

trouble to look through the lessons and psalms before they come into church. 'If they did, they ought clearly, in my judgment, to omit and curtail and substitute—with, of course, a reasonable degree of discretion and tact—wherever this is evidently necessary to preserve the Christian character of the service.'

And then the minister is a pastor. This is to Professor ASHLEY his true function. His business is to promote goodness in the parish, and so he must be good; it is to be a help to intelligent men, and so he must be intelligent. For 'I must confess that the older I get the more I return to the conception of the Christian minister, not as the

preacher of doctrines or the performer of rites, but as the promoter of kindly feeling in the parish, the painstaking and thoughtful friend of all in trouble of mind or body.'

The High Church minister is a priest; the Low Church minister is a theologian; and the Broad Church minister is a kindly gentleman who goes about his parish telling everybody to be good. And as you listen to Sir William ASHLEY commending the Broad Church minister to your imitation, you hear a cry from the trenches, 'We know already that we have to be good; can you not tell us how?' It is the cry of a soul in its agony.

Irenæus and the Fourth Gospel.

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I.

It may seem superfluous to add another to the numerous discussions of Irenæus' relation to the Fourth Gospel. But it is obvious to all who try to keep abreast of critical investigation that certain positions, when they have been reiterated with sufficient boldness, not to say, audacity, soon take rank as dogmas, to challenge which appears to savour of incompetence. One of these dogmas is the worthlessness of what Irenæus has to say about the Fourth Gospel and its authorship. One may admit that his evidence, if at all trustworthy, intensifies one of the most perplexing problems in New Testament literature. For those who without bias approach the Fourth Gospel in its present form, and take it at its surface value, find it increasingly difficult to believe that this presentation of Jesus Christ can be the work of a man who daily accompanied with Him in His earthly career. There are, however, ways of estimating the Gospel which help to relieve the difficulty. Most recent investigators agree that it is interpretation far more than history. Many are inclined to give prominence to it to a symbolic element, largely foreign to our modern modes of thought in the West, but con-

gruous with the Oriental mind in every epoch of history. One has little doubt that here lies a most important clue to the standpoint of the author. Further, there is much to be said for the supposition that the document as we have it is a compilation of already-existing materials which the compiler (or compilers) set himself to construct into a Gospel, more or less after the model of the Synoptics, but which lay before him possibly in the shape of historical discourses intended to kindle faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God. These two estimates of the Gospel are not contradictory. But they lead us back ultimately to the mind which is responsible for this portrait of Jesus.

Whose mind was it? At least it reveals some one extraordinarily sensitive to the significance of Jesus, some one with a unique power of relating the spiritual experience of Christians at the close of the first century to the living Master who had walked this earth, and thus of preserving the concreteness of history in an age disposed to dissolve facts and events into imposing abstractions. I do not intend to discuss here the possibility or impossibility of identifying this ultimate authority for

the standpoint of the Fourth Gospel with John, the son of Zebedee, who belonged to the inner circle of the Twelve. I am not sure whether we have as yet clearly enough grasped the various factors in the Fourth Gospel, or made sufficient progress in assigning to them their relative values, to be able, on the basis of *internal* evidence, to reach definite conclusions as to its author.

But these considerations do not absolve us from discussing frankly whatever data lie within our range. External evidence for a document, unless of an unusually cogent character, does not indeed impress us like internal. Yet it forms one of the features which must contribute to a final judgment. And it seems to me that the testimony of Irenæus has received scanty justice from the majority of recent investigators. I do not profess to attempt a survey of the whole field. I shall endeavour to keep rigidly to the salient elements in the situation.

We have some fixed dates for Irenæus which serve as landmarks in the discussion. We know from Eus. *H.E.* v. 5. 8 that when Pothinus, bishop of Lyons, suffered martyrdom in 177 A.D., Irenæus succeeded to his bishopric. In his *Contra Haer.* (ed. Stieren) iii. 3. 3 he himself refers to Eleutherus as at the date of writing occupying the see of Rome. This fixes the composition of Book iii. between, say, 175 and 189, and it is probable that the whole work falls within this period. But he must have been a churchman of influence considerably before 177, for, in that year, previous to his election as bishop, he was entrusted with an important letter from the church of Lyons to Eleutherus at Rome. There is no evidence as to the date of his birth. But considering that thirty was the very earliest age at which a man could be consecrated bishop, one is inclined to believe, with Lipsius, that he cannot have been born much later than 140, and quite possibly as much as ten years earlier. Some light is shed on the question from the statement of Irenæus in his Letter to Florinus (Eus. *H.E.* v. 20. 5), where he speaks of seeing his friend 'while I was still a *παῖς*, in Lower Asia in company with Polycarp.' Probably the term *παῖς* ought to be interpreted in the light of another statement made by Irenæus about his intimacy with Polycarp, in which he speaks of having seen him *ἐν τῇ πρώτῃ ἡμῶν ἡλικίᾳ* (*Contra Haer.* iii. 3. 4). There is a close parallel to this phrase in Pind. *Nem.* ix. 42, *ἐν ἀλικίᾳ πρώτῃ*, which Fennell translates, 'in his earliest prime.' This reminds

us that the language of Irenæus must not be taken too rigidly. In calling himself *παῖς* at the date of his intercourse with Polycarp, he does not necessarily mean that he was only a child. The term has a much wider range. Irenæus himself (ii. 22. 4: Latin translation alone preserved) describes the various stages of life as *infans*, *parvulus*, *puer*, *juvenis*, and *senior*, and regards the period of *juvenis* as roughly extending from thirty to forty. Thus the stage represented by *puer* (= *παῖς*) interprets boyhood in a large sense. That coincides with the remark of Eusebius (v. 5. 8): 'We have already discovered that he [Irenæus] was a hearer of Polycarp in his youthful prime' (*κατὰ τὴν νέαν . . . ἡλικίαν*). So that the description would quite reasonably apply to the period, say, from fifteen onwards.

Polycarp's martyrdom is now assigned by most scholars to 155 A.D. At that date he had passed the age of eighty-six. But while Irenæus refers to Polycarp's advanced years as having made it possible for him to be his pupil (*ἐπὶ πολὺ γὰρ παρέμεινε*, iii. 3. 4), he seems to distinguish between that period and the closing one of his career, for he adds: 'and in extreme old age, after a splendid and illustrious martyrdom, he departed this life.' The language suggests that his own intercourse with the aged bishop must be placed some years earlier than 155, perhaps about 150. Supposing he were eighteen or nineteen at the time, that would place the year of his birth somewhere about 131 or 132. The approximate date would tally with his statement in v. 30. 3, that the Apocalypse 'was seen no long time since, but almost in our own generation, at the close of the reign of Domitian.' As a generation was reckoned at that time to extend from thirty to forty years, and Domitian's reign ended in 96 A.D., we have further evidence for some date in the neighbourhood of 132.

By the middle of the second century, therefore, Irenæus, living in Asia Minor, was in contact with the currents of life and thought in the Christian Church of that region. The one clear fact in this earlier period of his experience is, of course, his famous statement about Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, in the Letter to Florinus (Eus. v. 20). 'These opinions,' he writes, 'the elders before us, who also were disciples of the apostles, did not hand down to you. For I saw you while I was still a boy (*παῖς*) in Lower Asia in company with Polycarp, while you were in the midst of a brilliant

career at the royal court and endeavouring to stand well with him. For I distinctly remember the events of that time better than those of recent occurrence. . . . So that I can describe the very place in which the blessed Polycarp used to sit when he discoursed, and his goings out and his comings in, and his manner of life, and his personal appearance, and the discourses which he delivered to the people, and how he used to tell of his intercourse with John and with the rest of those who had seen the Lord, and how he would repeat their words. And what he had heard from them about the Lord, and about His miracles, and about His teaching, Polycarp, as having received them from eye-witnesses of the life of the Word, used to relate in complete accordance with the Scriptures. To these discourses I used earnestly to listen at the time by the mercy of God bestowed upon me, noting them down not on paper but in my heart. And constantly by God's grace I brood over them faithfully.' So luminous a statement as this can in no way be minimized. We could not possess a more convincing proof that Irenæus in his opening youth had stood in an intimate relation to Polycarp: that Polycarp's discourses had made an indelible impression upon his mind: and that the essential content of those discourses, on which he had never ceased to ponder, was the bishop's reminiscences of what he had heard about Jesus from 'John and the rest of those who had seen the Lord.' It ought to be noted that Irenæus, in this letter, has no thought of the Fourth Gospel or of emphasizing its connexion with 'John who had seen the Lord.' He simply wishes to appeal to the position of Polycarp as a doctrinal authority whom Florinus and he had acknowledged in their earlier days.

Irenæus was also, in some sense, in touch with Papias, bishop of Hierapolis. There is an interesting statement of Eusebius (iii. 36. 1) which says: 'Prominent in Asia at that time was Polycarp, a disciple (*δμιλήτης*) of the apostles, who had been entrusted with the bishopric of the Church at Smyrna by the eye-witnesses and ministers of the Lord. At the same time Papias was becoming known, who was also a bishop, having his diocese in Hierapolis.' Polycarp and Papias were thus contemporaries, in adjacent provinces. And there seems no strong reason to doubt the testimony of Irenæus that Papias had become a companion of Polycarp (v. 33. 4). In that case it might well be

that Irenæus was personally acquainted with him. An Armenian historian of the seventh century (Sebêos) connects Irenæus with Laodicea (see Hübschmann, in Harnack, *Patrum Apostol. Opp.* i. p. 189), and if the tradition be trustworthy, the propinquity of Laodicea to Hierapolis would add to the probability of the supposition.

Irenæus only once mentions Papias by name, and the passage in which this occurs deserves examination because of its bearing upon the whole question of his relation to the bishop of Hierapolis. When explaining Isaac's blessing of Jacob (Gn 27^{27ff.}) as a prediction of the future Kingdom of God (v. 33. 3), he proceeds: 'Even as the presbyters, who saw John the disciple of the Lord, reported that they had heard from him, how the Lord taught concerning those times and said.' There follows a strange description of the abnormal fertility of vines in the coming Kingdom, with additions on the fruitfulness of other crops by Irenæus himself. Then comes the statement: 'These things Papias also (*ταῦτα δὲ καὶ*) testifies in writing in the fourth of his Books. For five books have been compiled by him. And he added the words: "These things are of course credible to believers."'

Some scholars take up the position that the 'presbyters' of whom Irenæus here speaks simply mean Papias (e.g. Harnack, *Chronologie*, i. p. 335, note). This is possible. But the careful language employed seems to draw a distinction between the report of the presbyters and the additional (*καὶ*) written testimony (*ἐγγράφως*) of Papias to the same tradition. At the same time Lightfoot has adduced strong arguments to show that it is possible to distinguish between two types of reports given by Irenæus. 'In some cases he repeats the *conversations* of his predecessors; in others he derives his information from published records. . . . Thus, when he quotes the opinions of the elder on the two Testaments, he is obviously repeating oral teaching; for he writes, "The presbyter used to say," "The presbyter would entertain us with his discourse," "The old man, the disciple of the apostles, used to dispute" (iv. 27. 1 f.; 30. 1; 31. 1; 32. 1). On the other hand, when in the passage before us [v. 36. 1 f.] he employs the present tense, "As the elders say," "The presbyters, the disciples of the apostles, say," he is clearly referring to some *document*' (*Essays on Supernatural Religion*, p. 196). Hence it is probable that we should

assign to Papias the passage on the translation of the righteous to Paradise, introduced by the phrase, διὸ καὶ λέγουσιν οἱ πρεσβύτεροι, τῶν ἀποστόλων μαθηταί (v. 5. 1). These introductory words imply the view of Irenæus as to the sources of Papias' written work. To the same category belongs another paragraph on the heavenly bliss which awaits the redeemed (v. 36. 1 f.), given on the authority of the presbyters (ὡς οἱ πρεσβύτεροι λέγουσι). Here again the statements of Papias, if the material is derived from his work, are referred ultimately to the presbyters. Harnack, therefore, is, on the whole, justified in saying (*op. cit.* p. 336, note), on the basis of the *Contra Haereses*, that Irenæus claims no direct relation to the 'elders' who had been 'disciples of the apostles.'

But he underestimates the remarkable statement in the Letter of Irenæus to Florinus (*Eus.* v. 20). In challenging what he regards as heretical views, promulgated by his old friend, Irenæus says: 'These opinions even the heretics outside the pale of the Church have never ventured to broach; these opinions the elders before us, who also were disciples of the apostles, did not pass on to thee' (οὐ παρέδωκάν σοι). It is illegitimate to conclude, as Harnack seems to do (*op. cit.* p. 344, note), that the use of σοι in the last clause excludes Irenæus from intercourse with 'the elders before us.' Assuming Harnack's view that there was a difference of, say, fifteen years between Irenæus and his friend (an extreme hypothesis on my view of the date of Irenæus' birth, according to which twelve years would be a much more probable figure), this surely does not shut out the former from those elders who were authorities for the latter. Indeed, the connexion of this sentence with that which follows implies that Irenæus has in his mind Church leaders who were contemporaries of Polycarp. The very language he uses regarding them indicates that he was acquainted with their standpoint.

But in addition to these vague references to 'the presbyters, the disciples of the apostles,' either directly or through the medium of Papias' work, Irenæus repeatedly appeals to the authority of certain unnamed individuals of an earlier generation. Thus, in the Preface of Book i. § 2, he mentions a saying (εἶρηται) which he ascribes to 'our superior' (ὁ κρείσσων ἡμῶν), and again, in i. 13. 3, a maxim of ὁ κρείσσων ἡμῶν is introduced. There is no ground for Harnack's assertion that these sayings,

from their language, cannot have belonged to oral tradition (*op. cit.* p. 334, note). They are precisely of the type which might be handed down in a community. But the curious obscurity of the description possibly suggests a documentary source. Now Eusebius, in an interesting note, speaks of Irenæus as 'mentioning the recollections of a certain apostolic presbyter, whose name he did not divulge and adducing his interpretation of Divine Scripture' (v. 8. 8). This statement probably refers to a further authority whom Irenæus brings forward in several places belonging to the same context. Thus, in iv. 27. 1, he tells of what he had 'heard from a certain presbyter, who had listened to those who had seen the apostles.' I believe Harnack is right in finding the same person in iv. 27. 1 (*sicut dixit presbyter*), iv. 27. 2 (*inquit ille senior*), iv. 31. 1 (*talía quaedam enarrans de antiquis presbyter, reficiebat nos*), iv. 32. 1 (*hujusmodi quoque de duobus testamentis senior apostolorum discipulus disputabat*), to say nothing of one or two other passages which are less clear. The most distinct description of this authority is that of the first passage cited above. He had been a pupil of disciples of the apostles. He is indeed designated in the last of our references *senior apostolorum discipulus*, but it is quite legitimate to take the expression in a wide sense.

To sum up, Irenæus may have known Papias personally, but was in any case acquainted with his writings. Probably he had access to other statements of elders in written as well as oral form, but he had been in personal touch with contemporaries of Polycarp (*Letter to Florinus*, *Eus.* v. 20), and also with an important Church leader who had listened to disciples of the apostles. He gives no hint as to where he came into contact with this authority. It may have been in Asia Minor. It may have been in Gaul. At all events, Irenæus plainly stands in the current of a living tradition, one which indeed reveals the accretions due to the chief tendencies of the age, but at the same time, from the nature of the case, preserves the memory of the prominent leaders belonging to the close of the first and the opening of the second century.

No evidence has survived as to the date of Irenæus' removal to Gaul. He first appears in 177 as a presbyter at Lyons, entrusted, during the persecution under Marcus Aurelius, by the Gallican martyrs with a letter to Eleutherus, bishop of Rome, 'on behalf of the peace of the Churches.' In commending him to Eleutherus, they give Irenæus

a high eulogy (Eus. v. 4. 2), and their confidence in him is attested by his being chosen as bishop in succession to the aged Pothinus, who fell a victim to the persecution, after completing his ninetieth year. A later tradition reports Pothinus to have been, like Irenæus, a native of Asia Minor. This is highly probable, as the Gallican Churches stood in the most intimate relation with those of Asia Minor. The famous Letter on the Persecutions at Lyons and Vienne (Eus. v. 1) was sent by 'the servants of Christ . . . in Gaul' to 'the brethren throughout Asia and Phrygia.' In all likelihood Gaul owed its Christian mission to Asia Minor, just as at a much earlier date it was Greek colonies from Asia Minor which were the pioneers of its civilizations.

Irenæus must have been brought into close

contact with Pothinus. That meant for him a further link with early traditions of the Church in Asia, for if Pothinus died in 177 above ninety, his birth must be dated at least as far back as 87 A.D. His recollections, therefore, would be almost as valuable as those of Polycarp. Lightfoot (*op. cit.* p. 266) is inclined to identify him with the nameless elder referred to above. There is nothing improbable in the hypothesis. Indeed, the expressions used by Irenæus of the elder, which have been already quoted, give it weight, for they imply habitual intercourse. And when we take into account the fulness of the material as ascribed to this elder, it is natural to associate it with regular discourses which Irenæus had the opportunity of hearing. This would completely tally with his relation to Pothinus.

Literature.

CHURCH AND STATE.

THE world has not recognized the loss it sustained on November 14th, 1916, in the death of Professor H. M. Gwatkin. He could do many things, and each thing with a unique approach to the ideal. We speak not of his scientific work. Who could preach the sermons that he preached? We have them now, thank God, in two wonderful volumes. Who could lecture as he lectured—the manner of it, the matter of it? Who could write the encyclopædic article? It is not too much to ask if anything will ever be written on Protestantism and the Reformation which will get to the heart of that mighty fact and mighty movement more nearly than Professor Gwatkin has attained in his articles in the *ENCYCLOPÆDIA OF RELIGION AND ETHICS*. He was a controversialist also when the occasion really demanded it.

The issue of a handsome volume on *Church and State in England to the Death of Queen Anne*, with a Preface by the Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History in Oxford (Longmans; 15s. net), gives occasion for new and profound regret. It is a subject in which he is at his very best. He knew he was master of it, and, one might say, revelled in the handling of it. The kindest of men, what a contempt he has for ineffectual kind-heartedness.

The most conscientious of men, what a scorn he feels for the men whom conscience drove to persecution and cruelty. The most modest of men, how easily he brings kings and governments to the bar of his self-confident judgment-seat. When he has described a scene it remains with us, rarely even modified by subsequent reading, always central and self-sustaining.

Dip into this book at random. The name of Anne Askew catches your eye. 'Anne Askew was a Lincolnshire lady of some rank and highly educated. She was accused of heresy in 1545, but Bonner obtained from her a confession that saved her for the time. Next year she was arrested again, and this time there was no doubt of her heresy. Her ready wit and sharp tongue and command of Scripture were too much for the Council. But she seemed to have been encouraged by persons of high rank; and this might implicate the Queen. She was in great pain when she was sent to the Tower and racked; and when the Lieutenant refused to do more, the Lord Chancellor Wriothesley and Sir Richard Rich turned the screws with their own hands till they had nearly pulled her to pieces, and then made her sit two hours on the bare floor reasoning with them without their getting any information from her. A month later she was carried to Smithfield, for she could not