

THE SO-CALLED *TRACTATUS ORIGENIS* AND OTHER WRITINGS ATTRIBUTED TO NOVATIAN.

THE twenty Latin homilies discovered by Batiffol under the title 'Tractatus Origenis de Libris SS. Scripturarum' were published in 1900, and in the October number of the JOURNAL of that same year and the January number of 1901 (ii 113 and 254) I contributed notes wherein I discussed the problems raised in the early stages of the literary controversy called forth by the appearance of these *Tractatus*.

Now, after the controversy has been running for five years, and a number of scholars have pronounced upon it, it may be of interest to report progress. I shall not go back upon the ground covered in the previous notes, but shall endeavour to define the present position of the discussion, and shall indulge in some practical reflections upon certain methods of literary criticism commonly in vogue.

The one point about which there appears to be common agreement is that Weyman has solidly established his thesis that the *Tractatus* are essentially a book of Latin origin; consequently Batiffol and Harnack have frankly abandoned their first theory of a translation from Origen (by Victorinus of Pettau).

The controversy has practically narrowed itself to a choice between the two following views.

- (1) The *Tractatus* were written by Novatian;
- (2) They are the work of an unknown author (or compiler), certainly post-Nicene, and probably of the later part of the fourth century at earliest².

The first upholders of Novatian's authorship, Weyman, Zahn and Haussleiter, have all reasserted their view, and defend it in face of the criticisms levelled against it; and their ranks have been reinforced by Jordan, who has produced a substantial book entitled *Die Theologie der neuentdeckten Predigten Novatians* (1902); he practically assumes Novatian's authorship as proved, and proceeds without more ado to analyse and systematize the teaching of the *Tractatus*, and to present the result as 'Novatian's theology.'

¹ The proof offered in my first note, that fragments of true Origenistic matter are embedded in the *Tractatus*, is, however, accepted as valid by these scholars and others.

² Batiffol it is true has adopted a middle position: he is strongly opposed to Novatian's authorship, but believes that the author was an unknown Novatianist, ante-Nicene, perhaps of the first years of the fourth century (*Bulletin de l'Église*, *ecclesiastique* (Toulouse) 1900 p. 283; *Revue Biblique* 1903 p. 81). A similar view seems to have been put forward by a Danish scholar named Torm. But it has not made way or gained recognition.

Against the claim to the authorship thus set up for Novatian weighty voices have been raised. Funk was the first carefully to examine the new theory; we shall return to his argument; here it will suffice to say that he concludes that the *Tractatus* are certainly not by Novatian, and that they are certainly post-Nicene, and probably later than 350. Bardenhewer, in his great *History of Early Church Literature*, devotes six pages to the *Tractatus*; he weighs carefully the hypotheses hitherto broached, and concludes that the author lived *at the earliest* in the second half of the fourth century, but that there are no means for identifying him. Harnack in his 'Chronology' also discusses the problem, and in his article 'Novatian,' in Herzog-Hauck, he summarizes his conclusions: the evidence points to an unknown writer at least far on (*tie/*) in the fourth century¹. In the second edition (just published) of Part III of the *History of Roman Literature* by M. Schanz, professor at Würzburg (to be distinguished from the late Professor Schanz of Tübingen), a wonderfully clear and comprehensive *risumi* of the whole controversy may be found: he sums up in favour of the position defined at the end of my second note in the JOURNAL, that the *Tractatus* as we have them are the work of an unknown writer in the fifth or sixth century*.

Now it will probably be agreed that on a point of early Christian historico-theological literary criticism, a stronger court than Funk, Bardenhewer and Harnack could hardly be formed; and these qualified judges are unanimous in the verdict that Novatian's claim must be rejected unconditionally, and that the *Tractatus* are definitely post-Nicene: Bardenhewer and Harnack add that they are not earlier than 350, and may be considerably later; in his article Funk abstained from any more precise pronouncement than 'Post-Nicene,' but he tells me his belief is that the date must be postponed till the fifth century*.

In these circumstances it was a surprise to read in a little textbook, prepared by Jordan for use in ecclesiastical colleges, the statement that the *Tractatus* 'are with good grounds attributed to Novatian by a series of students, and undoubtedly were not composed later than the beginning of the fourth century, and certainly belong to the Novatianic circle'⁵.

¹ *Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur* ii 568-74.

* *Chronologie der altchristlichen Literatur* || 407-10; *Real-Encyclopädie* xiv 227.

³ *Geschichte der römischen Literatur* iii 423-27.

⁴ He writes: 'Meine Gründe sind abgesehen davon, dass ich jedenfalls ins 4. Jahrhundert herabgehen muss.'

⁵ Die erste von den 20 Predigten, welche Pierre Batiffol im Jahre 1900 zum ersten Male herausgegeben hat, und welche von einer Reihe von Forschern mit guten Gründen dem Novatian zugeschrieben werden, zweifellos aber nicht später entstanden sind als am Anfang des 4. Jahrhunderts und sicher dem novatianischen Kreise angehören' (*Rhythmische Prosatexte* p. 3 (1905)).

This, it has to be said, is a method of assertion rather than of science ; but it is not uncharacteristic of the general method pursued in this discussion by the upholders of Novatian: they steadily advocate Novatian's authorship, but ignore what has been advanced on the other side. It seems that in these circumstances perhaps the most useful contribution that can at present be made to the controversy will be just to mark time, by stating succinctly the arguments that have been urged against Novatian or any ante-Nicene author of the *Tractates*; which are accepted as decisive by Bardenhewer, Harnack, Schanz and most others ; but to many of which Novatian's supporters, to the best of my knowledge, have hitherto attempted no answer.

These arguments are internal and external.

In regard to the internal arguments, practically nothing has been added to the reasons put forward by Funk against an ante-Nicene origin for the *Tractates* in the article which he wrote at the beginning of the discussion—an article characterized by all the learning, solidity and acumen which is associated with Funk's name.

(1) The point on which he lays most stress is the terminology in which the Trinitarian teaching and the Christology of the *Tractates* are couched throughout; this Funk declares to be decisively post-Nicene. This argument is the one with which the defenders of the Novatian theory have tried to grapple—as indeed they were bound. Weyman had already suggested 'a slight retouching'—ein wenig re-touchiert—in the sense of Nicene or post-Nicene Orthodoxy³.

Jordan endorses Funk's judgement, but labours to shew that the pieces in question are interpolations'. Bihlmeyer (Repetent in the Catholic Faculty at Tübingen) contended that the pieces in question belong to the structure of the context, and cannot be regarded as interpolations*.

Funk, Batiffol, Bardenhewer, and Harnack agree in pronouncing the interpolation-theory to be quite inadmissible; and what is more significant still, Weyman, who had been disposed to acquiesce in the theory, after Bihlmeyer's article reverted to his previous idea of a retouching, or even rewriting of the *Tractates*⁵. It is hard to draw the line between interpolation and retouching; for instance, in the chief passage in question (Tr. xiv p. 157, 11): 'Nemo enim vincit nisi qui [Patrem et Filium et Spiritum Sanctum aequali potestate et indifferenti virtute] crediderit,' Jordan attributes the words in [] to interpolation;

¹ *Thtologischt Quartalschrift* 1900 p. 534.

² *Archivf. lat. Lex.* 1900 p. 551.

³ *Du Theologie, &c.* pp. 50-65.

⁴ *Theologische Quartalschrift* 1904 p. 38.

⁵ 'Bearbeitung und Überarbeitung,' *Biblische Zeitschrift* 1914 p. 236.

can Weyman attribute much less to retouching? I believe Batiffol stands quite alone in thinking that all the expressions in question may be (not Novatian's, indeed, but) ante-Nicene. Even though Hippolytus used the term <f>S>s IK <DTH&xi> and Tertullian wrote 'ita de spiritu spiritus et de deo deus ut lumen de lumine accensum', still few will see in the language of the *Tractatus*: 'deus de deo et lumen ex lumine' (p. 67, 21) and 'deus verus de deo vero' (p. 33, 19) anything else than the Latin version of the Creed.

(2) In Tr. xii (p. 135) the Church is represented as consisting of three grades,—catechumeni, competentes, fideles. The middle grade (otherwise electi or <DTH&xi>) were the 'candidates for baptism', and there is no trace of their being recognized as a distinct grade before the middle of the fourth century.

(3) The application (in Tr. vii p. 80) to our Lord's bodily appearance of the text: 'Speciosus forma prae filiis hominum', with the comment that He was 'omni pulchritudine pulchrior, omni formositate formosior', is a post-Nicene conception, elsewhere appearing first towards the end of the fourth century, the ante-Nicene conception being that of Is. liii 2, 3. These two arguments, (2) and (3), have received the emphatic endorsement of Bardenhewer and Harnack; they have, to the best of my knowledge, been ignored by the supporters of Novatian.

(4) Funk points out also that the author of the *Tractatus* gives the Sacred Writers whom he quotes the epithet 'beatus' more than twenty times; but Novatian not once does so: this difference, says Funk, tells more strongly against Novatian than all the parallels adduced tell for him. I have not seen any notice taken of this point.

We now turn to the external arguments against Novatian.

(5) Batiffol pointed out the existence of parallels between Tr. ix and a passage in Gaudentius of Brescia as a proof that the *Tractatus* could not at any rate be placed in the fifth century, thus assuming that the plagiarism lay on the side of Gaudentius. Morin, on the other hand, maintains that Gaudentius was the original, and that for reasons that merit attention.

The following is the text from Gaudentius (Serm. III, de Exodi Lectione, Migne *P. L.* xx 865) :

Agnus enini perfectus, masculus, inquit, anniculus erit vobis: ut nihil mediocre de perfecto sentias, nihil infirmum de masculo, nihil de anniculo semiplenum. Perfectus est quia in eo habitavit omnis plenitudo divinitatis corporaliter. Masculus est quippe quia vir nasci dignatus est ex virgine, ut sexui utrique consuleret. Anniculus est, quia post illud baptismum quod pro nobis in Iordane suscepit, usque ad passionis suae diem unius anni tempus impletur; et ea tantum scripta sunt in Evangeliiis quae in IIII anno vel docuit vel fecit, nee ipsa tamen omnia . . . [he illustrates this] . . . Hic est annus domini acceptus . . .

Hie est *annus* cuius *coronatu* (victorialem quippe circulum operibus bonitatis Christi benedicendum) propheta laetus nuntiavit in psalmo: *Benedices*, inquit, *coronam anni benignitatis tuae, et campi tui replebuntur ubertate*: corda nempe credentium populorum, percepto semine verbi vitae, fructu etiam centesimo redundabunt.

It is plain, as Morin points out, that Gaudentius's text of Ex. xii 5 was: 'Agnus perfectus masculus anniculus erit vobis'—it so stands not only at the beginning of the comment, but also when he cites the whole context, Ex. xii 3-7, earlier in the Sermon (col. 862), and in the previous Sermon (col. 854); and these are the three adjectives on which the commentary is based. Thus the commentary belongs to the text; and moreover it has in itself a perfect unity of thought and structure.

Let us now turn to the parallel passage in Tr. ix (p. 99):—

(a) Sed illud mirari me fateor, dilectissimi fratres, ut cum ovem diceret, masculum nominaverit. Nemo enim ovem masculum appellat: hie vero sic ait: *Ovis autem maturus masculus anniculus erit vobis ab agnis et haedis*. Cum enim ovem nominat carnem Christi indicat, quam ecclesiam esse apostolus definivit dicens: Caro, inquit, Christi quod est ecclesia, ex qua omnes credentes in Christo generati sumus, cuius fetus sancti appellantur. Masculum autem ideo dicit, ut carnem ipsam non femineam sed virilem, id est perfecti viri, esse ostenderet, quia non est masculus et femina, sed omnes unum sumus in Christo Iesu.

(b) Et ideo hie talis agnus immaculatus eligitur, ut simplicitas et innocentia Christi sub agni istius figura monstretur: masculus quaeritur, ut invicta virtus ipsius comprobetur:

(c) *Anniculus* dicitur quia ex quo in Iordane baptizatus est a Ioanne, quando dixit: *Ecce agnus dei, ecce qui iollit peccata mundi*, expleto et exacto praedicationis tempore, passus est Christus, sicut David de hoc praedixit: *Benedices*, inquit, *coronam anni benignitatis tuae*. Perfectus est quoque quia, ut apostolus ait, *omnis plenitudo divinitatis corporaliter in illo inhabitat*.

Here again I think that Morin's analysis must be accepted: he points out that the passage falls into three sections:

In (a) the biblical text in Ex. xii 5 cited and commented on is: *Ovis maturus masculus anniculus erit vobis*, and it is so cited also, with v. 6, earlier in the Tractate (p. 97). The comment turns on the word *Ovis*, and there can be no doubt that *Ovis maturus* is what the writer of the *Tractatus* had in his biblical text. But in (b) we find that the comment is on another reading of the verse—*Agnus immaculatus masculus*, and we

¹ I agree with Morin in rejecting the (as it seems to me) paradoxical view that there is no biblical text in the *Tractatus*; on the contrary, I hold that not only is there a biblical text, but a highly curious and interesting one. I have not the special knowledge necessary for investigating it fruitfully, but it is a piece of work that ought to be undertaken, and would probably repay the labour spent upon it (see note at end of my article in *Zettschr. für die NTliche Wissenschaft* 1903 p. 87).

have an explanation of *masculus* different from that in (a): the source of this fragment has not yet been found. It is in (c) that the parallel to Gaudentius occurs, the comment on *anniculus* being surely a manifest depravation of that of Gaudentius; and then his comment on *perfectus* being added, as by an afterthought, though *perfectus* has not occurred in the verse as cited in the *Tractatus*: in other words, we have in (c) yet a third type of biblical text, that of Gaudentius—*Agnus perfectus* & *c.

Can it be supposed that the apparently composite passage of the *Tractatus* is primary, and the passage of Gaudentius, with its transparent unity, is secondary? This is Morin's argument, slightly developed.¹

(6) At the end of my first article in the JOURNAL I called attention to a series of parallelisms between Tr. III and Rufinus's translation of Origen's *Horn*, vii in *Gen.*, and I said the 'presumption is strong that the writer of the *Tractatus* is the plagiarizer. Batiffol pronounced the argument 'fragile', but Morin^a and Schanz* accept it as decisive. That the readers of the JOURNAL may have an opportunity of judging I print out the chief of the parallels:

Origen-Rufinus *Horn*. VII in *Gen.* % 3
(P. G. xii 200).

Superius iam exponentes spiritualiter
loco virtutis posuimus Saram.

Si ergo caro cuius personam gerit
Ismael, qui secundum camem nascitur,
tspiritui blandiatur, qui est Isaac,

et illecebris cum eo deceptionibus
agat, si delectationibus illiciat, volupta-
tibus molliat,

•huiuscemodi ludus carnis cum spiritu
Saram maxime, quae est virtus, offendit,
et huiuscemodi blandimenta accerbissi-
raam persecutionem ludicat Paulus. Et
tu ergo, o auditor horum, non illam
solam persecutionem putes quando
furore gentilium ad immolandum idolis
cogeris: sed si forte te voluptas carnis
illiciat, si tibi hbidims alludat illecebra,
haec si virtutis es filius tamquam persecu-
tionem maximam fuge. Idcirco enim et
apostolus dicit: Fugite fornicationem.

Tract Orig. III, ed. Batiffol,
pp. 27, 17-28, 7.

Nunc vero fratres attendite quod dico,
quia et ludus iste aliud significare po-
test, quia in omnibus caro adversatur
spiritui.

Ismael etenim figuram carnis gerit, quia
secundum camem nascitur,

Isaac autem spiritus, quia per repromis-
sionem generatur. et ideo caro
fit blandiatur spiritui

ut inlecebris cum eo deceptionibua
agat, delectationibus inliciat, voluptatibus
molliat,

et libidinis alludat inlecebra.

Unde, dilectissimi fratres, videte quia

¹ *Rtvue Behedictine* 1902 p. 228.

¹ *Op. at.* IIP 424.

¹ *Ibid.* p. 226.

Sed si iniustitia blandiatur, ut personam potentis accipias et gratia eius flexus non rectum iudicium feras, intelligere debes quia sub specie ludi blandam persecutionem ab iniustitia patens. Verum et per singulas malitiae species, etiamsi molles et delicatae sint et ludo similes, has persecutionem spiritus dicito, quia in his omnibus virtus offenditur.

et iniustitia hominibus blanditur, ut personam potentis accipiat et gratia eius flexus non rectum iudicium ferat. Quapropter intellegere debet quis quia sub specie ludi blandam persecutionem ab iniustitia patitur.

Sed quia Sarra figuram virtutis gerit, proinde
 f huiusmodi ludus Ismael cum Isaac, id est carnis cum spiritu, Sarra, quae est virtus, maxime offendit.

There is no need to repeat what I urged in the *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* (1903 p. 86) against the notion that Rufinus is here dependent on the *Tractatus*; after Novatian's advocates have dealt with the passage it will be time enough to reinforce what is there said; it is to be hoped that they will consider the effect on Origen's homily of the removal of the various passages which (they must hold) Rufinus interpolated from Novatian. Here I shall direct attention to yet another consideration. It will be noticed that a piece of Rufinus's text, suggested by the pagan persecutions and very natural in Origen, is not found in the *Tractatus*, except the three words 'libidinis alludat inlecebra'. That Rufinus, when translating Origen, should have substituted for his author a piece out of Novatian, and then have, so to say, plastered on to three words of Novatian this piece on persecution, whether out of Origen or out of his own head, would surely be an altogether fantastic hypothesis.

In short, are the defenders of the Novatianic (or ante-Nicene) authorship of the *Tractatus* prepared to assert, with Jordan, that the above parallels present 'by no means a case of direct literary dependence', but only 'a common inheritance of preaching-tradition'¹? Or will they try to make reasonable the view that Rufinus, in his work of translation, substituted pieces of Novatian for pieces of Origen, and thus produced a patchwork of Origen and Novatian? Or, lastly, will they have recourse to further applications of the interpolation theory?

Until the six difficulties just rehearsed have been in some reasonable

¹ 'Was die von Butler erwähnte Tatsache von Übereinstimmungen im 3. Traktate mit der Rufinusübersetzung der Homilie in Genesim VII anbetrifft, so wird darüber dasselbe zu sagen sein wie . . . oben gesagt ist.' This is the passage referred to: ' . . . setzen die Übereinstimmungen keineswegs einen direkten literarischen Zusammenhang voraus, da die Übereinstimmungen, die sich finden, ein gemeinsames Erbe der vorangegangenen Predigtpraxis sein können und wahrscheinlich auch sind' {pp. at. 205, 206}.

measure removed, the case for Novatian, or any ante-Nicene author, cannot be seriously considered.

But lest I should expose myself to the same reproach as Novatian's advocates—viz. the failure to notice what is advanced on the opposite side—it is necessary to deal with an argument recently put forward by Weyman, not indeed as proof of Novatian's authorship, but as a sign that the *Tractatus* cannot be placed later than the middle of the fourth century¹. In Tr. XVIII (p. 198) we read, 'Novum etenim genus per Christum inventum est: interire ne pereas, mori ut vivas'. And in Lucifer of Cagliari's *Moriendum esse pro deifilio* we find, 'Siquidem novum salutis genus per dei filium fuerit tributum: interire ne peream' (*P. L.* xiii 1016). Weyman urges that it is unlikely that a trained rhetorician and stylist like the author of the *Tractatus* should have borrowed this elegant antithesis from a writer so rude as Lucifer, who nearly always uses a commonplace ('vulgar') style of writing, and who ('soweit meine Kenntnis reicht') has exercised no literary influence on posterity. Moreover, the presence of the explanatory genitive 'salutis' is a sign of secondary character. And Lucifer in two other places makes use of pseudo-Cyprianic treatises attributed to Novatian. As this treatise of Lucifer's was written in 360 or 361, Weyman concludes that the *Tractatus* must be placed earlier. Now whatever weight may be attached to these arguments—and Krieger seems to have been impressed by them²—it will, I think, be conceded that the case in favour of Lucifer's dependence on Tr. XVIII fades away in presence of the vastly greater counter-difficulties involved in postulating Gaudentius's dependence on Tr. IX or Rufinus's dependence on Tr. III*.

Schanz agrees with Morin and myself that the plagiarisms from Gaudentius and Rufinus are proved, and places the *Tractatus* in the fifth century at the earliest; in his judgement, my verdict that they 'will find their level among the anonymous writings of the fifth or sixth century' (*JOURNAL* ii 262), is the position in which the investigation at the time stands: Bardenhewer goes even further, and says there is no sure landmark to fix the posterior limit until 690-750\

¹ *Biblische Zeitschrift* 1904 p. 338.

* *Gottingsche gelhrte Antigen* 1905 p. 51.

² Weyman, in the **same** place, hesitatingly calls attention to the fact that the phrase 'ut potui et puto ut debui' occurs twice in the *Tractatus*, while in a writing of Victricius of Rouen (c. 400) we find 'si non ut debui, tamen ut potui': and he suggests as a mere possibility that Victricius is indebted to the *Tractatus*. It is difficult here to see any relation on either side: 'si non ut debui tamen ut potui' seemed quite familiar to me, though I could not recover it; but I have since met the identical formula in the writings of St Gertrude (ed. 1875 vol. i p. 74): she certainly did not get it from Victricius or the *Tractatus*. It may have been a proverbial expression. [Cf. *A p. constt.* viii 12 *ti xapieTōvñtr aoi., . . oi! žaar i xptLKontv, dAV laov \$vr<i/u6a.*—F. E B.]

⁴ In the article in the *Zeitschr. f. NTlicht IVissmschaft* I shewed that **even** if

It is practically true to say that the only substantive ground on which Novatian's claim has rested is the linguistic argument, based on resemblances of vocabulary, expression, and style, elaborated with such care by Weyman. I must not go over the ground already traversed in my second article in the JOURNAL, wherein I offered some criticisms both on Weyman's application of the method in this particular case, and also on the conditions and limitations of the valid use of the method in general. But on this latter point I propose to offer some further considerations, suggested by the whole series of recent attempts to father anonymous writings on Novatian. The treatises *de Trinitate* and *de ribis ludaicis*, and Letters 30 and 36 among the *Epp. Cypriani* have been for some time, and now are, recognized on all hands as being by Novatian; since 1892 there has been a growing tendency to attribute to him, in addition, various anonymous writings, viz. from among the 'Spuria Cypriani':

De spectaculis. *De laude martyrii.*

De bono pudicitiae. Adversus ludaeos.

De singularitate clericorum.

from among the 'Opera Cypriani':

and finally:— *Quod idola.*
Z, „ . . .
Tractates Ortgems.

As a basis of discussion, I have drawn up, mostly out of Ehrhard, Bardenhewer, Harnack, and Schanz, a Table of names, indicating the current state of opinion, *pro* and *con.*, in regard to Novatian's authorship of each of these works. A name in brackets signifies reserve or hesitation in the opinion expressed.

Pro
De spectaculis)
De bono pudtldtae)

Weyman
Landgraf
Haussleiter
Demmler
Harnack
Bardenhewer
Ehrhard
Jordan
(Wolfflin)¹
(Kroger) »

Con.

Monceaux
Geyer
Watson (*J.T.S.* v 434).
(Funk)¹
(Schanz)'

Moni's attribution of the Homily parallel to Tr. XI to Caesarius of Arles be accepted, it affords no clue to the date of the *Tradatus*, as that Homily is not derived from Tr. XI.

¹ On Wölfflin, Funk, and Schanz, see below.

* Krfleger evidently has some lingering scepticism in spite of Novatian's 'strong' case. (*Kritische Benurkungen eu A. Hamacks Chronologie, G6ttmg. gtlthrt** Atuttigm 1905 p. 48.)

<i>Pro</i>	<i>Con.</i>
<i>De laude mariyrii</i>	
Harnack	Weyman
Loofs	Monceaux
Hilgenfeld	Bardenhewer
(Jordan)	KrQger
	Schanz
	(Ehrhard)
<i>Adversus Iudaeos</i>	
(Landgraf)	(Weyman)
Harnack	Bardenhewer
Jordan	KrQger
	Schanz
<i>De singularitate clericorum</i>	
Blacha	Harnack
	Hennecke
	Krüger
	Schanz
	Bardenhewer
	Weyman
<i>Quod idola</i>	
Haussleiter	Weyman
(Jordan)	Monceaux
	Bardenhewer
	Benson
	Bayard
	Ehrhard
	Schanz
	Watson
	Harnack
	(KrQger)
) Cyprian
) Neither Novatian nor Cyprian.
<i>Tractatus Origenis</i>	
Weyman	Funk
Zahn	Batiffol
Haussleiter	Morin
Jordan	Künstle
	Ehrhard
	Butler
	Ammundsen
	Torm
	Andersen
	Bihlmeyer
	Bardenhewer
	Harnack
	Schanz

The study of this Table must set all a-thinking. We have the best scholars of the day in hopeless contradiction, and we seem threatened with a system of mere authority—a counting of the names that support the rival theories—as the practical method of settling these and similar questions. The scholars who can best claim to be specialists in Novatian are probably Weyman, Landgraf, Haussleiter, and Harnack; and

yet in the Table they are divided into every combination. And the examination of points in detail is calculated still further to lessen confidence. For instance, the *De spectaculis* and *De bono pudicitiae* have been almost universally accepted as Novatian's on the strength of Weyman's and Demmler's linguistic arguments; and Harnack says that 'if it ever is possible to identify an author on internal evidence, it is so in this case'*. On the other hand, Funk declares the linguistic argument in favour of Novatian's authorship of the *Tractatus* to be just as strong as that in favour of his authorship of the *De sped*, and *De bono pud.*; as, therefore, the argument is certainly invalid in the case of the *Tractatus*, Funk declares that we cannot rely upon it in the case of the other two¹ and Schanz considers that Funk's scepticism in regard to Novatian's authorship of the *De sped*, and *De bono pud.* is very intelligible*. On the other hand, Ehrhard and Bardenhewer agree with Harnack in accepting the linguistic proof offered in the case of these two writings, but rejecting that offered in the case of the *Tractatus*. Wolflin seems to acquiesce in Demmler's proof of Novatian's authorship of *De sped*, and *De bono pud.**, but he had not long before written an article, based largely on similar linguistic considerations, to urge that *De sped*, is a genuine work of St Cyprian⁶, and Matzinger, a pupil of his, had done the same for *De bono pud.**

Again, Harnack maintains that the internal arguments for Novatianic authorship are just as strong in the case of *Adv. Iudaeos* as in the case of *De sped*, and *De bono pud.*¹; yet Weyman and Bardenhewer, who accept the latter proof, do not accept the former.

Concerning *Quod idola* the difficulties are still greater, for three views are in the field: a number of scholars of first rank (Weyman among them) cling to the Cyprianic authorship; Haussleiter claims the tract for Novatian; others deny that it belongs to either. Among the last is Harnack, who once upon a time thought the Novatianic authorship to be possible or even probable, but now definitely rejects it⁸. Of the two chief authorities on St Cyprian's stylistic and linguistic peculiarities, the one, Bayard⁹, believes that *Quod idola* is by St Cyprian, the other, Watson¹⁰, believes that it is not. In 1899 Weyman, while

¹ *Chronologie* ii 402.

* *Theol. Quartalschr.* 1900 p. 543.

• *Gesch. d. röm. Lit.* iii (2 ed.) 424. Schanz's position in regard to the authorship of *De sped*, and *De bono pud.* is not easy to determine: in the first edition (1896)—so at least I gather from Ehrhard—he did not admit Novatian's authorship; in the second (1905) he allows it < a certain degree of probability' on p. 423, but on the next page he expresses sympathy with Funk's scepticism.

• *Anhtvf. latein. Lexicogr.* 1896 p. 319.

* *Ibid.* 1893 p. 1.

• *Des hi. Th. C. Cyprianus 'De bono pud.'* (1892).

^T *Chronologit* ii 403.

• Herzog-Hauck xiv 226".

• *Le Latin de St Cyprien* (1902).

¹⁰ 'The Style and Language of St Cyprian' *Studia Biblica et Ecclesiastica* iv (Oxford 1896).

opposing Novatian's authorship, said he found it extremely difficult to accept Cyprian's¹; but in 1904 he veered round to the view that we must receive *Quod idola* as a genuine production of Cyprian¹. Krieger seems undecided (*loc. cit.*).

When we come to the *Tractatus* we find Weyman and Haussleiter, than whom more diligent and competent students of Novatian could not be found, affirming that the style and language are throughout altogether like Novatian's, and afford a convincing proof that he and no other wrote the *Tractatus*; on the other hand, Harnack, a no less diligent and competent student of Novatian—who declares, moreover, that Novatian's style is 'easily recognizable',—says that only in the portions of the *Tractatus* taken from Novatian can he discern any clear resemblance to Novatian*.

In my second article in the JOURNAL (ii 259) are indicated other examples, which have arisen out of the *Tractatus* controversy, of the uncertainties to which these critical methods lead; and if the survey were extended beyond the horizon of the *Tractatus*, similar phenomena would meet us on all sides.

The kaleidoscopic variations of expert opinion cannot but engender scepticism, not perhaps regarding the theoretical validity of the current linguistic and stylistic method of investigating authorship, but regarding the practical possibility of applying it in concrete cases; and agnosticism regarding the results obtained by such methods. As subsidiary proofs they may play a useful part in literary criticism; and as negative proofs, to establish difference of authorship, they may easily be decisive. But it seems that Ehrhard and Bardenhewer speak only the language of sound sense and sound criticism, when they say, the former, that Weyman's proof that Novatian wrote the *Tractatus* is 'inadequate, because of a purely linguistic nature' *; the latter, that on such grounds of language and style alone, 'only in quite exceptional cases is it possible to prove authorship'.

The time will probably come before long when a great review and revision will be held of the numerous assignments of authorship made in the present generation, and it can hardly be doubted that many works are destined then to sink back into the anonymity whence they have been temporarily evoked.

g. C. BUTLER.

¹ This I take from Ehrhard *Altchrist. Lit.* ii 462.

* 'Doch werden wir ihn uns als ein echtes Produkt Cyprians gefallen lassen müssen' (*Biblische Zeitschrift* 1904 p. 237).

¹ Herzog-Hauck xiv 227.

* *Aleichrittheit Littraturli* 331.

¹ *Gesch. dtr altkmhlichen LitUratur* ii §71.