Fathers could have deduced their eloquent and logical statement from those scattered sentences.

In this same chapter they say again : " Faith, unless hope and charity are added to it, neither unites perfectly with Christ, nor makes a living member of his body. For which reason it is truly said that Faith without works is dead and idle, and that `in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor the prepuce, but faith which works by charity."

Decisively, the Fathers are not *quoting* from the apostle James (chapter ii.) and Paul (Galatians v., vi.). They are themselves the Apostles, and are delivering to us their apostolic mind, which includes both Paul and James.

The Epistle to the Romans was written by Romans and for Roman purposes ; and they alone can tell us what Paul really means, and what the heretics would falsely make him mean. It is distinctly denied that the Apostle means by justification gratis—freely (Romans iii., iv.) : that sins are remitted to anyone who has the mere confidence and certainty that they are, and rests upon that alone. It is a "vain confidence, remote from all piety," to be sure that we have attained the grace of God. And some such trembling doubts are insinuated in the Pauline writing.

Yes ! these Pauline Fathers anathematise all and sundry of us who may dare to say that a man is justified by his deeds or works, which are done by the teaching of human nature or of the law; and they, or their immediate pre[113]decessors, have made the oracular Paul say so (Romans iii., 1 Corinthians xv.).

They, or their predecessors, have made the same oracle to say that men cannot be justified without the meritorious justice of Christ (Galatians ii., v., Ephesians i., iv.).

And again they anathematise all who say that men are justified by imputation alone of the justice of Christ, or by the remission alone of sins, to the exclusion of grace and charity which is poured abroad in their hearts by the Holy Spirit, and inheres in them (Romans v. 5).

In short, the good Fathers of Trent can prove out of Paul the condemnation of all our poor Protestant opinions. They anathematise all who say that there is no mortal sin except unbelief, or that by no other sin, however enormous, except unbelief, grace once received is lost.

But I must turn to another part of the Pauline question, as treated by the Fathers of Trent.

All my readers are aware that the question of Matrimony was in the Pauline and Lutheran times a burning question. Well! what do the Fathers of Trent make Paul say, or

assume that Paul says upon this question ? They tell you on the authority of their Jewish Apostle (Ephesians v. 22f ), that the bond of matrimony is perpetual and indissoluble ; that Paul the Apostle hints of the grace which sanctifies natural love when he says : "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the Church and gave himself for her;" and when he adds : " This is a great Sacrament ; but I speak in Christ and in the Church."

In short, Paul, no less than Christ, is made the mouthpiece of the dogma, that matrimony is one of the Seven Sacraments of the Law of the Gospel. If anyone says



that the Church is in error when it decrees that both Gospel and Apostle (1 Corinthians vii. 27) teach that the chain of matrimony cannot be dissolved because of the adultery of either partner, let him be anathema !

The Lutheran licence is distinctly damned out of the words of Luther's favourite apostle, say the Fathers of Trent.

"Let him who says that all may contract matrimony who do not feel that they have a gift of chastity, though they have vowed it, be anathema ! because God does not deny at to those who seek rightly, nor suffer us to be tempted [114] beyond what we are able." Compare our good "Paul" in 1 Corinthians x. 13, where the saying is in another connection.

Does any one dare to say that the conjugal state is to be preferred to the state of virginity or celibacy, and that it is not better and more blessed to remain in virginity or celibacy than to be joined in matrimony ? Let him be anathema! Of course ; see Paul again, 1 Corinthians vii. 8-38.

I believe that I have given my intelligent readers illustrations enough from the Decrees of the Council of Trent to, enable them to follow up the track which leads to truth for themselves. Writing myself as a Protestant of the Protestants, I have no dispute with the Catholic Fathers. It is to, my own *confrères*, the German, the French, the Dutch, the English, or the American critics, of my age, that I put the question : Why is it that you have all failed, and confess that you have failed, to explain these hard-to-be-understood. Epistles, whereas the Fathers of Trent, so long, long ago, had the easy mastery of their meaning ? Strange, very strange !

Until a better answer shall be forthcoming, I give my own answer to the question on every page of this treatise. It is this : Paul is the idol or ideal of the Catholic Church ; of the Augustinians or Lutherans; of the Calvinists, of every possible sect of Christians you may name: you cannot do without Paul, nor with him. You admit, Protestants, that none of you are more than about 400 years old in the world, if you mind your dates. And I tell you that Mother Church herself could not have perfected her Pauline idol long before you began to meddle with it, and to alter its features as you have done over and over again!

I cannot forbear to add a little on the curious question of the marriage of the clergy from the little text-book of Polydore.<sup>24</sup> He says that when Paul (1 Timothy iii.) prescribes that both bishops and deacons shall be husbands of one wife, he embraces all in Holy Orders, because, on the. statement of Jerome, bishops were formerly called presbyters. He adds that some Catholic theologians are so superstitiously modest that they twist the passage to their own,

115] purpose, and say that the Apostle meant the bishop was to have only one bishopric, and the presbyter only one benefice. And he quotes Jerome on the point ! Then Polydore hints that the hatred of marriage dictated such notions, and also the notion that, when Paul said he would all men were as he was, he meant that he was a maid (in the phrase of the wife of Bath). No ! says the Italian ; he hinted by this that he abstained from conjugal intercourse, and was chaste in body and mind. Augustine clearly explains that this was the meaning ! And when Paul refers to leading about a sister, he means his wife whom he treated as a sister. And Jerome is accused of pious craft, when he would explain the allusion as pointing to a lady friend like the Shunamite !

In this curious chapter Polydore shows that, by means of the notorious forged Gratianic decrees and the like, the abrogation of the marriage of priests is meditated ; but he pleads strongly for the institution, on the ground that " enforced chastity " has led to much greater evils, owing to the lusts of priests, than the custom of marriage.

What can you infer but that, at the time the Pauline Epistles were coming to be known, the mind of the Church was divided, and that some of the priesthood desired to make him the advocate, others the enemy, of the institution of priestly matrimony ? The times of Paul are, in short, the times of Luther.

Polydore's citations from the monks show precisely the same duplicity on the question that is seen in the Epistles themselves. We cannot divorce the idea of the monk from that of the vow of chastity ; and we can therefore only infer that monkdom was a recent institution when such sentiments could be published.

## [116] CHAPTER XII.

### LUTHER AND PAUL.

I COME now to deal with the relation of Luther to Paul. Here again peculiar difficulties arise from the nature of the evidence. The life of the Reformer has been written partly by his friends and followers, partly by his opponents; and in many respects so badly written that we still remain in doubt as to what manner of man the Augustinian monk really was, and how much of the literary remains ascribed to him was really his production.

We must content ourselves with general impressions. These are very striking; and I believe the candid reader will come to the conclusion, independently of the evidence I have already advanced, that Paul was not heard of until the time of Martin Luther; that the party represented by Luther had something to do with the framing of the Epistles, and that the struggles of the Reformation time have caused the Epistles to reflect both Catholic and Protestant doctrine.

The statement put into the mouth of Luther, that the Bible was unknown about the beginning of the Age of Publication, and that he himself found to his great astonishment and joy a complete copy of the Bible in Erfurt Convent, gives a very just idea of the prevailing unculture, and the general ignorance of the monks of the period, which cannot be too strongly insisted on, if we are ever to understand the subject in hand.

Then in later years his great glory is that he translated the Scriptures into the vulgar tongue. He is represented as saying to all : " Here is the Book of Life ! there are no more veils, no more darkness for you ! you are judges of the sense of Scriptures; it is for you to translate, whether [117] God has granted or refused you the difficult gift of interpretation !"

But it is well known that Luther is said to have freely treated the New Testament books as what I have been proving them to be : recent human productions. It must have been known to the Augustinian monks, at all events to the scholars among them, that the books had come from the monasteries of the order of St. Benedict, and by monks of that order (of which the Augustines are merely a branch) could alone be explained. The Abbot Trithemius of Spanheim is stated to have been a contemporary of Luther. To him is ascribed one of the great catalogues of the " Illustrious Men " of his order ; and I feel certain that he and the contemporary German Abbots were in the secret of all that fictitious historical composition which it has been my business to expose.

Is it not a surprising thing that a man who is supposed to have been long familiar with the Bible, and especially with Paul, should be writing to Melancthon (the date is given as 1521) for an explanation of a passage in 1 Corinthians vii. 14., which seems perfectly clear in the Latin : " otherwise your sons would be unclean ; but now they are holy" ? Luther (in rather halting Latin) wants to know how his friend treats this passage : " You would not understand it of adults only, or of the sanctity of the flesh, would you ?" I confess I cannot understand the question of the Reformer, who admits in another letter that he finds the Latin Bible difficult to translate. The explanation lies in the haste with which the Latin text had been constructed. For it will be found, I believe, that Luther writes the same kind of Latin with that of the New Testament.

The great enthusiasm with which the Lutheran translation was received by literary men in Germany marks an epoch in culture. As I have pointed out, Latin letters were recent in that land. But I wish we could be certain of our dates ! It is stated that the translation of the New Testament was published entirely in 1522. Yet the Library of Wittenburg boasts of possessing the original edition in folio, which has *no name of translator, nor of printer, nor any date !*

Then the statement has been made that the printers reproduced the *chef d'oeuvre* of the monk with an elegance [118] and purity of types unknown at the present day — a thing to me incredible. It is stated that Hans Lufft founded characters for the purpose, that he threw off 3,000 folios a day, and that between 1537-1574 no less than 100,000 German Bibles were printed ! So difficult is it to obtain anything like a simple unvarnished statement about anything relating to the "sixteenth-century" literature.

There are other tales which strongly show how novel was Biblical knowledge in any tongue, even among the clergy. Noble ladies are represented as taxing them with crass ignorance of Latin ; Luther was the only man who knew the original tongues! Proselytes go so far as to make Luther an apostle, and a greater apostle than Paul; and his version the veritable word of God. " Shame upon him," exclaims one of them, "who holds that version suspect ! The word of the doctor is a divine sound. Even if the Reformers were to desert that word, I should defend it, and support its honour."

But then there are counter-stories from the Catholic side, which fully confirm the impression derived from the Lutheran works themselves, that the Reformer had his share, in a certain sense, in making the Bible. At least he could not have so treated books which he believed in his heart to be either divine or of venerand human antiquity. At the moment when reformed Germany appears to be receiving the Lutheran version of the New Testament like a book fallen down from heaven, a Catholic scholar is said to have sprung a mine upon the Reformer. "Emser took the new version, dissected the preface, in which the milk of Lutheran doctrine was adroitly concealed; discovered the poison of the small notes on the margin of the book, where the doctor posed as a Father of the Church.<sup>25</sup>" He keenly pointed out alleged systematic corruptions of the text. Luther retorted with a volley of abuse. Emser was " a basilisk, a disciple of Satan," and what not ! However, Luther had to revise his work, all the while denouncing the "asses of papists, who were unworthy to judge of his labours."

Says Emser : "He has falsified the Bible in almost every chapter, and has hidden about 1,400 heretical errors and [119] lies." Bucer makes a similar charge. Here are some of the errors alleged by Emser in the text of the Pauline Epistles:

Romans iii. 26: "We hold that a man is justified by faith without works." Luther is accused of adding the word *solam*, " alone," in order to make Paul the mouthpiece of his theology. " *Allein durch den Glauben* " is certainly the German reading. Surely this is very serious evidence to any thoughtful mind that the translator could not have stood in any awe of Paul, that he must have known Paul to be merely the mouthpiece of the Catholic Church.

Now, what does Luther say in reply ? " If a papist loses his temper and makes a difficulty about the word *solam*, say at once, a papist and an ass is the same thing : I will have it so, I command; let my will stand for reason !" (quoting a well-known

Latin sentence). He adds in the edition of his works : "The papists contend that faith alone formed by charity justifies. Here we ought to resist with all our might, here we ought not to yield a nail's breadth, neither to the angels in heaven, nor to the gates of hell, nor to Saint Paul, nor to a hundred emperors, nor to a thousand popes, not to the whole world ; and let this be my countersign and symbol!"

Here, then, Luther avows himself a greater doctor than Paul; and the charge against him (or his faction) of having falsified Paul, and turned him from a Catholic into a Protestant, must be regarded as having some foundation. No question, the Catholic doctrine is of justification through "faith formed by charity." Faith is the firm and constant assent of the mind to God as the revealer of His mysteries, as the catechism teaches. But justification being the complete renewal of the man, faith alone cannot render him just in the eyes of God ; faith must be formed—that is, animated, vivified from the source of charity, and must operate by works, and be as a hearth whence the fire of love may radiate.

But in the Lutheran or Protestant sense faith is something altogether different. It is, Luther says, a pearl that Jesus deposits in the heart, that shines by his own fire, needing no charity nor work that it may radiate. It seizes God as the light seizes the darkness. This is Luther's dream, and he endeavours to make it a Pauline dream.

[120] In his commentary on Galatians he teaches that men cannot be disinherited of heaven by any sin save unbelief. Repentance and confession, satisfaction and works, are mere human inventions. Eating and drinking, labour, teaching, are all "works," and as such sins. Of what use are the indulgences sold by Tetzels, if you have found the pearl which will cure you of every malady?

It seems that this was the great and original invention of Luther; he taught the terrified and victimised folk that what they desired, and had been paying for, they could have for nothing: " Believe that you have it, and you have it already" ! It is equal to saying : "The disease is imaginary, therefore the cure must be imaginary." Was this the invention of a theological quack, or of a practical philanthropist and a statesman ? Was it originally designed to form a Church on this principle? Clearly it strikes a blow at all priesthoods, makes all Church institutes useless, and converts every man into his own priest.

Both the Catholic and the Protestant ideas are in the Pauline Epistles ; and I am showing that they were inserted in the Apostle on the eve of, or during, the Reformation itself.

The Catholic doctrine is that justification is of grace, which remits our sins, and renders us pleasing to God. The effect of this is that we come to have justice in ourselves, just as we must have knowledge and virtue in ourselves in order to be learned and virtuous. I quote from Bossuet. This doctrine is in the Pauline Epistles.

But Luther will have nothing in as that can justify us and render us pleasing to God. He will have it that God imputes to us the justice of Jesus Christ as if it were our own, and because we can appropriate it by faith. And this strange doctrine is also found in Paul.

Moreover, the justifying faith consisted not merely in a general faith in the Saviour, His mysteries, and His promises, but in the certain conviction of each person that his sins are forgiven. We are justified the moment we believe with certainty that we are ; and the certainty is not merely the moral certainty which is founded on reasonable motives, and excludes agitation and trouble, but absolute

and infallible certainty by which the sinner may believe that he is justified by the same faith with which he believes that Jesus Christ came into the world.

[121] It is not necessary that we should be assured of the sincerity of our penitence. The new doctor says to the sinner: Believe that you are absolved, and you are absolved whether you be contrite or not ! It is evident that Luther really dispenses with both priest and sacrament. I quote again from Bossuet.

There are other tales about Luther's early life, in which he is reported to have learned this notion of an all-justifying faith at the lips of an aged monk, who had found it in St. Bernard. Such tales are late inventions ; but, of course, the mere fact remains, that the teaching is to be found in the Gospel, in Paul, and in some of the monkish writings. I can only account for the fact by suggesting that the difference of opinion had existed in the monasteries before the great schism. The earlier teaching of the monks appears to be on the all-sufficiency of charity (1 Corinthians xiii.), which itself is said to " believe all things," and, in fact, to be almost identical with the "faith" of Luther.

In the peculiar juggle with words and ideas, I detect that same flexibility of the system, that principle of "all things to all men," which, as we have noticed elsewhere, Paul's example was designed to illustrate.

Another instance of the alleged interpolations of Luther in the Pauline text is I Corinthians ix. 5 : "Have we not power to lead about a sister?" The words "for a wife" have been added. In the German the words are : *eine Schwester zum Weibe*.

What can we infer from facts so striking as these ? The Church History, being older than the New Testament, says that Paul had a wife, like other apostles. In the Epistles he is made to represent himself as a celibate, and, like a true monk, he is made to extol virginity over marriage, which state of life is indulged to human weakness. Matrimony is now condemned, and now pronounced to be honourable in all. Thus once more we have an apostle Facing-both-ways—one who blows hot and cold upon the same object, and is a model of studied duplicity. Finally, we see him converted into an apologist. for marriage, as well as a Protestant, by another stroke of he pen.

The whole relation of Luther to Paul is a very curious one, and well deserving of patient attention, in spite of the [122] insuperable difficulty of finding any good evidence in the exact sense of the word. But the Pauline Epistles having been written in the monasteries by men vowed to celibacy, Luther and his fellows being the first monks of whom we hear who broke their vows, it is not possible for me to trace certain passages to any secret authorship, except that of him or his party. Who could have put into the mouth of Paul the denunciation of liars and hypocrites and enemies of marriage (1 Timothy iv. 2) but the Augustinian monks, who, according to Cochlaeus, went up and down the country, selling Lutheran tracts at the doors of the churches? It is a quarrel between these laxer clergy and those who still observed the strict rule of St. Benedict that we detect, and without reading very hard between the lines. Let me give a few more illustrations.

I cannot accept the " Table Talk " and other writings as genuine in their entirety. But, as before, we may collect some general impressions of the truth.

Luther is reported to have said : " I regard Jerome as a heretic, who is always talking of fasting, of virginity, of celibacy. I would not have him for a chaplain." But Jerome—that is, the monks who invented him, knew the secret of the composition of

the Bible; so did Augustine, of whom Luther also speaks with extreme contempt, though in another place he contradicts himself, calling Augustine the "purest of all the doctors." He says that the Fathers did not understand the text of St. Paul on the widows who have broken their first faith. "Augustine thinks the vow of chastity was meant ; but I understand the text better than a thousand Augustines. This Father ought to be sent to school. The Fathers are fools who have all written nonsense about celibacy ; besides, the Apostle only speaks of widows; she (Bora) is not a widow, nor am I"

Yet, undoubtedly, the text (1 Timothy v. 12), cited by the Catholics in all their disputes on the question, was written to prove the necessity of the vow of continence in widowhood.

The story is more than once told of theologians who argued that, because Paul taught that a bishop should be the husband of one wife, he allowed that one who was not a bishop might have two or three wives ; and Luther and Melancthon are said to have counselled both Henry VIII. [123] and a German landgrave to take second wives, and to have relieved them from the fear of hell denounced by the Apostle against fornication. How is it possible that such tales could ever have been written down, had any New Law of Jesus Christ been long extant and recognised ?

One of the most startling discoveries in the Lutheran literature relating to Paul is a passage in which the Reformer treats the Apostle in the spirit of a Rationalist, and pours contempt upon the halting Pauline logic. Commenting on the text, "As all die in Adam, all shall live again in Jesus Christ "(1 Corinthians xv. 22), Luther is alleged to have said "'Tis a ridiculous homily that St. Paul here gives us. In the eyes of reason it is matter of derision that the whole human race should be involved in the fault of a single man ! It seems unjust and absurd to suppose that God played such a comedy, and that for an apple eaten by Adam he should have condemned to death generation upon generation. Adam was not guilty of murder, nor of adultery, nor of theft, nor of blasphemy. He ate an apple, seduced by his wife, who was deceived by the tempter. What? For an apple all the human race was devoted to death, even the saints, the prophets, and the Son of God ! And if it were only death, but it is the suffering and damnation that we all incur for another's fault ! Injustice that makes the heart rise ! Gratuitous cruelty of which we make a God of justice and goodness guilty! Such is the incredible enigma that Paul proposes to us when he says that death and life depended on one man; so that to elude the sentence all is powerless — wisdom, virtue, good works. Nothing avails, neither the piety of the monks, nor the sacred teachings of the Apostles, nor the blood of martyrs." He proceeds to attack in the same manner the Trinity and other articles of the Creed as offensive to human reason. It is usual to set down these passages to the period of his temptations and trials; but it is strange that they should ever have been published to the world.

In one of the editions of his "Table Talk " he is alleged to have described the Apostles in general as "sinners —nay, downright rogues." And this from the man who is supposed to extol Paul as the author of the Epistle to the Galatians to the very skies ! In all this Lutheran medley there are no doubt revelations to a discerning eye of that hypocrisy [124] and duplicity, that consent in falsehood amid seeming contention for the " truth," which, unhappily, was the result of the clerical organisations. The oblique confession is made again and again that partisan mendacity is rife; but

the decisive able critic of the whole fraud has not been discovered, or, at all events, does not put in an appearance.

I repeat, whoever it was that launched such criticisms against Pauline teaching, it is clear that the teaching must have been known to the critic as having no more authority than that of Jerome or Augustine.

I may point to a few more incidental evidences from the Lutheran literature tending to confirm the opinion that it was members of the Order of St. Augustine who had the main part in connecting together Paul and Luther. For example, one of the Erfurt theologians tells how Luther, on returning to that town from a visit to his parents, was caused to fall down during a thunderstorm to the ground like another Paul, and was determined to seek the cloister of the Augustinians, and to find salvation in the life of the monk. The tale is confirmed by others.

On entering the convent he himself takes the name of Augustine, and is said to make the works ascribed to that imaginary Illustrious his favourite reading, along with the Bible, and especially Paul. His friends describe him as engaged in the most abject service, as an ascetic of quite the same cast with Paul, as surpassing all in the severity of his studies, his fastings, his prayers. He is made to say that he really suffered the death of martyrdom in his effort to gain heaven by these observances ; and to discover, like Paul, the vanity of all work and merits. He endures mental torments like those described in the Epistle to the Romans. He is harassed by the study of the doctrine of election. He is said to have found a revelation in the saying, "The just shall live by faith," which, by the way, is a *misquotation* in Romans from the Hebrew prophet, who is thinking of fidelity or good faith, not of belief.

The Jesuits have, I think, a saying to the effect that Paul begat Augustine, and Augustine begat Luther; the inward meaning of which is, to the critic, that there is not the interval of 350 years between Pauline and Augustinian, or of 1,1000 years between Augustinian and Lutheran, ideas; [125] but that the ideas in question are substantially the same, and of the early Reformation time.

D'Aubigny observes that "the monastic; orders were perhaps more in favour of the Reformation than against it. This observation applies more particularly to the Augustinian order." I believe in the general truth of this remark, and I should explain the fact by reference to the temperament and habits of our Northern peoples by which the monks were influenced, and which indeed they were compelled to comply with. They led a movement of revolt against the tyranny of the Pope, which was a popular movement; and, in rejecting the vow of celibacy, they also followed the current of popular sympathy. The more enlightened spirits desired to establish a book religion ; but the opposed party were strong enough to make themselves felt in the books. And it seems to me that the Pauline Epistles and the rest of the books have all the appearance of documents that have passed through the hands of some editorial board, which comprised the various opinions extant among the Orders. In that way the Augustinian or Lutheran Paul may be reasonably accounted for.

Other hints are to be found in the discovery by Luther that the Hussites were also Pauline and Augustinian men. "We are all Hussites without knowing it." And then there are phrases in which Luther is hailed as "true son of St. Paul" by a German elector, or in which he himself is supposed to say, " I am not Paul, I am only his commentator!" "The Epistle to the Galatians is my Epistle, I am wedded to it."



Here I may quote some acute remarks of Hardouin, whose writings contain much truth for the literary critic, however mixed with priestly sophistry. He protested against the honour done to the imaginary Augustine, the fraud of whose writings he had exposed : " As if no greater than Augustine had arisen among those born of woman ! You make a more illustrious man of him than of Peter, Paul, and the rest ! Christ does not please you, nor Paul; the words of Paul or of Christ do not please you unless Augustine interprets. This is a new Paul, a new Christ. And yet nothing can be said more contrary and adverse to the faith of the Church than pseudo-Augustine is in all his chapters. Men care less whether they are Christians than [126] whether they are called Augustinians. It is enough for me to be a Christian."

He insists that Paul does not teach Augustinian doctrine —on the contrary, it is Augustine who has brought "another Gospel" into the world, a contrary and a bad Gospel (*Kakaggelion*). This sheds new light on the Epistle to the Galatians. And how strange it is that this very Epistle, so peculiarly protected by Luther, should here be claimed by the redoubtable Catholic champion as anti-Lutheran in its denunciation of an innovating Gospel. ,

Evidently the Epistles must either remain an insoluble riddle of literary history, or we must, as before, assume that the composers were double-minded or many-minded men, who have either consciously or unconsciously uttered confused and self contradictory voices in respect to the primary tenets of the Christian religion.

## [127] CHAPTER XIII.

### THE AUTHORS OF "VERISIMILIA": THEIR ANALYSIS OF THE EPISTLES.

I WISH now to render my English readers a service by imparting to them some of the results of analysis by the authors of the able Latin work, "Verisimilia," 1886.

I have a particular interest in this work, which is devoted to the dissection of many parts of the New Testament writings; because, at the same time that Professors Pierson and Naber were engaged in their study, I was engaged upon an analysis of the alleged "second century" or post-apostolic literature. The publication of their book was shortly followed by the publication of my own essay, "Antiqua Mater;" and it was noticed by interested reviewers in Holland and France how curiously my own results confirmed those of my predecessors. They showed from an examination of the New Testament that it did not contain a true nor the earliest account of the origin of our religion; and, in turn, I showed that the alleged followers of the Apostles did not know what the alleged Apostles knew. Therefore the Church story of her own origin must be rejected, and we must make a fresh research among the documents, with the view to discover the positive facts. My readers are aware of what I have since done towards the solution of the great problem. But I would now point out that again the results of my *confrères*—always with one important exception—coincide in a striking manner with my own.

The exception is that they have not questioned the Church chronology as I have done. Taking for granted that the Church did come into existence some 1,800 years ago, and that the scheme of centuries is genuine, they have nevertheless seen that the Catholic Church is behind the Pauline Epistles. Upon this point, then, it appears to me [128] that some side-light from the minds of these acute and learned scholars will be welcome to my readers.

They discover from the phenomena of the Epistles a certain "Paul the Bishop," or Catholic editor of a variety of Lectures which have been tacked together and placed under the name of Paul the Apostle. A various and mutable mind is shown in these writings, the groundwork of which is mostly Jewish, with a Catholic varnish, as it were, given to the whole. The Epistles are, therefore, full not only of grammatical blunders, but of logical incoherences. But certain ideas have been persistently inserted with the object of making Paul the mouthpiece of Catholic sentiments.

In the earlier Epistles (which they hold to be those to the Thessalonians) a bare outline of the Creed has been inserted "Jesus is Lord of the faithful; he died and rose again. Nothing is reported of his life, or doctrine, or cross, or intercession, or of the remission of sins."

In the Epistle to the Galatians they point out how incomprehensible is the historical, or what I call the pseudo-autobiographical, part of the Epistle, and how self-contradictory the language is. They detect two different writers of opposed temperaments—one harsh, the other mild. They see that the episcopal scribe has again, in accord with his assumed character of an ex-Israelite, borrowed Jewish writings and converted them to his use, so that what had been said of the patriarch Abraham was made to hold good of the assumed offspring of Abraham: Christ, and His Church.

They descry the rivalry of the Christian to the Jewish Church in the terms "Christ" and "Circumcision," and they recognise an analogy to the strife of parties during the

Protestant Reformation, when "the law" was understood as the body of useless precepts and ceremonies, and when many were halting behind the old and the new form of religion. They detect in the editor precisely that ideal of the Monks whom I have shown to my readers : an adroit ruler and pacificator, one who affirms while he denies, and denies while he affirms ; who gives pictures of concord amid strife, and scatters here and there a fine word, like Galatians v. 14.

In 1 Corinthians they see again the lineaments of a great Churchman, intent more upon the rule of life and upon uniformity of confession than upon theology. The unity of [129] the Church, which he sees to be possible, must rest upon *convention*, no matter if one opinion seem to destroy another. The communion of the brethren is to be preferred to everything. Most truly our analysts observe :

"The Catholic Church has best understood these things, and hence has grown and flourished. This clearly appears in the history of the Canon of the New Testament, the volume consecrated by the Church. There is place here for the sobriety of James, the fervour of the Apocalyptic, the prudence of the Paul of the Acts of the Apostles, and the vehemence of the Paul who opposes Peter. The one volume satisfied the wants of all."

In commenting on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, 1 Corinthians xi., our critics justly observe that Transubstantiation cannot be removed from the New Testament, that the whole Roman Church depends upon it, that Luther could not give up the *Hoc est Corpus*, that Calvin maintained the "spiritual eating." There is nothing more ancient in the Church than Transubstantiation. It may be added that, the Church itself being a Communion, the problem of the origin of the rite is one with the problem of the origin of the Church. There were, no doubt, Orphic and Mithraic ceremonies in use to a late period —on these the Catholic rite may be partly based; but we cannot conceive of a Catholic Church until the Jewish Passover was known and imitated.

I must again call attention to the unfortunate neglect of chronology on the part of our critics. They say that the dogma of Transubstantiation was not laid down till the beginning of the thirteenth century, nor the cup denied to the laity before the beginning of the fifteenth. What had become of the dogma during the vast period of silence? A little reflection on this point will convince thoughtful readers that such a notion is on every ground untenable.

In another interesting passage our critics again detect the attributes of the Catholic bishop, or, as I say, of the monk. A gentleness and mildness of manner is united with a certain confessed guile (2 Corinthians xii.16), which is not misbecoming a Christian man. There is a strange transition from the tones of deepest humility to those of arrogance and scorn against his rivals, and again to elation in the recollection of an ecstasy, or to incredible violence against the false Apostles who play the tyrant, devour [130] the patrimony of the faithful, and do violence to the Church (2 Corinthians xi.). They observe: —

"This is the kind of writing which the Archbishop of the Roman Church, through the course of ages to our own day, will faithfully imitate; a kind of writing in which the very exaggeration of the words necessarily infringes their force. Here, already, the priestly mind confounds the honour of the man with the authority of the ministry. Enlightened men ask whether the truth has been spoken; they care not who

spoke it. It is otherwise in the Church, where the multitude clings to *proper names*. Our bishop knows this, and takes care lest he should be postponed to others." .

In another remarkable passage Pierson and Naber say "No one can readily deny that from the first ages the Christian religion was by no means developed according to the rule of the opinions which are believed to have been in the first instance proper to Paul. We never see what the Epistle to the Galatians effected. The Church and theology itself ignore Paul. Must we not hence conclude that he never existed who nowhere appears ? Are we to believe that the labours of Paul could perish, leaving no vestige behind them ?"

I cannot but regret that these able scholars did not endeavour to explain to themselves such an anomaly and absurdity of literary history. If Paul is not fully known in the "second century," as he certainly is not, he is discernible in no following age before the Revival of Letters.

A few observations on the complete failure that has attended the efforts of those who have assumed the Pauline Epistles and the New Testament in general to be early documents of Christianity, may be cited. In allusion to the obscurity and difficulty of the Epistles, which have tasked the efforts of commentators ever since the writer of 2 Peter iii. 16, it is justly asked, How can this strange phenomenon be accounted for? Here you have, according to the theory of the Church, not a collection of memoranda for the writer's own use, but letters to communities recently founded, of plain, unphilosophic people, written by a man who makes no pretension to learning! How is it that he is so hard to understand ? A great literary apostle who has never learned to write : the enigma and despair of the acutest exegetes !

[131] It is assumed that these are historical documents, and that you must seek the explanation of them from the history of the time in which they were written. Yet we cannot ascertain the time without the aid of these very Epistles, so dark and hard to understand! A must be explained by B ; B cannot be understood without A, and A is unintelligible !

Then the notion that Paul dictated carelessly and lost his thread, and did not think it worth his pains to revise and correct, is dismissed as a very lame excuse for the glaring faults of grammar and of logic.

The German writers have got themselves into utter confusion over the question of Jewish and Gentile Christianity, because they have not seen that the documents are mere compilations of diverse literary Jewish and Christian materials.

Professors Pierson and Naber point out that the interest in the Epistle to the Galatians *dates from the Reformation* time. Yet the Protestant scholars of the present day who have worked at the Epistle are well aware, by painful experience, that, though at first sight a transparent document, it is really one of the hardest riddles of the New Testament.

So with many other details. Were the majority of the Church of Rome Jewish or Gentile Christians? To this day the learned Germans are debating the question, in this sense and in that ! They can make out neither the persons addressed, nor the object in writing the Epistle. In particular, it is shown that the very learned Holtzmann fails to defend the genuineness of the Epistles, except by means of flimsy devices and subterfuges ; and that the difficulties must be regarded as insuperable, unless the trite and vulgar, way of interpretation be abandoned.

There are, say these critics, erroneous assumptions at the basis of all these bewilderments and confusions. It is assumed that something *primitive* is to be found in the New Testament ; whereas the case of the New Testament is like that of certain ruins, where you dig and dig again, without finding the first structure. The oldest you find suggests something older still. The notion that the New Testament contains the beginning of Christianity must be overthrown, even as the old theory of inspiration has been overthrown. Then occur these remarkable words : " *The opinion which [132] most people hold, that there is something primitive in the New Testament, comes to us from the Revival of Letters and the movement of Luther.*" And again: " *What the Egyptian priests said to Herodotus, 'your history, Greeks, is very recent,' we must now apply to the sacred writers. They are scarce more than of yesterday.*"

Once more I cannot refrain from the expression of regret that these able and independent scholars were not led to examine the chronological question, where lies the root of all these illusions. After the statement made about the Revival and Luther, it may seem strange that they should add that they can believe the Epistle to the Romans may have been written sixty years after Christ ! But it merely shows that their thought was not exerted, was slumbering, in common with the whole learned world, upon this question. If they had once asked themselves, When was the chronological table of New Testament events laid down, and if they had investigated the point with the like acumen to that which they have shown in other parts of the subject, they would inevitably have been led to assume the "sixteenth century" as the starting-point for fresh inquiry into the origin of the Catholic Church. At the time, however, that this book was published I was in the same situation as these authors. I acknowledge the help I have had from them with sincere thanks, and doubt not that, if these lines should meet their eyes, they will give a candid consideration to all that I have advanced.

It is true that there is much that is older than the New Testament; but not, in my opinion, older by many years. The Symbol is older ; the Eusebian history is older ; and the key-book, the Latin "List of Illustrious Men," is older than the New Testament. But all these books have been planned upon one scheme of art, which can be clearly understood, when once the false notion that we have to do with testimonies has vanished.

Our authors, in summing up, say: "The main thing is this: We are ignorant of the first beginnings of the Christian religion." I so far agree with them : that the Catholic Church originated in a secret society, and that the origin of a secret society can only be conjectured from what is published and gradually comes to light. It continued in great part a secret society — as they themselves point out —while [133] the composition of much of its literature was going on. The literature itself is evidence of its recent origin, of the immense pains that were taken to conceal the fact, and to impose on the world the belief as to its antiquity.

Late did the Christian religion produce its most excellent fruit, the Christ himself. The various forms the Christ assumes we recognise in the New Testament."

The meaning of this is, that the literary men who constructed the various ideals of Christ and of Paul gradually elaborated their design, as I have shown in these pages, on the basis of the Church History.

But when they say, "Here [in the New Testament] we see how, before the Council of Nicaea, the Catholic Church arose and flourished and became a great institution,"

I must, of course, dissent from the note of alleged time. The myth of the Nicene Council is Eusebian—i.e., Benedictine, and is of the sixteenth century. The first Council that we can believe in is that of Trent, and even that, on the evidence of Catholic writers, had not the authorised canonical writers in its hands, and has, probably, handed down no genuine documents to us.

Finally, I agree with the authors of "Verisimilia" that "the sacred Scriptures and the Catholic Church grew together;" and I hope I have shown my readers by all-conclusive proofs that it is not possible to separate the one from the other, or to trace the origin of either to any other body of men than the literary men of the monasteries at the time of the Revival of Letters.

## [134] CHAPTER XIV.

### PAUL AS HEBREW SCHOLAR.

I COME now to deal briefly with what is really the radical question in reference to the Pauline writings —namely, the origin of Hebrew literature. Here is a man who is represented to us as boasting of his Hebrew extraction and his Biblical learning. The analysis of the writings under his name shows that they are based on Hebrew thoughts and sentiments, partly Biblical, partly Rabbinical. All this has long ago been well known and understood. In Galatians, especially, Paul is made an allegorising Rabbi in the Christian interest.

But what is not yet understood is the true epoch of the beginning of Hebrew literature —in other words, the rise of a class of literary men among the Jewish people. It has now been long a growing opinion that the Biblical books are much later than the "tradition" from the "Revival of Letters " has alleged them to be. Some critics, like Ernest Havet and Maurice Vernes, have lowered some of the books many centuries on the chronological scale. In this way the public mind has to some extent been prepared for the conclusion which I venture to announce, that the Hebrew literature is distinctly a modern literature.

I cannot, of course, deal exhaustively with the subject in this place, but must merely point out the cardinal evidences in favour of my opinions. In the first place, it is utterly impossible to trace the existence of Hebrew books among the Jewish people themselves beyond the epoch which I roughly date as "about 400 years ago," or the beginning of the Age of Publication. It is, indeed, alleged that the first Hebrew book was printed at a place called Soncino, near Cremona, a little earlier; but the student will discover, as [135] before, that the fifteenth century dates are not to be trusted, and that sixteenth-century dates are very dubious.

But in general terms let me say that all our information about the Hebrew books from Hebrews themselves is sixteenth-century information. Only from the Age of Publication is any light cast upon the preceding darkness, and it is a light which convinces us that the Hebrew Letters were then a novel invention in the world. In Christian circles it is difficult to trace even the faint beginnings of Hebrew study in the earlier half of our sixteenth century. If the date of the Alcala Polyglott be true, Hebrew was of course known at that time to a limited number of monastic scholars, and was treated by them with no reverence, but merely as an instrument of ecclesiastical dominion. Their Latin version, so-called, is not a version or translation, but a sort of travesty of the Hebrew meaning. And I, at least, cannot conceive that such a thing could have been done had the Hebrew Scriptures been long in existence, and their meaning generally understood.

I have already pointed out what I hold to be the keybook to the system of Latin or Christian literature, the "List of Illustrious Men." Is there any corresponding keybook to the system of Hebrew literature? Undoubtedly there is; but that book is not the Hebrew Bible, which does not contain from end to end a solitary date, in the ordinary sense of the word, that can be used for purposes of science. Books alleged to be of Divine authority, and to contain a tradition from the creation itself, necessarily do not admit of being dated as matter-of-fact compositions are.

But now close the Bible, and open the other traditional books of the Hebrews, for which no Divine authority is claimed, and all becomes clear. The Cabbala, or Tradition, proves to be no tradition at all, but an invention of the Revival of Letters. The key-book is the "Sepher Juchasin" or "Book of Families," written in unpointed Hebrew, and attributed to the pen of one of the Sephardim or Spanish and Portuguese Jews, the Rabbi Abraham Zacuth or Zacuto. Though this little book has, never been translated, its contents have passed into various compilations, and may be conveniently consulted—for example, in the Latin works of Wolf or of Bartolucci. The book is said to have been written about the year 1502 of our chronology.

[136] Now, what is the programme of this work? It professes to contain a history of the events of the world from the Creation down to the time of the author. In particular, it contains the list of the alleged illustrious Hebrew scholars, and so corresponds to the Latin list to which I have so often referred. If you wish for particulars about Moses Maimonides, or any other famed writer, this list must be consulted, or one of the later lists based upon it. There is no dispensing with it. If it be a genuine record of ancient and mediaeval times, Hebrew antiquity is proved. If, on the other hand, it be, like the Latin list, a mere invention designed to produce the illusion of antiquity, the whole system is discovered to be a modern invention. I have no hesitation in saying that, tried by any possible test, the "Book of Families" is an invention of the Revival of Letters. Not only have no early records been discovered on which it is based, but the later Hebrew writers of the Age of Publication entirely confirm the opinion of the recency of the system.

I say that the admissions of the solitary Rabbi, Elias Levita, of whom a story is told that he gave lessons to Luther in Rome, are sufficient of themselves to establish the truth. What is the meaning of the admission that the vowel points are recent, but that the written language is still in a crude and imperfect state? What is the meaning of the admission that the Hebrew had ceased to be a spoken tongue in the mouth of the people, and that it had become the mere possession of literary men? It means that the Hebrew was the recent work of art of literary men. The Rabbis were in the same inconsistent position with all priestly scholars: they had to maintain the antiquity and sacredness of books which they knew to be fresh and of human origin. The truth, as usual, escapes for the initiated eye, and, possibly, was intended to escape by some of the more enlightened and truth-loving of these scholars.

When a writer like Canon Driver, following many precedents, says that the statements of Elias and other Rabbis about their literature cannot be trusted, the answer is, in all courtesy, that a canon of the Anglican Church is not in a position to give a critical account of the Scriptures, any more than the Jewish Rabbis are. But, by the method of analysis, you may extract the truth from the contradictions of the Rabbis themselves.

[137] The tales of "Palestinian" and "Babylonian" schools are but tales. I once thought that there were Spanish schools of Hebrew learning in the eleventh or twelfth century of our chronology; but, on detecting the fable of Zacuto's work, I found that notion must also be abandoned. Nor can I so much as make out anything definite about Jewish culture so late as 1492, when the great exodus from Spain is said to have taken place. The Hebrew accounts of that event are very slight, and appear to have been written down near the middle of the sixteenth century.



Another very important book for the understanding of the rise of Hebrew literature is the chronicle ascribed to the R. Joseph, another of the Sephardim, who is said to have lived in exile at Avignon and at Genoa. Here is a man who may be said to "write Bible," so thoroughly is he steeped in Hebrew poetical imagery. He is one of the best guides to the Bible extant; and, as his work has been done into English, it should be studied by all who wish to arrive at the truth. He is another powerful indirect witness against the antiquity of Hebrew letters.

Another fact that should be added to the sum of evidence is the bad state of the text of the early-printed Hebrew Bibles. Can you conceive it possible that a text which had been long in use, and had been jealously guarded by the pastors and rulers of the people, should come from the Press teeming with errors, and bearing all the marks of rush and haste ? To me this is not conceivable. In short, it would be weakness to labour the argument, once clearly stated. It is this : The phenomena of Hebrew letters during the Age of Publication (or sixteenth century) forbid us to suppose that they are an invention of much earlier date.

Again : According to the Christian tradition, which my readers will find in the handbooks, the first Christian scholar who learned Hebrew from Jewish teachers was none other than our notorious Hieronymus, or imaginary Jerome, the mouthpiece of the monks of the Age of Publication

Once more : When you understand the " Jerome " works to be of that time, many a cloud rolls away, many an enigma is solved. Through this imaginary scholar we learn that the monks had unpointed Hebrew before them ; that, consequently, the same word might be read *Roim*, shepherds, or [138] *Reim*, lovers ; that another word might be read either as Salem or Salim, because " very rarely do the Hebrews use vowels, and the words may be pronounced differently, according to the caprice of the readers and the variety of regions ;" that the Hebrew word DBR, without vowels, may be understood as *dabar*, word, or as *daber*, pest ; that SM may either be understood as *placed* (sam), or as *there* (sham); and so on (" Hieron. Ep. ad Damasum," 125; "Ad Evag." 126 ; " Comm. ad Heb. 111., 5," etc.).

Further: It is through the Talmud alone that we can know what the Jewish scholars wished their people to believe about the Bible ; and, certainly, the collection of Jewish lore called by that name was not heard of until the early Age of Publication, when it was denounced by Christian scholars as entirely inconsistent with Christianity. The Talmudic tracts give evidence that mere Hebrew caligraphy is still imperfect, and that correct readings have not been fixed, in many a passage. The good Rabbis veil their critical observations, such as they are, under the figure of the "Tradition of Moses from Mount Sinai."

The Masora (tradition) is merely another disguise of the inventions of the Hebrew men of letters. You cannot ascend above the statements in Zacuto on this head about the "custom of the sages of Tiberia" (whoever may be meant), of whom were the Masorites, who handed down the punctuation. It is essentially the same statement which is repeated by Elias the Levite. But, in these fables, they are not alluding to any Tiberias in Syria : not until the supposed *proper names* in Hebrew literature have been subjected to critical re-examination can we conjecture what is really meant.

But I must refer my readers of the learned class to the Rabbinical Bible, Bomberg, Venice (dated 1518-1526), and to Elias the Levite, for the further and detailed evidence of what I have stated with reference to the novel and plastic state of

Hebrew letters at the Revival. Beyond question the whole is a European affair. But whether the Jewish scholars began their labours in Spain, or in France, or in Italy, is a question on which I could not venture to pronounce with any confidence until I had tested every particle of the circumstantial evidence with the closest scrutiny.

I will add that the Jewish clergy, like the Latin clergy, [139] were more anxious to amuse and divert their public with discussions about the jots and tittles of their texts than they were to engage in discussion on the weighty question, whether their theory of history was in itself true and trustworthy. All the clerical bodies have taught us to "strain at gnats and swallow camels "

My readers may be lost in astonishment at the results to which I have led them by critical inquiry. I, on the other hand, may be permitted, as a writer exposed to much obloquy, to express my astonishment at the fact that no critic has been sufficiently interested in the subject-matter to study it, and to discover the very simple facts which I have laid bare in reference to the rise of Hebrew literature. Never will an opponent arise competent to overthrow the general position I have taken up ; but I predict with confidence that my steps will be followed by men of research, who will make it clear to the public that the Hebrew letters are possibly an even later invention than I have alleged them to be.

With regret I turn from this fascinating subject to the question I am bound to treat in particular. Was such a person as Saul-Paul ever known to Jewish tradition or to the Jewish literary art ? My readers have anticipated the negative answer. And there the question is at an end.

A Jewish scholar, brought up at the feet of a Rabbi in all the wisdom of Rabbindom, one of the great founders of the new religion : and yet Jewish " tradition " knew nothing of either master or scholar ! It is intolerable nonsense. A persecutor of the nascent Christian Church ! What power have the Jews, as we know them, ever had to persecute by any legal means, or in any proper sense of the word, the Christians ? Oh, the folly of it ! The Jewish community, as it stands before the world's observation at the present day, is always liable to be oppressed by violence, but never has had independent power to oppress by violence. When was it otherwise ? Never. It is absurd to discuss a question which is no question at all.

Then, lastly, my readers will ask of me, Why did the writers in the interest of the Catholic Church (the monks) invent the Ideal of a converted Jew, who became their greatest Apostle? The answer is, that it was fundamental in their system to make the Jews indirectly the founders of [140] the Church. "We wish they were exterminated; but without their books we cannot go on," says Polydore. Quite true ! And that is one of the sentences which unravels the whole Pauline enigma.

Paul must be a Jew, they all say. He must be a Catholic, say all the Catholics. He must be a Protestant, say all the Protestants. But the fatal point of evidence is that the Jews do not own such a person as Saul-Paul. They have merely supplied the name of Saul of the tribe of Benjamin, a persecuting king, for the ingenuity of the constructive monks to work upon. Paul, as both Hebrew and Roman citizen, is in great part allegorical of the construction of the Catholic Church itself. Under the extreme difficulty of penetrating the secret life of that dark time of four hundred years ago, we can only resort to probable conjectures of the course of events.

The Jewish scholars, dispersed from Spain, busied themselves with their legislative and poetical literature. It was no doubt in its way a great achievement ;

the mysterious and impressive contents of the books attracted attention and envy; the success in welding the scattered Jewish families into a community similar to that of Islam inspired imitations to a like enterprise. The military societies formed to resist the Orientals were succeeded by the spiritualmilitary confederation of the monks. Their object was to persecute and to depress the Jewish people, and to make use of their sacred books for the very opposite purpose to that for which they were designed. There are, I believe, in the Hebrew Bible itself, in veiled and allegorical forms, allusions to those confederacies against the people, possibly to the rise of monkdom (the K'morim), and of the papacy itself. The malignant design was carried out, and to it we owe the figure of the ex-persecutor Apostle.

I cannot well conceive that any Jewish scholar of powerful understanding and competent learning could ever be convinced and converted to Christianity from his own simple creed by any of the arguments put into the mouth of this alleged Jewish Apostle, or any of his peers. But Jewish scholars might yet do much, after the example of Bernays, in the analysis of the Epistles, by way of showing still more clearly, if possible, from what sources and at what time the Hebrew basis was taken, and to establish the general truth [141] of my contention as to the modernity of Hebrew letters, and as to the causes of that superstition about their alleged immense antiquity which is now passing away from the educated world.

My task is now accomplished. It has been said by a great writer that the statement we arrive at in attempting to satisfy our own curiosity is of universal value. I trust that it may be so in this case. Certainly it was a painful, a most distressing curiosity to know, after long years spent in the calling of the teacher, what I ought to hold and teach as true Christianity, that goaded me to undertake these investigations. In one respect the result has been a grievous disappointment : because, instead of discovering a solid basis of witnessed and accredited facts, I have found nothing but clear and irresistible evidence of the schemes and devices of a secret literary society, whose bold statements have again and again to be contradicted out of their own writings.

"These things were not done in a corner," Paul is made to say. But they *were* done in a corner; so that, to this day, we can only speak in general terms of the monasteries which were the chief haunts of the literary constructors. "We have not followed cunningly-devised fables," the Brother-Apostle is made to say; and yet the whole system is one of cunningly-devised fables. And the very Apostle who is made to asseverate so awfully that he tells the truth and lies not, is held up as an example of pious mendacity. Here are alleged Epistles, which are unlike any letters that a man, knowing his own mind —to say nothing of a great teacher —ever wrote to his friends, and which prove to be mere compilations of theological and ethical matter, so confused and so contradictory that one is often at a loss to know whether it is a Jewish Rabbi, or a Catholic priest, or a Protestant-wedded clergyman who is addressing us.

One trained like myself to believe in and to defend these writings, and to look upon the Church as ideally, at least, a glorious institution, free from spot, wrinkle, blemish, or any such thing, cannot reflect upon these discoveries without pain. By instinct and old affection my place is among her servants or allies. But the duty of the literary critic is no less serious and stern than that of the judge upon the bench; [142] and my conscience, as a critic, compels me to condemn an institution which is

stained, and maculate, and deformed by complicity with so much of falsehood and of fraud, and to make what effort I can towards a new reformation. The Church is still the most powerful literary organisation in the world ; she can still do much to hinder the solitary student whose mission it is to proclaim the truth as it stands in letters and science to the world. But I hope for better things.

In this time of seething intellectual activity the day can hardly be distant when the clergy themselves will discover that an institution based on blind credulity towards a false tradition is the source of endless evils in their own body and in the society they rule, and that it will be necessary to revert to those great moral principles of truly Catholic and universal import which are written in the hearts of men, which need no forged history to confirm them, because they are self witnessed and self verified. Self authoritative. they need the support of no imaginary great and illustrious names.

I am not to be understood as denying the use of fiction as a vehicle for the conveyance of sound teaching to the minds of the multitude; on the contrary, such vehicle is both convenient and necessary. But methinks the persuasion is growing, and must continue to grow : that this Pauline vehicle, and the Biblical vehicle in general, has become used and worn —in fact, all but obsolete ; and that for the most part the substance of doctrine conveyed by it is no longer salutary to the world.

Bowever this may be, I have sought to gratify such readers as have an educated taste for truth and science, apart from which there can be no good taste; readers who desire to rid their minds of illusions so enormous as those it has fallen to my lot to expose. Lest any should suppose that I have made an exaggerated statement, let me call attention to some remarkable passages in a work ascribed to one of the most able, and I believe justly respected, of English clergymen. I refer to the narrative of the most memorable passages of his life and times published under the name of Richard Baxter, 1696. The author says

"I am much more cautelous in my belief of history than heretofore, not that I run into the extreme of those that will [143] believe nothing because they cannot believe all things. But I am abundantly satisfied by the experience of this age that there is no believing two sorts of men, ungodly men and partial men. Though an honest heathen of no religion may be believed, where enmity against religion biases him not, yet a debauched Christian, besides his enmity to the power and practice of his own religion, is seldom without some bias of interest or faction. Especially when these concur, and a man is both ungodly and ambitious, spousing an interest contrary to a holy heavenly life, and also factious, embodying himself with a sect or party suited to his spirit and design : there is no believing his word or oath.

" The prodigious lies which have been published in this age in matters of fact, even where thousands or multitudes of eye and ear witnesses knew all to be false, doth call men to take heed what history they believe, especially where power and violence affordeth privilege to the reporter, that no man dare answer him or detect his fraud ; or, if they do, their writings are suppressed.

"Conscionable men dare not lie; but faction and interest abate men's tenderness of conscience .....Sure I am that, as the lies of the Papists, of Luther, of Zwinglius, Calvin, and Beza are visibly malicious and impudent, by the common plenary contradicting evidence, and yet the multitude of seduced ones believe them all, in despite of truth and charity ; so in this age there have been such things written

against parties and persons, whom the writer designs to make odious, so notoriously false, as you would think that the sense of their honour at least should have made it impossible for such men to write. My own eyes have read such words and actions asserted with such vehement, iterated, unblushing confidence, which abundance of ear witnesses, even of their own party, must needs know to have been altogether false. And, therefore, having myself now written this history of myself, notwithstanding my protestation that I have not in anything wilfully gone against the truth, I expect no more credit from the reader than the self evidencing light of the matter, with concurrent rational advantages from persons and things and other witnesses shall constrain him to, if he be a person that is unacquainted with the author himself, and the other evidences of his veracity and credibility."

[144] I regard these remarkable confessions as casting a piercing ray of light upon the whole of Church History and upon the earliest Church books, which are distinctly so factious, and therefore fictitious, in their origin. In truth, it may be said that the day in which the Church ceases to be a faction against the Jews, she ceases to exist.

I cannot forbear to quote a few more words from another eminent English divine, Tillotson, because they seem to me so pertinent to the case of this spurious Pauline legend. He preaches: "Truth is always consistent with itself, and needs nothing to help it out; it is always near at hand, and sits upon our lips, and is ready to drop out before we are aware ; whereas a lie is troublesome, and sets a man's invention on the rack; and one trick needs a great many more to make it good. It is like building upon a false foundation, which continually stands in need of props to shore it up, and proves at last more chargeable than to have raised a substantial building at first on a true and solid foundation. For sincerity is firm and substantial, and there is nothing hollow or unsound in it, and because it is plain and open, fears no discovery, of which the crafty man is always in danger; and, when he thinks he walks in the dark, all his pretences are so transparent that he that runs may read them. He is the last man that finds himself to be found out; and, while he takes it for granted that he makes fools of others, he renders himself ridiculous." Such statements as those of the Archbishop were certainly not derived from Pauline study, nor are they reconcilable with the Pauline writings. A page or two of this manly English sermon on the advantages of truth and sincerity are worth infinitely more than the whole of the Apostolic lore; and that is perhaps the most damaging criticism that can be urged against the Epistles in question.

But I must now leave this essay to the intelligence and candour of my readers, in the calm consciousness that I have used my best endeavours to ascertain the general truth, and to make some useful contribution to the neglected science of Letters.

## [143] ADDENDA.

IT may be desirable to give some further illustrations of the state of literary culture (or unculture) later than the year 1533.

With regard to the difficulty of getting a true *date*. In the preface to Polydore Vergil's work on "Inventors " there is a strong denunciation of fables and superstitions, and a large promise to tell the strict truth about inventions, that no one might be defrauded of his praise. The writer declares that he alone has dared to write on this subject since Pliny, who, in his Natural History (bk. 7), had touched on the matter lightly and in a fabulous manner. The undertaking is described as very arduous, as now completed. This preface is dated Urbino, the nones of August MCCCCXCIX. It would be a valuable date if we could rely on it. Comparison with other dates, however, compels us to regard it as one of the numerous cases of ante-dating. There is another preface before the fourth book of this work, where the author begins to treat of the origin of the Christian religion. This is dated nones of December, London MDXVII. Yet only a few pages on, the author refers to something that had occurred in the year 1533 (the Arabic numerals are used). Moreover, he alludes to his English history, the dedication of which to Henry VIII. is dated 1533. Possibly the prefaces are booksellers' fictions.

The work itself is quite uncritical, the author making no attempt to discriminate between what we call the classical writers and the Christian writers in respect to their relative age and authority. He begins with the origin of the gods, and of the name "Deus." The very first writer quoted is Paul the Apostle (2 Corinthians xi.). 11 Satan himself is [146] transfigured into an angel of light " —that is, God who is light. And this is said to prove the dogma that evil daemons personate gods. And the Apostles (Matthew xiv.) were terrified at what they believed to be a spectre on the waters. Then it is said that Christ undoubtedly teaches of guardian angels in Matthew xviii. "Saint Jerome " is quoted for the correct interpretation ; each soul has from birth a guardian angel delegated to it.

The opinions of the Greek and Roman philosophers are reviewed; and then, for the true doctrine of the one and unbeginning God, Macrobius is quoted, then Esaias, Cicero, St. Jerome, Virgil, Ovid, Plato, St. Ambrose! Several fantastic etymologies of " Deus " are proposed. We see here the artificial nature of the Catholic theology as compounded partly of the opinions of the philosophers. But how old the writings of the philosophers were, we have no means of knowing.

For the origin of humankind the opinions of the philosophers are cited; and it is alleged that "Sacred Letters" contain the truer account, and that the first birth of men was among the Jews ! The authorities are the miserable " Josephus," which is wholly a monkish and recent book, conficted, of course, by the aid of Jewish writings, also the "old instrument" (Testament), and Ovid, St. Jerome, and Lactantius. Then we have St. Jerome again, followed by Virgil ; and by Josephus again for the cause of the variety of tongues. This preference for Josephus over the Bible is one of the causes of the misunderstanding of the Hebrew Bible which has since prevailed. The monk "Eusebius" is also cited in the perversions of the Hebrew.

Polydore continues to make himself the mouthpiece of the monks ; cites " St. Jerome " for the dictum that Adam and Eve were virgins in Paradise, that marriage

came in with sin. There is no sign that the author has either Hebrew or Latin Bible in his hands.

On the question of the origin of Letters, the tales about Mercury and Cadmus are given; and then the indispensable "Josephus" is fallen back upon again for the statement that the Greeks had no Letters before Homer, which, however, is contradicted by Cicero and by Eusebius. The monk will have it that Moses was long before Cadmus, and [147] gave Letters to the Jews, who gave them to the Phoenicians, and the Phoenicians to the Greeks. And then we have the silly tale from Josephus, how the sons of Seth wrote astrological information on two columns; but this may have been washed away by the flood!

Then we have the indirect admission, amply confirmed by the sixteenth-century Rabbins, that Hebrew Letters are recent. "As Eusebius says, they are twenty-two in number. If we believe St. Jerome, they are new and invented by Esdras."

It is maintained on the monkish authority of Eusebius that the origin of Poetry was among the Hebrews long before the Greeks, because the great Moses, Emperor of the Hebrews, after crossing the Red Sea, composed a thanksgiving in hexameters. David also composed trimeters and quinquemeters: Josephus again! And "St. Jerome" mixes up Horace and Pindar with Deuteronymy and Esaias, Solomon and Job, as if Deuteronymy were a man, who wrote in hexameters and pentameters! It is not, however, alleged that the Hebrews had anything to do with Grammar, or with Tragedy, Comedy, and Satire.

But Moses must be made out the first historian, 783 years before the first Olympiad! But he is not alleged to have invented Rhetoric. The Hebrew Tubal, son of Lamech, must have been the first musician (see Josephus again). David invented various instruments. Philosophy came from the Hebrews, and Plato learned the division into physic, dialectic, and ethic from them! Abraham taught the Egyptians astrology, also arithmetic and geometry. Weights and measures were introduced by Cain, son of Adam.

But on the great question of chronology we are left in the dark, after a brief allusion to the Olympiad of the Greeks, the lustre and the annals of the Romans, who denoted the number of years by nails driven into the wall of the temple of Minerva. There is no mention of any other registers whatever. The Roman numerals are given and the Arabic, which are not admitted to be Arabic, but are said to be "sufficiently known to all."

Medicine is not claimed as an invention of the Hebrews; but magic goes back to Moses and his mother Jochobel.

In a chapter on the calendar, the invention of the golden number is *ascribed either to St. Bernard or to Julius Caesar*—[148] a remarkable statement, as showing the ignorance of all time-reckoning or perspective. I have long suspected that the few passages which ascribe the reformation of the calendar to Julius Caesar are really sixteenth-century inventions, and that the approximate solar year of  $365\frac{1}{4}$  days was then determined on in the interests of the ecclesiastical system. Metal clocks are referred to in a way which shows them to be recent inventions, "now possessed by nearly all the West." There is an allusion, however, to the inventive activity which is going on—another example of which is the *pyxis* of the mariner.

On the cardinal question of books, our information is very slight. Reading and study are said to be on the increase daily. From Diogenes Laertius, and Gellius, the

story is told that Anaxagoras first published a book he had written, or that Pisistratus was the first to offer books for public reading. And then this boast is refused to the Greeks, and once more "Josephus against Appion" is called on to declare that the Greeks are very recent—in fact, of yesterday or the day before, as the phrase sometimes runs.

Then we have the tales from Gellius, how the Athenians collected a large number of books, which Xerxes carried away to Persia, and which Seleucus Nicanor brought back; how as many as 1,700 books were collected by the Ptolemies in Egypt, and how they were all burned. Here we have the slight notice from Strabo of Aristotle as first founder of a library; also Pliny's notice of the library of Pergamus, and the first library in Rome, founded by Asinius Pollio, who thus "*made the minds of men a commonwealth.*"

But what of the vast interval of 1,500 years that is alleged to have elapsed between the Augustan age and the time of Polydore? It is passed in absolute silence; there is no allusion whatever to those monastic libraries which a writer like Dr. Maitland ("Dark Ages") believes, on false monkish testimony, to have flourished. Our writer continues "There are *also* at the present day several libraries in Italy, but by far the most celebrated in my opinion is that founded by the late Duke of Urbino, and increased by his son." Not a word about the Medicean or any other library!

The writer—then passes to the invention of printing, and says that more is now printed in one day by a single hand [149] than could be hardly written in a whole year by several—a broad statement which, in connection with other evidence, shows that the mass of books in existence is mainly subsequent to the invention of printing. Indeed, it is added that printing has supplied a sufficiency of books even for the neediest of men; it has "rescued very many Greek and Latin authors from destruction."

But what was their state before the *recent* art came in to preserve them? How long had they been in existence? Through what libraries transmitted? The more closely we consider the problem, the less possible will it be for us to believe that the Greek and Latin authors are of great antiquity. It is simply inconceivable.

Honour is done to John Gutenberg as the first printer at Mainz, and the inventor of printer's ink. The date is given as about 1442. Then in 1458 Conrad, another German, brought the art to Rome, and later Nicolas Jenson, the Frenchman, greatly improved it. The art now flourishes almost everywhere in the world.

In reference to the use of charts and membranes, it is repeated that the Hebrews, as the oldest historians, wrote on membranes, and this once more on the credit of the idle tale in Josephus how Eleazar the Prince sent the sacred books to Ptolemy Philadelphus that they might be turned into Greek!

The utter ignorance of what had taken place in the alleged vast "Middle Ages" is again and again shown. Moses invented warlike weapons, and made a glorious expedition against the Ethiopians. The Venetians invented cannon in 1330! This is one of very few dates.

Again and again the absurd theory that the Hebrews were first in everything is forced upon us from the pages of the false Josephus. Cain was the first man to hoard money, therefore there must have been coins in his time!

What can we think of the state of general culture when the striking of gold and silver coins is denounced as one of the worst of sins on the part of the inventor, and



when the writer wishes we could go back to the system of barter as in the Trojan times? And yet the Roman golden ducat is said to have been in use for some 1,600 years; silver coin longer!

With regard to buildings, similar fables are told. The sons [150] of Adam were the first builders, and so on. But our author has nothing to say that is valuable about either Moslem or Christian architecture. I call him as witness to the fact, insisted upon by Fergusson, that none of our ecclesiastical buildings or our ecclesiastical terms are ancient. He says that the Christian temples are everywhere used, especially in England, as Asylas not only for the innocent, but for the worst malefactors. Contrary to the law of Moses ! He repeats the like in his English History, and he thinks it a great scandal. The statement throws great light on the circumstances under which the Church arose—a secret society, sheltering the most desperate of mankind from justice. This, I believe, is the only foundation for tales of martyrdom.

In another chapter he confesses that he cannot write a certain story of Christian buildings. He conjectures from the *recently*-published Eusebian tales that for about 300 years the Christians could have had no public buildings, but met in secret and subterranean places. It is safe to guess, however, that in remote places like Ethiopia, India, or Scythia, fanes may have been built to Christ! Or at Jerusalem by James ! There is a slight notice of St. Prudentiana in Rome, the Church of the Blessed Virgin in the Transtevere, and the cemetery in the Appian way; and the fables about the Catacombs are beginning to be told. Then follows the fable about Helena and the invention of the Cross.

Towards the end of the book we have the perverse story which the monks chose to tell about the rise of Mohammedanism.

I have perhaps given sufficient illustrations of the state of historical knowledge about the middle of the so-called sixteenth century, itself a fabulous expression. Here were various systems of literature, Greek, Roman, Hebrew, Latin-ecclesiastical, Moslem, all claimed by their authors to be very ancient, all supported by false chronological schemes. The notion that the Hebrew is the oldest literature is due to the persistent falsehood of the monks. The theory is confuted by the fact that the Arabs looked up to the Greeks as their masters, and that the Hebrews confess themselves disciples of the Arabs and the Moors. But if the Greek and Latin classics are the oldest books of Europe, [151] we appear to have no means of knowing exactly how old they are, in the absence of any genuine chronology.

Let me show from other sources that this tradition of the great antiquity of our books must be regarded as one of the many inventions of the Revivalists. It has been said that Greek letters were silenced in Italy during about the period " 700-1400 " of our chronology. The statement is really without meaning, for the period is imaginary. Again, it has been said that about 1400 they began again to be taught by exiles from Constantinople, at Venice, Florence, Rome, Ticino. It is said the revival of good Latin after long barbarism followed.

To test these statements. What books were there at Constantinople after its capture by Mahomet II., dated 1453 ? It is stated by Ant. Verderius and by Ant. Possevin that there were about 150 MSS. in the Patriarchium, scarce 180 in the whole city. The reader may consult the "Palaeography" of the celebrated Benedictine of St. Maur,

Montfaucon (page 20), etc. In the whole of the rest of Greece he cannot produce evidence of so many as 100 MSS.

The same scholar shows that Christian literature is the affair of the West, when he computes that there may have been some 20,000 MSS. in Italy, France, England, Germany, and Holland. I believe this to be an over-calculation, even from the middle of the sixteenth century. And the mass of them have been artificially aged by means of false dates, alleged old handwriting, etc.

The evidence perfectly teems with signs of trickery and fraud. The secret faction of literary monks devised alphabets, parchments, and inks to represent different ages. Still the scheme could not escape detection. When you observe that the copies alleged to be of a particular age, no matter where written, have the same form of writing, the same characters, you perceive that you have to do with a company of copyists who had the same alphabet before them.

On pages 217-8 of Montfaucon's "Palaeography " you have the characters of the Royal Codex of the Epistles of Paul, and of the St. Germain's Codex. The characters are the *same* with those of " The Epitome of Lactantius," one of the disguised faction, published from the library of Turin, [152] 1712. "So similar is the character throughout, you would swear that these Codices (together with one of the Four Gospels, Paris) were not only of one workshop, but written by one hand; or, if by several, then certainly by those who had the same alphabet before them, which was closely followed in every letter" (Hardouin).

It is a here fallacy to suppose that there ever were experts who could tell by inspection the age of a given 1125. All an expert can pretend to do is to state what age the MS. in question was intended to represent by those who laid down the scheme of centuries. There are many oblique confessions of what was done, in charges made against alleged heretics, that they had left their writings with "clandestine craft" in a bishop's book-case, which were in due time to be produced as if ancient.

In the "Palaeography," page 326, Montfaucon adduces a MS. containing the Gospels elegantly written. He assumes it to be of the fourteenth century, yet points out that the scribe had imitated the eleventh-century handwriting. It is to be doubted whether in the epigraphs or inscriptions at the end of MSS. a single true statement of date has been found.

Hardouin alleged that there was no Monastic library earlier than what is called the fourteenth century; and he must, according to other statements, have revised that opinion in favour of a later date. He also said that no Hebrew MSS. were believed to be older than that age, when all were written and depraved that are in existence. In Hebrew characters the forgers could not produce the illusion of different ages as they could with their alleged Merovingic, Lombardic, Saxon forms in Latin.

In going over the same ground afresh, I have been convinced, by the evidence, that no libraries or collections of books are discoverable until the period of the Tudors and their contemporaries, or say about 1540. For Paris, the satire of Rabelais, who is said to have been a Benedictine and a Franciscan, on the nature of the literature and on monkish history in general, is very instructive. My final as my first word must be : You cannot ascend, in the retrospect, above, or even so high, as the year 1500.

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- 1 Polydore Vergil, "Analica Historia," xxxvi., s. f.
  - 2 Our first bibliographer. The Boston catalogue, as usual, is antedated ; Leland knows it not.
  - 3 See Rev. J. S. Brewer's preface to documents of Henry VIII.
  - 4 "De Rer. Inv.," iv. I.
  - 5 Chapter lxxxii.
  - 6 H. E. ii. 18; iii, I and 4 ; Vi. 25.
  - 7 H.E. iii. 1.
  - 8 H. E. iii. 24.
  - 9 H.E. vi. 25.
  - 10 H. E. iii. 3 and 25.
  - 11 H. E. i. 12.
  - 12 H. E. ii. 1.
  - 13 H. E. V. 2 ; viii: 10.
  - 14 H. E. iii. 4 and 15.
  - 15 H.E. iii. 16..
  - 16 H.E.. iii. 2.
  - 17 H. E. iv. 14.
  - 18 On this part of the subject see my special investigation in " Antiqua Mater," 1887.
  - 19 Hebrew, Greek, and Arabic were added by Paul V., Const. Apost., so late as 1610.
  - 20 On grounds above adduced, and to be yet adduced, I cannot hold the Codices of the entire Bible, Amiatinus, Toletanus, Paullinus, Vallicellianus, F., or the Codex from Fulda, one of the chief seats of the German Benedictines, to be earlier than the late sixteenth century.
  - 21 Printed in Bishop Tanner's Bibliotheca. The MS. is not extant.
  - 22 See Hieron., " Ep. ad. Marcellam," etc.
  - 23 The Benedictine, disguised as "Rufinus," is the authority; Polydore simply says it means a collation of the opinions of the Apostles o Fathers about God. An allegory of the Round Table.
  - 24 " De Inv.," v. 4.
  - 25 Audin, iii. 376.