

Again, the study of other religions opens the preacher's eyes to the originality and particular value of his own. For the true nature of anything, says Professor Bertholet, can be recognized only by comparison. Only by setting it beside other precious stones can we see the eminence of the diamond. And then he refers to his own experience. 'I may speak by my own experience. In my *Religionsgeschichtliches Lesebuch* (1908) I have endeavoured to render non-Christian sacred texts accessible to a larger circle of readers. The point of view from which their selection has been made was not, it is true, that of their beauty, but of their fitness for rendering comprehensible the religions which they are destined to illustrate. But the more I plunged into them, the more it struck me how much the Bible—not of course every part of it, but taken as a whole—excels them. And if in some papers I have tried to sketch the superiority of Christianity over them, this was the very result of my closer occupation with Buddhism.'

It is quite true that on the part of certain members of Christian countries there is a movement at present in the direction of embracing

Buddhism. And an active Buddhistic propaganda has begun on European soil. But what does that signify? It signifies that the preacher has neglected to study Buddhism for himself and to tell others what it is. These persons are ignorant of Buddhism. That is why they embrace it. And Professor Bertholet is not afraid to say that they are merely toying with it, and indulging the latest freak of fashion.

It is then that Professor Bertholet comes to the value of the study of Comparative Religion for the pulpit. It is not in the way of illustration merely, though he gives illustrations. It is still more in the new and larger outlook, the new emphasis, the new proportion, and even the new and welcome vocabulary. 'At the Congress of the History of Religions at Basel,' says Professor Bertholet '(the previous gathering to that just held at Oxford), a Parsi high priest from Bombay asked me to recommend him some books of Protestant sermons, as he wished to oppose the traditionalism in the present manner of preaching among the Parsis, and hoped that new life would be given to it by means of non-Parsi homiletical literature.'

## The Bearing of Criticism upon the Gospel History.

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### I.

[THE papers which follow are the substance of two lectures delivered in the summer of this year; and the lecture form has been retained. The full title of the lectures (which, it may be explained, was not of the writer's choosing) was 'The Bearing of Criticism on (1) the Events of the Gospel History, and (2) the Belief in the Divinity of our Lord.' It might perhaps be expected that the lectures would include the discussion of some burning questions, such as the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection. But the omission of these subjects was deliberate; partly from a desire to

avoid anything at all sensational, and partly because the lectures were addressed to students, and their purpose was not so much to supply cut-and-dried conclusions as to suggest a method and attitude. When the time comes, I shall be prepared to deal as well as I can with all parts of the Gospel History; but my belief is that the particular questions I have mentioned are best reserved till the last. A somewhat prolonged suspension of judgement is, I conceive, to be encouraged rather than otherwise, in order that when the decision is made it may be made with the total mass of the

facts behind it and not merely the few that lie nearest to the surface. At the same time I have, in the second lecture, discussed more directly the one great premiss which affects the estimate of everything connected with the Gospels.

The lectures, as I have said, were addressed to students, for all of whom it was not possible to assume a high degree of knowledge. It was therefore perhaps inevitable that they should cover a certain amount of ground that to many will seem elementary. It was also necessary at times to make assumptions that could not be fully defended. Within the limits of two lectures a choice of topics had to be made that may well appear arbitrary. I can only say that more consideration has been given to this than may at first sight be supposed. I have kept the lectures by me for some time in the hope of improving them; and perhaps they have been a little improved. The most that I can look for from them is that, taken as a whole, they may give an impulse in what I conceive to be the right direction.]

The fundamental difference between the older, non-critical, method of studying the Gospels and the newer, critical, method is that, whereas under the former the Gospels were taken simply as they stand and no attempt was made to go behind them, under the latter (the new method) we seek to operate as far as possible not with the Gospels in their present form, but with the sources on which they depend—many would say, with the documents out of which they are mainly composed. Here at the outset we must take account of two different theories which at first sight will seem strongly opposed to each other but which in practice are by no means far removed and even on the main point come to almost the same thing.

The majority of those who have made a study of what is called the Synoptic Problem believe that there once existed written documents, earlier primitive Gospels as it were behind our present Gospels, of which use was made in the composition of those Gospels. It is in that way that we explain the great amount of resemblance that strikes us at once in the Gospels as we have them. The easiest way of explaining that resemblance appears to be to suppose that the first three evangelists—to whom, as a rule, this part of the inquiry is confined—largely made use of the same material. If three separate historians base their

narratives on a single authority, the result will naturally be that, so far as they do so, their narratives will be very like each other. And so, as a matter of fact, we find that over a large extent of the ground our first three Gospels are closely parallel: indeed, to be precise, almost the whole of our Second Gospel St. Mark has been incorporated substantially in the other two—all but about fifty verses out of a total of 661. Then again, if two historians out of three make use of a single document, those two will present the same kind of resemblances. And that is just what we find. Over and above the common matter which St. Matthew and St. Luke share with St. Mark—the 611 verses of St. Mark's Gospel of which we have just been speaking—they too have a considerable amount of mutual resemblance. Sir John Hawkins<sup>1</sup> estimates that they have at least 185 verses in common; and that may be taken as rather a minimum estimate; it is an estimate rather of the actual extent of the matter that they can be strictly said to have in common, than of the matter in which they may be reasonably presumed to have had before them the same authority. There will be a certain number of verses that were present in the original authority but were omitted, or modified out of recognition in one or other of the later Gospels. Beyond this both St. Matthew and St. Luke have a good many verses peculiar to themselves which may be taken to represent so much special information to which they severally alone had access.

This may be called the documentary theory of the origin of the Gospels. But by the side of this there is another oral theory, which for some time past has been held by a minority of scholars and critics, but a minority of considerable eminence and influence. It included Gieseler the Church historian, and the late Bishop Westcott; and a somewhat similar view is held by Dr. Arthur Wright of Queens' College, Cambridge, who is the editor of two excellent *Synopses* of the Gospels in Greek, one based on the order in St. Mark, and the other on the order in St. Luke. This last may be said to be the form of the oral theory which is most prominent at the present time. I described this theory as not being *in practice* very far removed from the documentary theory. And I did so for this reason. Dr. Wright bases his view upon the fact that in the East, throughout a

<sup>1</sup> *Horæ Synopticæ* (Oxford, 1899), p. 89.

great part of its history and even to the present day, more use is made of oral communication and less of writing than in the West. In the famous mosque of El-Azhar, at Cairo, groups of young students may be seen learning off long passages of the Koran by heart, instead of using books as we should. That is one of Dr. Wright's reasons; and the other is that he thinks that in this way he can better account for the differences between the Gospels in their common matter and quite as well for the resemblances. The resemblances, according to him, are due to the early catechists or Christian teachers learning off the texts by heart.

I can quite believe that there is an element of truth in this, but I do not think more than an element. St. Mark's Gospel was probably written at Rome; St. Luke was a Greek, and used the methods of the West rather than of the East. Both these Gospels in all probability circulated more over the field of St. Paul's missionary labours than in Palestine. It seems to me, too, that the freedom with which the evangelists reproduced their sources is in part rather deliberate and literary than due to mere failure of memory. I shall have occasion to come back to this point later. But for the present I would ask you to remember that the evangelists did not think of themselves as mere copyists but as historians, or at least narrators who told their story in their own way. They did not use books as we do, but they used lengthy rolls which had to be unrolled every time they were consulted. I imagine that the evangelist would read a paragraph at a time, and carry it in his head, and then set down the substance of it more or less from memory. It seems to me that the phenomena are just what we should expect from this mode of procedure. I doubt if two students repeating the Koran would repeat it with anything like the same amount of variation that there is in the Gospels.

At the same time it is to be noted that on Dr. Wright's hypothesis, too, there is the same fixed text to start with, and the same idea of variation due in part to memory; the difference is only as to the conditions under which the lapses of memory came in.

This amount of preface will perhaps be enough for my present purpose. I shall assume the facts on which most scholars at the present time, including Dr. Wright, are substantially agreed. I shall assume that there are three main sources, or

classes of sources, of our present Gospels: (1) our present St. Mark — the actual Gospel, not an *Urmarcus* or older form of the Gospel—which has supplied the outline and broad narrative of our Lord's public ministry as it is found in the other two Gospels; (2) a collection consisting for the most part of discourses, which an ancient tradition would lead us to think was the work of St. Matthew, and which was drawn upon by both the first evangelist and St. Luke, but not or in a much less degree by St. Mark; we may follow the example of many scholars at the present time by using for this document the symbol Q; (3) certain special material peculiar to the First Gospel and St. Luke, and amounting in the latter Gospel, at what is perhaps a maximum reckoning, to nearly 500 verses (499, J.C.H.).

The point that for our present purpose it is most important for us to ascertain is, What is the ultimate character and value of these sources? I say the 'ultimate character and value' of these sources, because I think that some light may be thrown on this by their subsequent history—by the history of the text, and by a study of the manner in which they have been used in our Gospels.

1. *The Text*.—It is a fact well known to textual critics that the further back we go in the history of the New Testament and more particularly of the Gospels, the greater the freedom with which they were copied. To such an extent is this the case that Dr. Scrivener went so far as to say:

'It is no less true to fact than paradoxical in sound, that the worst corruptions to which the New Testament has ever been subjected, originated within a hundred years after it was composed' (*Introduction*, ii. 264).

A good many of Dr. Scrivener's judgments in the context of this passage need rather drastic revision, but the passage itself is substantially true. There are really two kinds of textual corruption, and another kind may be said to have been more prevalent in the fourth century than in the second; but that kind which we should describe as 'freedom in copying' is specially characteristic of the earlier period.

It can be easily explained why this was the case.

There were of course professional scribes, and there was a fairly active book trade in the first century of our era. But there must have been

great inequalities in regard to book-production. In an old centre of scholarship like Alexandria or Athens, or in a somewhat less degree Pergamum, no doubt the facilities would be ample. But even at Rome the production of books on a large scale only went back to the time of Cicero, and so far as the trade was concerned seems to have been in comparatively few hands. Away from the large cities, and for ordinary middle-class people and the poor it must have been often by no means easy to get a MS. professionally copied. I must not make too sweeping statements. There was doubtless great variety of conditions, and with the variety of conditions great variety also of practice. It would happen from time to time that the wealthier Christians would have copies made for them by experts, and finely written MSS would after a time be produced for use in churches. But I imagine that the greater number of private copies would be made by individual Christians for their own use. And they would naturally be guided by their interest in the subject-matter. They would not have the rules or traditions of the professional scribes. They would be intent on the record of what Jesus said or did, and they would think little of minute exactness in the reproduction of the text as it lay before them. They would be only too glad, if they could, to enrich the text by additions made from other sources. It would be in this way that the story of the Woman taken in Adultery made its way into the Gospel of St. John; in this way that the anecdote of the man working on the Sabbath day found a place in the Bezan text of the Gospel of St. Luke, and another rather long interpolation not only into Cod. Bezae but into many Latin and some Syriac copies of Mt 20<sup>28</sup>. And there are many other smaller examples.

2. *Our present Gospels.*—It is interesting to observe the phenomena of which we have been speaking in the history of the text, because it is really in many respects a continuation on a smaller scale of processes that we can see at work in the composition of our present Gospels. Here we are able to test the procedure of the writers with a considerable degree of accuracy. It is an extraordinary piece of good fortune that in one instance—and that as it happens the most important of all, nothing less than the ground-document of the two later Gospels—not only have the Gospels been preserved to us, but the original on which they are

based. We are thus able to compare our present texts with the original which lay more or less before the writers—I say ‘more or less’ because I do not think that they either professed or tried to copy it continuously. I have already explained that the evangelists were not mere copyists, and did not think of themselves as copyists; they thought of themselves as narrators, whose duty it was to reproduce such information as they possessed, in the form in which it was best to lay it before their readers for their souls’ health.

Accordingly we find that here, just as in the case of the text, the characteristic of their procedure is freedom. We know that by degrees the notion grew up that the actual text of the Gospels was not only sacred but infallible, that every jot and tittle of it was in effect dictated by the Spirit of God. But this was by no means the view of the writers themselves. The Preface to the Gospel of St. Luke shows us exactly how that writer thought of his own composition. He aimed, it is true, at conveying to his patron the ‘certainty’ of the things in which he had been instructed (lit. ‘catechized’). But the whole context and practice of the evangelist shows that he meant *substantial* certainty and not minute verbal exactness. He bases his claim to be accepted as trustworthy on the human ground of the care and pains that he has taken to get back to the facts and to reproduce them methodically.

With slight shades of difference the same description would suit the other Synoptic Gospels as well. The special purpose that the author of the First Gospel had before his mind appears to have been didactic. The consideration that guides his hand in setting down his narrative is effectiveness of teaching. It is for that reason that he groups together the masses of discourse that form such a prominent feature in his Gospel, and in his treatment of events such as the miracles he seems to wish to make his examples typical, and impressive because they are typical. St. Mark’s is the first written Gospel to come down to us, and it has the qualities that we might expect under these conditions. The writer aims at painting a picture, a graphic rather than a finished picture, of the Lord’s ministry.

In Sir John Hawkins’ *Horæ Synopticae* will be found a very close and instructive analysis of the literary method of the three evangelists. Treated as Sir John treats it, this method stands out with

great distinctness; he is not content with giving vague impressions, but illustrates every point with an abundance of concrete examples. These examples very largely converge on the general characteristic of freedom. It is shown how each of the three evangelists has his own favourite words and phrases, which he does not hesitate to employ instead of those which he finds in the document before him. This is very markedly the case in St. Luke, but also quite distinctly in St. Matthew. And even in the case of St. Mark, though we cannot recover the exact words used by his authority St. Peter, yet we can generalize to some extent as to St. Mark's own personal predilections.

The freedom of treatment is by no means confined only to style; it extends also to the subject-matter, and is perhaps specially noticeable in regard to the order in which sayings and incidents succeed each other. Although there is no doubt a considerable degree of uniformity as to the main outline of our Lord's public ministry, due to the fact that both the later evangelists follow on the whole the lead given them by St. Mark, yet neither of them has any scruple in altering the place of a section when it suits him. We have seen how the first evangelist groups his materials so as to make them more effective for his purpose. It is probable that what we call the Sermon on the Mount has worked up into it sayings spoken on other occasions. If we compare Mt 8 and 9 with the parallel sections in St. Mark on which these chapters are based, we shall see that their contents have been in great part taken to pieces and rearranged. There is one conspicuous dislocation (the Preaching at Nazareth) and one disturbing insertion (the miraculous Draught of Fishes) at the beginning of St. Luke's narrative; but there is a larger amount of displacement, mainly through the introduction of new matter, towards the middle and end of his Gospel. A still greater degree of variation in position may be seen in the common matter of St. Matthew and St. Luke that has no parallel in St. Mark. This common matter is mostly of the nature of discourse; and whereas St. Matthew, as we have seen, shows a tendency to collect the sayings together in larger masses, in St. Luke they are for the most part widely dispersed. There is little doubt that much of the grouping in St. Matthew is artificial; the only question is whether the grouping as we find it was

made for the first time in our Gospel, or had been already carried out in the older document that the evangelist was using. In regard to St. Luke the main question is, how far the slight introductions or connecting links of narrative rest upon independent tradition preserved in the source, and how far they are simply conjectures by the evangelist suggested by the context. Both alternatives are possible, and the choice between them is still more or less open.

It is a curious characteristic of St. Luke that sometimes for no very apparent reason he transposes whole sentences or paragraphs: e.g. the second and third Temptations, the sayings about the Ninevites and the Queen of the South, and the giving of the Bread and of the Cup at the Last Supper.

It is probable that slight changes such as these are due to unconscious brain-action. They fall into the same class with a number of other small changes, in which, e.g., words attributed to one speaker or set of speakers in one Gospel are attributed to another in another, or words are used with slightly different senses or applications. Many instances of this kind are collected by Sir John Hawkins, *Hor. Synopt.* pp. 53-61.

I may perhaps venture upon a small modification of the inference which Sir John draws from these examples. He speaks of them as 'inexplicable on any exclusively or mainly documentary theory' (p. 53 n.). But I would submit that they do not prove quite so much as this. They do prove that there was some interval of time and some room for unconscious brain-action between the moment at which the original document was followed with the eye and the moment at which its substance was reproduced in writing, but the interval need not be a long one. I suspect that the difference is not between the use or non-use of documents, but only between a stricter and a laxer method of reproduction. We should have to describe the method adopted in the Gospels as relatively lax; it is at least not punctilious or pedantic; the standard of accuracy is not exactly the same as ours.

There are one or two cases in which the divergence seems to amount almost to direct contradiction. For instance, in the introduction to the Sermon on the Mount, where St. Matthew describes our Lord as going *up* into a (or rather, the) *mountain* (i.e. the high ground surrounding



the lake) and *sitting down*, while St. Luke describes Him as coming *down* and *standing* on a *level place*. Dr. Wright thinks that the introductory phrases are in both cases only editorial conjectures; and that may be the case. But it is also possible that St. Luke may be affected in this passage by another document which overlapped the collection of discourses that he and St. Matthew were using together. His substitution of four Blessings and four Woes for the eight Beatitudes of St. Matthew seems to point in this direction. It is equally difficult to think that the first evangelist, with the text of the third before him, abolished the Woes and made the four Beatitudes into eight, and that the third evangelist, with the text of the first before him, made the converse changes purely of his own motion. The most satisfactory explanation seems to be that some further influence, some parallel tradition, has come into play. And this is to be found most easily in what we call the Special Source (or Sources) of St. Luke. I believe that St. Luke had two versions of this group of sayings before him, and that he combined or 'conflated' them together. On the other hand, the first evangelist may have enlarged the original group by the addition of sayings that he found elsewhere.

Another instance which perhaps has a similar explanation is the account of the Transfiguration, which is expressly dated by St. Matthew and St. Mark six days after the preceding incident, and by St. Luke eight days. The agreement of St. Matthew with St. Mark shows that our present text of the latter is that of the original Gospel. The change must be deliberate on the part of St. Luke; and I suspect that he took it from his other authority because there are other additions in his narrative which appear to have come from this. It is an overlapping of two distinct traditions, and this is one of the instances which goes to show that when such overlapping occurred, St. Luke preferred the line that was peculiarly his own.

It is perhaps a different cause which led to an apparent discrepancy in the narrative of the mission of the Twelve. Here St. Mark expressly reserves permission to use the pilgrim's staff and such light footgear as sandals, whereas in both the first and third Gospels these too are prohibited. It is a slight detail on which not much stress is to be laid. St. Mark appears to be right; and it is not very surprising that the other two evangelists, with their rather wholesale methods, should have

overlooked or neglected his somewhat fine distinctions.

But considerably the most important of the changes introduced in the later Gospels are those of which specimens are collected by Sir John Hawkins on pp. 96-100 (changes due to increasing reverence). There is no doubt room for slight differences of opinion in regard to particular instances; the motive at work may not have been always exactly that which is suggested. But in the larger proportion of cases the reason for the change seems obvious and unmistakable; and the number of these instances taken together sheds light upon the general tendencies at work in the period during which our Gospels were being committed to writing—let us say roughly, the period of twenty or thirty years from about 60 A.D. onwards. During that period it is clear that reverence for the Person of Christ was steadily, though we can well believe at the time imperceptibly, growing; and there was an increasing reluctance to ascribe to Him anything that seemed in the least degree inconsistent with the exalted conception which the Church had formed of Him. A certain reflected glory also fell from Him upon the Apostles; there was a tendency to treat their memory with a degree of respect which silenced at least the severer kinds of criticism. We cannot be surprised that the later Gospels should suppress a statement like that in Mk 3<sup>21</sup> that the friends of Jesus 'went out to lay hands upon him: for they said, He is beside himself.' Where St. Mark says that He 'could not do any mighty work' at Nazareth because of the unbelief of the inhabitants (Mk 6<sup>5</sup>), St. Matthew only says that He *did not do* such works there (Mt 13<sup>58</sup>). The comment has dropped out from St. Luke altogether, as he has anticipated his version of the incident with a quantity of new matter (Lk 4<sup>14-30</sup>). On several occasions a feeling of anger is ascribed to our Lord in the earliest Gospel (Mk 3<sup>5</sup> 10<sup>14</sup>; cf. 1<sup>41</sup> v.l.), where this feature has disappeared from the later Gospels. In Mk 6<sup>48</sup> the phrase 'would have passed by them' (*ἤθελεν παρελθεῖν αὐτούς*) apparently was taken as implying something of reproach, as though our Lord had been indifferent to the danger of His disciples; and it is accordingly omitted by St. Matthew. A rough expression like that in Mk 1<sup>12</sup>, 'the Spirit *driveth* (*ἐκβάλλει*) him into the wilderness' is softened down in the other Gospels. Mk 1<sup>32-34</sup> informs us that the

people of Capernaum brought *all* their sick to our Lord, and that *many* were healed, where St. Matthew says that *all* the sick were healed (though this may be only due to his compendious method by which the two clauses are run into one); and St. Luke, borrowing a phrase from other contexts, says that He 'laid His hands on every one of them and healed them.'

Again, in several places a seeming harshness of rebuke or imputation of blame directed against the Twelve (Mk 8<sup>17, 18</sup> 6<sup>51, 52</sup>) is modified or omitted; compare the treatment of Mk 4<sup>38</sup> 10<sup>35</sup>.

These examples taken together make it clear that there was a tendency to idealize, or throw something of a nimbus over, the Gospel history as a whole during the period of which we are speaking (60 to 80 or 90 A.D.). I do not think it can be described as a very sweeping tendency; the examples of it in proportion to the whole amount of matter are not very numerous; and yet they seem to be distinct and unmistakable so far as they go.<sup>1</sup>

But at the same time that we duly recognize these facts and do not attempt to explain away their significance, it is not less incumbent upon us to point out and to emphasize the converse truth of the way in which they heighten the value of the oldest extant Gospel. The indications on which we have been relying are all derived from a comparison of this oldest Gospel St. Mark with the later secondary narratives that are constructed out of it. There has been no deliberate intention of misrepresenting the facts, but in the process of reproduction the motives at work in the writers' minds have unconsciously made themselves felt

<sup>1</sup> What is said in this paragraph may perhaps go some way to furnish an answer to a question that may be raised. It may be asked whether, if there was this tendency towards an increase of reverence for the Person of Christ and that which was associated with it, the whole process represented in the Gospels may not have been a process of gradual deification. The reply seems to be that the movement, so far as we can trace it in the twenty or thirty years that are open to detailed investigation, is too gradual and too slow to admit of such a conclusion. At the rate of movement that is revealed to us in the years 60-90, it would never have been possible to build up such a structure as we find from its foundations in the years 30-60. We are compelled to suppose that at the very beginning of this period the belief in the deity of Christ was substantially complete; it must have been a universal assumption of the Christian Church from the Day of Pentecost onwards. And this result is overwhelmingly confirmed by the Epistles of St. Paul.

and toned down the stronger colours of the original. But all this does but enhance the essential veracity of that original. It throws into relief the naive simplicity with which St. Mark has told the story just as it reached him, sophisticating nothing and extenuating nothing. St. Mark too was human, and he had some of the infirmities natural to man. I can well believe that he has magnified a little at times, that he has spoken roundly and generally where he should have spoken particularly, that he was not on his guard as a modern might have been. And yet on the whole he comes well out of the ordeal of criticism.

In this connexion I cannot help referring to an argument which has attracted a good deal of attention in Professor Schmiedel's article 'Gospels' in *Encyclopædia Biblica*, vol. ii. 1881 ff. Schmiedel there singles out nine passages which he calls 'foundation-pillars for a truly scientific life of Jesus.' Of these passages, seven are taken from the Gospel of St. Mark, and the remaining two from Q. They all derive their point from the fact that at first sight they appear to run counter to the general teaching of the Church in regard to our Lord: e.g. one takes hold of the incident in which His relations are said to have declared Him to be beside Himself (Mk 3<sup>21</sup>); another, of the statement that no mighty work could be done at Nazareth (Mk 6<sup>5</sup>); a third, of the apparent disclaiming of the title 'good' (Mk 10<sup>18</sup>); a fourth, of the admission that even the Son did not know the time of the end (Mk 13<sup>32</sup>); and so on. It is argued that these passages are such marked exceptions to the general tenor of the Gospel tradition that they cannot have been produced by it; they may therefore be accepted as absolutely credible.

Both in this country and in Germany the argument has met with criticism from the left as well as from the right. Some (like the author of *Pagan Christs*) who go further still than Professor Schmiedel in the way of negation deny the validity of the inference. Schmiedel has replied to his critics in this country, in a preface contributed by him to the translation of Arno Neumann's *Jesus* (London, 1906), and in Germany by an article in the *Protestantische Monatshefte* (1906). So far as the criticism from the Left is concerned, I must profess myself entirely at one with him. It is of course possible to explain away almost any fact in history; but I do not

doubt that Professor Schmiedel is right in claiming for the passages he enumerates a very strong stamp of authenticity. They are a decisive refutation of those who contend that there is nothing credible in the Gospels and that there is no solid proof that Jesus even existed.

In further explanation of his position Schmiedel goes on to divide the contents of the Gospels into three classes :

'First, those which are plainly incredible ; secondly, those which are plainly credible ; and in the third category those which occupy an intermediate position as bearing on the face of them no certain mark either of incredibility or of credibility. This third group contains almost the whole of the purely religious and moral teaching of Jesus, including most of the parables ; it also embraces much that is said about various journeyings of Jesus, about works of healing of the kind that are known to happen even at present, about His entry into Jerusalem, about His cleansing of the temple, about His Passion and His death.'

He also lays down that

'One may hold as credible all else which agrees in character with these (foundation passages) and is in other respects not open to suspicion.'

But that is surely narrowing the ground unduly, and indeed begging the whole question. To say the truth, Professor Schmiedel really starts by assuming what he will accept as credible and what he will not. The position that he takes up is the paradoxical one of insisting upon certain passages because they seem to run counter to the main tenor of Christian tradition, but at the same time practically ignoring this main tenor, which is really that which gives them their value. In other words, he builds on the exceptions, and ignores the rule to which they are exceptions. Is it not a much fairer way of proceeding to treat the passages of which we have been speaking as so much striking evidence of the generally high historical character of the documents in which they occur? We have seen that two documents are really concerned, one still extant and the other not. It is of the second of these that I must now go on to speak.

3. *The Lost Sources.*—Among the hypothetical

documents which we have seen reason to think once existed, though they soon dropped out of sight, the most important is that which we have hitherto designated Q. This is the document which must in any case be mainly reconstructed from the common matter of St. Matthew and St. Luke that is not found in St. Mark.<sup>1</sup> It is called Q—a symbol first used for it in Germany—in order not to make any more assumptions about it than can be helped. An older name for what was substantially the same document was *Logia*. The reason why this is now less commonly used is because the use of the title presupposed the identity of the lost document with a work referred to by Papias in a famous extract preserved by Eusebius (*H.E.* iii. 39) as the composition of the Apostle St. Matthew. I still think this identity probable, as it explains more satisfactorily than any other hypothesis would seem to do the way in which the name of St. Matthew came to be attached to the First Gospel. But it is no doubt well that the reconstruction of the document should not be too much mixed up with a possible tradition as to its origin.

The clearest effect produced by Q is the picture that it gives of the Christian ideal and of the character of Christ. We think at once of the Beatitudes, and the Sermon on the Mount as a whole, and of those wonderful verses at the end of chap. 11, 'Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me ; for I am meek and lowly of heart.' And then we remember how exactly St. Paul seems to have caught the features of this picture, when he entreats his readers 'by the meekness and gentleness of Christ' (2 Co 10<sup>1</sup>), or when he bids them bless their persecutors, not to render evil for evil, not to avenge themselves, but to feed their enemy if he is hungry, and if he is thirsty to give him to drink (Ro 12<sup>14-21</sup>). So close is the resemblance, and so marked is the way in which these features stand out, that we are tempted to ask if it is possible that St. Paul can have had access to this document Q. He had not, it would seem,

<sup>1</sup> On the contents and extent of Q see especially Sir John Hawkins, *Hor. Synopt.* pp. 88 ff. ; Harnack, *Sprüche u. Reden Jesu* (Leipzig, 1907), pp. 280-81 ; Wellhausen, *Einleitung in die drei ersten Evang.* (Berlin, 1905), pp. 65-68 ; B. Weiss, *Quellen d. Synopt. Überlieferung* (Leipzig, 1908), pp. 1-75. Weiss puts more into Q than the other writers because he believes it to have been also used by St. Mark.



had any real personal contact with our Lord, and yet he seems to have been well aware of the most distinctive aspect of His moral teaching. He would not have got this knowledge from any quarter so effectively as from Q. These particular features are not nearly so prominent in the Gospel of St. Mark, or in the special matter of St. Luke, or in the Gospel of St. John. St. Paul's day was over before the publication of any of these; but it is within the bounds of possibility that Q was in existence and had come into his hands before he wrote to the Corinthians or the Romans.

We must admit the possibility, but hardly, I think, more. The two places in which St. Paul shows the fullest knowledge of events in the Gospel History, the account of the Last Supper, and the enumeration of the appearances after the Resurrection, are wholly independent of anything in Q, and as it would seem of any extant written Gospel. On the whole it seems more probable that his knowledge was acquired orally; at the same time the coincidences with Q are striking. If St. Paul's knowledge was not derived from Q, then there must have been an independent line of tradition that was confirmatory of it, and that proves the early date of its contents. But these, indeed, have the witness in themselves.

We ask the same kind of question about Q and St. Mark. Was St. Mark acquainted with Q? This has been a point of much controversy among students of the Synoptic Problem. The conclusion that I am led to myself is that St. Mark was acquainted with it, in the sense that he knew of its existence and that at some time in his career he may have seen it; but I do not think that he can have made systematic use of it in the composition of his own Gospel. The first thirteen verses of St. Mark's Gospel are those that most strongly suggest a knowledge of Q. As compared with the narratives in Q these verses have every appearance of being an abridgement, as though the evangelist were hastening on to the point where he could take up the story of his chief authority St. Peter.

In the main I must needs think that the Second Gospel is independent of Q, though this point is contested. But, if that is so, then the two documents St. Mark's Gospel and Q, where they agree, furnish valuable corroboration of

each other. In any case they are sufficiently independent to do this. But the agreement between them covers important issues. Both documents imply the working of miracles on a considerable scale. We of course derive our knowledge of the main body of the Gospel miracles from St. Mark: the healing of the Gadarene (Gerasene) and other demoniacs, of the palsied man, of Peter's wife's mother, of the leper, of the withered hand, of more than one blind man, of the issue of blood and Jairus's daughter, the Syrophœnician's daughter and the epileptic boy, also the two miracles of feeding, the stilling of the storm, and the withering of the fig tree. It does not follow that all these miracles are quite on the same footing; but they are so at least as far as external authority is concerned. Q, on the other hand, is not a narrative Gospel, but, as we have seen, mainly a collection of discourses. It did, however, contain at least one narrative section, the healing of the centurion's servant, and perhaps another, the healing of the dumb demoniac (Mt 12<sup>22</sup>, Lk 11<sup>14</sup>). Besides these, the discourses contain many allusions to miracles, which are all the more convincing because they are indirect and assume the performance of miracles as well known. The Sermon on the Mount contains one such allusion, which in strict chronology probably belongs to a later period and refers to the miracles of disciples and not of the Master: 'Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out devils, and by thy name do many mighty works?' (Mt 7<sup>22</sup>). Our Lord's answer to the disciples of John contains an enumeration of miracles. In more places than one there are allusions to the casting out of demons, and so on.

Similarly as to the Christology. Besides minor points, there are of course in St. Mark the two great explicit passages, the Confession of St. Peter and the acceptance and affirmation of the saying of the high priest. Along with this there is the persistent use of the title Son of Man, about which I shall have more to say in the next lecture. The same use is found not less in Q. And in that document there is the third great passage, 'No one knoweth the Son, save the Father, and' etc., with its context. And here, too, there are a number of minor points like the authoritative 'I say unto you' of the

Sermon on the Mount, the 'greater than Jonah,' 'greater than Solomon,' the Judge who divides the sheep from the goats, and for whom good deeds done to His disciples are an act of homage to Himself. All these things, again, are so much more effective just because they are indirect, because they assume the great affirmation and do not attempt to prove it. We only have to look straight at these two documents, the Gospel of St. Mark and Q, to feel how entirely they presuppose the divinity of our Lord.

Passing on to the peculiar matter of St. Matthew and St. Luke: in the case of the First Gospel this peculiar matter is not all of the same kind. You will be aware that St. Matthew has a number of parables and other discourse matter which is not found in the other Gospels. It is probable that much, or most, of this really comes from Q, and is not found in St. Luke only because that evangelist was pressed for room and was not able to include it. All this matter was in any case quite in harmony with Q, and is probably not inferior in value. Another vein in the First Gospel has every appearance of being later, and as coming under the head of popular embellishment or legend. Such would be the stories at the end of the Gospel about Pilate's wife's dream, about the dead rising from their tombs, and about the bribing of the guard, etc. The first two chapters do not seem quite to come under this head. The contents of these chapters are not quite like the products of popular imagination; and before they found their way into the First Gospel it is not likely that they enjoyed any wide circulation. We cannot ignore the old observation that the story of the Nativity and Infancy is written throughout very much from the point of view of Joseph, just as the first two chapters of St. Luke are written very much from the point of view of Mary. The steady maintenance of this point of view in Mt 1 and 2 is remarkable, and has given rise to the supposition that the substance of these chapters stands in some relation to the so-called *Desposyni* or family of Joseph, who play some part in early Christian history. When I say 'stand in some relation,' the relation need not necessarily be a very close one. I should not like to pledge myself unreservedly to all that we are told in chap. 2, which perhaps more than any other part of the Gospel looks as if it

might have been suggested by the Old Testament. At the same time there *is* this curious connexion with Joseph; and, where the general tenor of the chapters is so widely removed from that of the corresponding chapters in St. Luke, the coincidences between the two Gospels on such an important point as the Virgin Birth become all the more noticeable.

Many interesting questions arise as to the special matter of St. Luke, which are still *sub judice*. The most important is whether we are to speak of 'source' or 'sources,' and how far this new information on which St. Luke relies was oral or in writing. I have a strong suspicion myself, which is shared by more than one good writer, such as Feine, who was the first to go into the subject, and both Bernhard and Johannes Weiss, that St. Luke made use of a single writing which not only embraced most of the peculiar matter of his Gospel, but also supplied him with a substantial portion of his material for the Acts. My principal reason for believing this is that there are certain common qualities that run through at least all the peculiar matter of the Gospel. We must leave aside the Acts. To begin with the first two chapters, it seems to me impossible that these can be merely an oral tradition to which shape was first given by St. Luke. There are many things in these chapters that seem to me quite alien from St. Luke. Observe, for instance, the exact knowledge which they display of Jewish custom and the Jewish law, beginning with the description of Zacharias and Elisabeth, and the description of the way in which the former, as belonging to the course of Abijah, had assigned to him by lot the duty of offering incense in the temple. All the details about this are very technical, and they are such as St. Luke, as a Gentile by birth and a disciple of St. Paul, can have known very little about and had little interest in of himself. And the same kind of thing comes up repeatedly in these chapters. We have a number of similar precise details: about the duration of the priest's ministrations; about the custom of circumcizing on the eighth day and naming a child at the same time; about the purification of a mother after childbirth and the offering which it was customary for her to bring; about the righteous Symeon who was 'waiting for the consolation of Israel'; about Anna the prophetess who spent her whole time in the temple in fasting and prayer, and who spoke

about the young Child to all who 'waited for the redemption of Jerusalem'; about the visit of Jesus to the Passover at the age of twelve, and how He was missed from the caravan and Joseph and His mother went back to find Him. It would be too much to expect that a writer like St. Luke would carry in his memory all these unfamiliar particulars and set them down so correctly. These are from the main thread of the narrative; the Canticles inserted in it are still more conspicuously Jewish—most of all the *Benedictus*, in which the whole point of view is far more that of Jewish expectancy than of Christian fulfilment. I should not hesitate to call it the most archaic thing in the whole New Testament.

And then, when we come to look into it, we see how the same characteristics come up from time to time in other portions of the peculiar matter. One of the first paragraphs that meet us, Lk 4<sup>16-30</sup>, opens with an accurate description of the custom of reading in the Synagogues. The parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus is full of Jewish touches (Abraham's bosom, the great gulf fixed, 'they have Moses and the prophets'). Then there is the miracle on 'the daughter of Abraham, whom Satan had bound' (Lk 13<sup>16</sup>); the stress on almsgiving (11<sup>41</sup> 12<sup>33</sup>); the welcome given to Zacchæus as 'a son of Abraham' (like the daughter of Abraham above); in the account of the Last Supper, the very Jewish reference to the eating of the passover in heaven (22<sup>15, 16</sup>); the address to the 'daughters of Jerusalem' in 23<sup>28</sup>; the little touch in 23<sup>56</sup> of the women resting on the Sabbath day 'according to the commandment'; in the walk to Emmaus, the question of Cleopas as to the stranger lodging alone among all the pilgrims to Jerusalem (24<sup>18</sup>), which reminds us of the allusion to the caravan in the story at the end of chap. 2. Points like these, or at least most of them, must in all probability be referred to the document and not to the evangelist, because they are not the kind of things that a Gentile like St. Luke would have thought of. Other features which have long been noticed as specially distinctive of this Gospel seem to be really distinctive of this particular document and are found distributed over all parts of it: e.g. the peculiar prominence given to women, to widows, to the poor, to sinners, to Samaritans, to prayer, to prophets and prophecy as an existing gift (from Anna the prophetess onwards).

The great contribution which this document (if we may call it so) makes to the history of the public ministry of our Lord is the collection of parables which belong specially to it (the Good Samaritan, the Prodigal Son, the Rich Man and Lazarus, the Pharisee and the Publican, the Rich Man's address to his soul, the Importunate Widow). But there are also certain miracles which it adds to the common stock; especially the raising of the young man at Nain, the crippled woman, the dropsical man, and the ten lepers. I do not know that there is anything very special in the way of Christological teaching except the account of the supernatural birth in the opening chapters, but all the rest is entirely consistent with this, and entirely consistent with what we have extracted from the other documents. Taking the three Gospels together, in all their elements, the total impression which they convey is essentially harmonious and consistent.

This total impression, I have not any doubt, represents the general attitude and current teaching of the Church in the decade 60-70 A.D. The only question that remains open to us is whether there can have been any great amount of growth and development in the interval between the Crucifixion and (say) the year 60. The greater Epistles of St. Paul fall before that date. And I think we may take them as a guarantee that on the central point of all, the estimate of the Person of Christ, there was no such great development. There is, however, perhaps room for a certain amount of growth and accretion in the narrative. One typical question rather presses upon us. Were there originally two miracles of feeding? Were there originally two miraculous drafts of fishes (Lk 5, Jn 21)? I am far from thinking that there can have been no repetition of similar incidents and sayings in the life of our Lord. Sayings, in particular, may well have been repeated in different contexts and with slightly different applications. And the more ordinary kind of incidents may well have happened more than once. But it is rather a different thing with events so extraordinary in themselves and so marked in their resemblance as these. Of course it is impossible to lay down anything positively and dogmatically. We cannot verify our conclusion either way. But I think that we must leave such points as these with the note of interrogation standing against them. And this note of interro-

gation will, I think, mark the extreme limits of divergence that we ought reasonably to allow for in the history. I cannot dismiss from my mind the possibility that the two narratives of feeding the multitude are different versions of the same event. Our ultimate authority for the duplication is of course St. Mark—there is no duplication either in St. Luke or in St. John. But St. Mark was not himself an eye-witness; different streams of tradition would come to him from different quarters; he was writing far away from the scene

of the events in distant Rome; and when St. Peter was gone there may quite well have been no eye-witness at hand to whom he could appeal. Besides, we must not suppose him keenly critical—not so critical even as St. Luke. If the two versions came to him from different quarters and at different times he would not hesitate to set them down side by side as he received them.

This possibility, I think, we must contemplate. And, if so, we cannot forget it as a standard of reference when we have to consider other possibilities.

## Literature.

### *THE LOLLARDS AND THE REFORMATION.*

LOLLARDY AND THE REFORMATION IN ENGLAND. By James Gairdner, C.B., Hon. LL.D., Edinburgh. (*Macmillan*. Two Vols. 21s. net.)

DR. JAMES GAIRDNER wrote the fourth volume of Stephens' and Hunt's *History of the English Church*, the volume dealing with the sixteenth century, from the accession of Henry VIII. to the death of Mary. In the two volumes which he has now published he has gone over the same ground. But he has gone over it in a different fashion. The earlier book was written to order; this is written to please himself. There is more leisure with it and more latitude. The former volume stated facts; this book gives the atmosphere of the facts—their origin, their history, their effects. Nor is the ground that is covered precisely the same, for now Dr. Gairdner is under no restraint but that of his own desire. And his desire is to write a History of the Reformation in England in order to show that it was not a national movement, although a movement which had gradually been prepared for and which worked itself out along the lines, not of natural evolution, but of particular forces, some good and some not so good.

In the earlier volume Dr. Gairdner was found to be at variance with other historians in many matters, some of them fundamental. He himself was aware of that, and seems to have been astonished that his book was not more severely

handled. He repents of none of these differences. On the contrary, one of his purposes in writing the new book is to have full opportunity for defending them. All this makes the volumes somewhat discursive; but the reader for whom they are written will not object to that. Nor will he be offended when he finds that Dr. Gairdner is less interested in events than in the connexion of events. For, as he puts it himself, 'The ancestry and growth of ideas that have revolutionized the world are far more important matters than the reception of a legate or the proclamation of a latter-day crusade.'

In pursuance of this preference, more space has been given to the causes which produced the Reformation in England than to the occurrences which took place as it was accomplished. The first book is wholly occupied with the Lollards. It fills nearly three hundred pages. There is no part of all the work into which Dr. Gairdner has thrown himself with more zest and enjoyment. And just for that reason, perhaps, there is no part that will cause more controversy.

Towards the end of the second volume occurs a chapter on 'The Story of the English Bible.' It is occupied of course with the Bible of Tindale and Coverdale and their immediate friends, and it is more historical than literary. It is a chapter that may have to be consulted by the future historian of the Bible. There are historical questions which it answers, and there are new questions which it raises.