

the impenitent and ungodly are to-day cherishing just this false and fatal hope.

Such are the views which we hold in regard to the act and the subjects of Christian baptism. These views separate us from many with whom we happily agree in other respects. We are heartily sorry for this result. But with the light which we have, the argument seems so plain, and these differences so important, that we are constrained to abide by all the unpleasant consequences of our position, and to be Baptists.

ARTICLE III.

REVELATION AND INSPIRATION.

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No. III.

GENUINENESS OF THE GOSPEL NARRATIVES.

IN the two preceding numbers we examined some false assumptions against the supernatural in the sphere of nature, and revelation in the sphere of mind. The survey was of necessity very cursory. We could only indicate certain lines of argument, the exhaustive development of which would expand itself into volumes. It is not on the side of hyper-orthodoxy alone that a "pestilent metaphysics" has been employed. There is current at the present day a *destructive* metaphysics, whose grand aim is to throw doubt and suspicion on all our primitive intuitions, and thus to unsettle all truth — especially all moral and religious truth — at its very foundations, and which is abundantly employed in the service of a false cosmology, a false anthropology and psychology, and a false theology. This must be met on its own ground by a true *constructive* metaphysics. But we cannot pause to attempt this work in its details. We plant our feet firmly on the great primal truth that there is a

personal God, who is before nature, above nature, and the free Author of nature in her inmost essence, with all the systems of being that belong to nature. Standing on this immovable foundation, as on a mighty rock rising up out of the unfathomable abyss of eternity, we raise, first of all, the inquiry whether the supernatural manifestation of himself to men is a part of God's plan for the administration of human affairs. This is a question of fact, not of theory. Nevertheless, it is proper to begin with certain

A priori Considerations in respect to Revelation.

We may reasonably assume, then, that if God makes a supernatural manifestation of himself to men, the manner of his procedure will be in harmony with the general course of his providential government, that is, it will not be at hap-hazard and in isolated, unconnected fragments, but according to some self-consistent plan; in other words, that the revelation will take the form of a *supernatural economy*, having a beginning, progress, and consummation. This feature will at once separate it entirely from the dreams, divinations, and omens of heathenism, which have no systematic unity looking to a common result.

We may assume, again, that such supernatural manifestations will have some high moral end, transcending the sphere of physical good and evil and also the pure teachings of natural theology. They will not be made, for example, to instruct men in the medical art or in natural science, nor simply to inculcate upon them the duty of truth and justice.

Once more, it seems necessary to the idea of a supernatural revelation that it should *verify itself as supernatural*, and that not merely to the particular persons who may receive it, but to mankind at large, for whose benefit it is intended. When, now, the Author of nature comes that he may make to men a revelation of truth over and above the proper teachings of nature, what is the most natural way in which he should certify to them the fact? We think at once of either the manifestation, within the sphere of nature, of a

power that clearly transcends all the laws of nature and all the agencies that man is able to exert upon the course of nature, or of a *knowledge* concerning the future that is clearly above all human knowledge; that is, we think of *miracles* or *prophecy* — the testimony of the former being available for present, of the latter for future, conviction. Against miracles and prophecy as the *seals of a supernatural economy* there can be no reasonable presumption. If the supernatural economy itself be a part of God's general plan, the certification of it as supernatural must be a part of his plan also. Here loose declamation concerning the improbability of the "violation of the laws of nature" is wholly out of place. Nature is not God's final end; she is only the means to something higher, even that *moral* kingdom of holiness and righteousness which infinitely transcends in dignity and excellence all that nature contains. If in the interest of this kingdom God sees good to interpose supernaturally within the sphere of nature, he will not allow himself to be limited by the laws which he has himself given to nature, and of which he is independent. Such a supernatural interposition of God is indeed *above* nature, accomplishing results to which the powers of nature are not competent, but it is not properly a *violation* of the laws of nature. This can be made clear by a simple illustration. Man is himself, in a true sense, a supernatural power. By the free, intelligent exercise of his will through the bodily organization which God has given him, he accomplishes results above the powers of nature. Reaching down his hand, for example, to the bottom of a running stream, he lifts to the surface a piece of iron. If one choose to say that this is contrary to the law of gravity, let him say so. But it is absurd and unmeaning declamation to call the act a violation of the law of gravity. Suppose, now, that, instead of the human will operating mediately through the human arm, it be the immediate personal will of God that raises the iron to the surface of the stream, we shall then have undoubtedly a miracle above nature, but no true violation of a law of

nature, any more than in the former case. The iron has only yielded to a power stronger than that of gravity coming into nature from without in a supernatural way. In this example the power exerted is, *qualitatively* considered, creative, for it is the immediate power of God above nature; but there is no proper creation. The same general principle, however, applies to miracles that involve true creation, and are therefore absolutely above the sphere of human agency. God is before nature, consequently before all the laws of nature. When he gave being to nature with its laws, he did not work through nature, which would have been to work through a nonentity. By his own free-will, acting before nature and independently of everything without himself, he produced nature. This is creative power giving a material product. Were he to annihilate nature this would be the same power, qualitatively considered, but with an opposite result. So of every step in the production of nature. God first created dead matter with its laws. Afterwards he *superadded* various systems of life, vegetable and animal. Through these systems nature produces, in her ordinary course, bread, flesh, and wine. Suppose, now, that for high moral ends God should choose to create bread, flesh, and wine. This is more properly an interposition and action above nature than a violation of nature's laws. We are not anxious, however, to dispute about words, provided the idea itself be clearly apprehended. And what is this idea? It is simply that of a personal God manifesting his presence in an immediate way to his intelligent creatures. Nature is herself, as we have endeavored to show, a manifestation of God. But for the purposes of redemption he may choose to superadd a revelation of himself above nature—a revelation embodying truths which nature does not teach, or which she teaches only in a dim and imperfect way. Who is competent to say that such a revelation is not consistent with infinite understanding and benevolence? And if God in his wisdom determine to make it, what folly to raise the question whether he can certify it to men in a

supernatural way! He will, when he sees good, come into his own creation, acting above its laws and independently of them in such a way that men shall be assured of his presence. Is it so, indeed, that God has given me power to certify my personal presence to my fellow-men, but cannot certify his own presence to me and to others—certify it not only inwardly in a subjective way, but outwardly and objectively beyond the possibility of doubt?

But now the great question arises: *Is* this supernatural revelation of himself to men a part of God's general plan? Here we are at liberty to begin our inquiries from any point in the world's history which we find most convenient. Where the object is simply to narrate a connected series of events, the chronological is the most natural order. But when the main question respects the truth of an alleged series of events, or (what amounts to the same thing) the real character of the transactions included in it, there is sometimes great advantage in selecting as a central point some prominent part of the series, and thence proceeding in our investigations backward and forward. This is the method which we propose to pursue, and we thus announce our central position:

The Appearance of Jesus of Nazareth was supernatural.

If we can show that this proposition rests on an immovable foundation of historic truth, the rest of our work will be comparatively easy. From the supernatural appearance and works of the Son of God, as recorded in the four Gospels, the supernatural endowments and works of his apostles will follow as a natural and even necessary sequel. Since, moreover, the universal rule of God's government is: "First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear,"¹ such a full and perfect revelation as that which God has made to us by his Son, which is certainly "the full corn in the ear," must, according to all analogy, have been preceded by exactly such preparatory revelations as we find recorded in the Old Testament. Proceeding in this way we look at

¹ Mark iv. 28.

revelation as an organic whole ; and it is only thus that we can apprehend the full strength of the evidences by which the truth of Christianity is sustained. The divine origin of the Mosaic institutions can indeed be satisfactorily shown independently of the New Testament. But the true breadth and depth of the foundation on which they rest is apprehended only when they are considered as preparatory to the incarnation of Jesus Christ. As in a burning mass the blaze and heat of each separate piece of fuel are increased by the surrounding fire, so in the supernatural economy of redemption each separate communication from God receives new light and glory from the revelations that precede and follow. It is only when we thus view the revelations of the Bible as progressing from "glory to glory," that we can estimate aright the proofs of their divine origin.

But the moment we address ourselves to the examination of the great central proposition above announced, that the appearance of Jesus of Nazareth was supernatural, the question of the genuineness of the gospel records forces itself upon us as of primary importance. In the case of books that deal mainly with principles the question of authorship is of subordinate interest. Thus the book of Job, with the exception of the brief narratives with which it opens and closes, is occupied with the great question of divine providence. It is not necessary that we know what particular man wrote it, or to what particular century it belongs. But the case of the Gospel narratives is wholly different. They profess to contain a record of facts relating to the supernatural appearance, works, and doctrines of Jesus of Nazareth, on the truth of which rests our faith in Christianity. If Christianity were only a system of ideas, like the philosophy of Plato or Aristotle, the question of the authorship of our four canonical Gospels would be one of secondary interest. But Christianity rests on a basis of supernatural facts, and if the basis be destroyed, the superstructure that is built upon it perishes. It is, then, of vital importance that we know the relation which the authors of these books held to Jesus. If they

were not apostles or apostolic men — that is, associates of apostles, laboring with them, enjoying their confidence, and in circumstances to obtain their information from authentic sources, — but, instead of this, wrote after the apostolic age, their testimony is not worthy of that full credence which the church in all ages has reposed in it. The question, then, of the genuineness of the gospel narratives, and that of their authenticity and credibility must stand or fall together.

The exhaustive examination of this great subject would require volumes. All we shall attempt is to mark out very briefly the lines of argument by which our four canonical Gospels are shown to be genuine under the two general heads of external and internal evidence. In the former head we make, moreover, as subdivisions, the testimony of Christian writers, that of ancient versions, and that of heretical writers. In this investigation we do not anticipate the question of inspiration, but proceed according to the ordinary laws of evidence in the case of writings that are acknowledged to be uninspired. It is our duty to conduct the inquiry with that freedom from bias (*unbefangenheit*) which the assailants of Christianity commend so much, but which they are not more accustomed to practice than other men. There is a bias of scepticism as well as of orthodoxy. It consists in those very *a priori* assumptions against the supernatural which have been considered in the two preceding Articles. Now, as we have no right to assume beforehand on our side, that the gospel narratives must be genuine and authentic, so neither have our opponents a right to make the contrary assumption, and then set themselves to bring the facts of history into harmony with it. If the gospel be false, the belief of it will not save us; if it be true, the rejection of it will destroy them. That candor which comes from the conviction of the supreme value of truth, and which has for its end the discovery of truth is, therefore, indispensable to the successful prosecution of the present momentous investigation.

Testimony of Christian Writers — General Considerations.

The canonical books of the New Testament profess to belong to the second half of the first century. From this time to the last quarter of the second century the remains of Christian writers are very scanty, a few genuine epistles of the so-called apostolic Fathers, and the works of Justin Martyr being the most important. This fact, when rightly considered, furnishes no unfavorable presumption against the genuineness of the gospel narratives, but rather a presumption in their favor. According to the record of the New Testament, the first preachers and writers of the gospel, with the exception of Paul and, apparently, of Apollos also, were "unlettered and private men" (*ἄνθρωποι ἀγράμματοι καὶ ἰδιῶται*); that is, men not trained up in the rabbinical schools with their succession of learned men, but unlettered men from the private walks of life. Their high endowments as speakers and writers were not the result of human education, at least not principally, but of the special gift of the Spirit; to which we must add, as a most important element in the case of the original apostles, the training which they had enjoyed under the Saviour's personal ministry. The great body of early Christians, also, was gathered, not from the schools of philosophy, Jewish or Pagan, but from the masses of the common people. When, therefore, the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, having accomplished their end, were withdrawn from the church, it is not surprising that there should have been a sudden and great descent from the high character of the apostolic writings to even the best of the succeeding age. Before there could be a high Christian literature of natural growth it was necessary that the gospel should exert upon society its purifying and elevating power for two or three generations, ennobling those born under its influence, and attracting to itself from without men of cultivated minds. When we consider how meagre are the remains of Christian writers that have come down to us from the period now under consideration, we ought not to wonder that we find in

them so few definite notices of our four canonical Gospels, but rather that the references to them are so many and so satisfactory.

Another consideration of still greater importance relates to the manner in which the very early Fathers refer to the writings of the New Testament. They more commonly quote anonymously, and often in a loose and general way. They frequently cite from memory, sometimes blend together words of different authors, and intermingle with them their own remarks. In citing the prophecies of the Old Testament in an argumentative way, they are more exact, particularly when addressing Jews. Yet even here they often content themselves with the scope of the passages referred to, without being particular as to the exact words. For this looseness there was in the case of the New Testament an obvious historic reason, to which we call the careful attention of the reader. There was, namely, a time, extending through a considerable number of years from the day of Pentecost, when the gospel history existed only in the form of oral tradition preserved in its purity by the presence of the apostles from whom it emanated. When the need of written histories began to be felt, they were produced one after another at uncertain intervals. So far as these documents were of apostolic origin — written by apostles or apostolic men — they had of course from the first the same authority as the oral teachings of the apostles and their associates. But the primitive preachers of the gospel were by no means restricted to their authority; for they had also the co-existing and co-ordinate apostolic tradition. It was only by slow degrees, as the apostles and apostolic men were withdrawn one after another from the stage of action, that the supreme importance of these apostolic records began to be understood. A still longer time elapsed before the custom became general of co-ordinating them with the writings of the Old Testament, and speaking of them as scripture. In entire harmony with all this is the loose and general manner in which the very early writers refer to the books of the New Testament, very

commonly in an anonymous way, and without that formal exactness which belongs to a later age. Another closely related fact is the occasional introduction, from unwritten tradition, of words or incidents not recorded in the canonical Gospels. It is surprising what extraordinary and incredible theories have been built upon these very simple and natural phenomena in respect to the written sources employed by the early Christian writers — theories that explain one difficulty by bringing in ten graver difficulties in its stead.

Testimony of Christian Writers — Last Part of the Second Century.

With the last quarter of the second century, and reaching into the beginning of the third, a new era opens in the history of Christian literature. This is the age of Irenaeus, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, and some other writers of less note. Their testimony to the apostolic origin and universal reception, from the first, of our four canonical Gospels is as full as can be desired. They give the names of the authors; two of them — Matthew and John — apostles, and the other two — Mark and Luke — companions of apostles, and fellow-laborers with them. They always associate Mark in a special way with Peter, and Luke with Paul. They affirm the universal and undisputed reception of these four Gospels from the beginning by all the churches, and deny the apostolic authority of other pretended gospels. Since it is conceded on all hands that in their day these four Gospels were universally received by the churches as genuine and authoritative records of our Lord's life and teachings, it is superfluous to quote at length their testimony, or to go further down in the stream of ecclesiastical history.¹ More important is it that we consider the character of these witnesses and the significance of their testimony.

Irenaeus was of Greek descent, and probably born about

¹ The reader may see in note A of the Appendix some specimens of the manner in which these Fathers speak of the gospel narratives.

A.D. 140. He appears to have been a native of Asia Minor ; at least we find him in a beautiful letter preserved by Eusebius (Hist. Eccl. v. 20) which was addressed to one Florinus, who had departed from the true faith, recounting in glowing language his youthful recollections of the person and teachings of Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna. He tells with what interest he listened as this man related his intercourse with the apostle John and the others who had seen the Lord ; “ how he recounted their words, and the things which he had heard from them concerning the Lord, and concerning his miracles and teachings.” And he adds that these things which Polycarp had received from eye-witnesses he related “ all in agreement with the scriptures ” ; that is, obviously with the gospel narratives. Afterwards we find the seat of his labors at Lyons and Vienne in Gaul, of which places he became bishop after the martyrdom of his predecessor Pothinus, about A.D. 177. Previously to this he had been sent to Eleutherus, bishop of Rome, on business relating to the Montanistic controversy.

The testimony of Irenæus is justly regarded as of the most weighty character. A native of the East, he was afterwards transferred to the West, whither he brought, and effectively used, all his Grecian culture. He was pre-eminently a fair-minded man ; and he knew, as we have seen, the traditions of both the East and the West. On the one side he had sat at the feet of Polycarp, the disciple of John ; on the other, he was the successor of Pothinus, Bishop of Lyons and Vienne in Gaul, who suffered martyrdom about A.D. 177, in the ninetieth year of his age, and must therefore have been acquainted in his youthful days with some who had seen and heard the apostles. Under such circumstances it is inconceivable that Irenæus should not have known the truth respecting the reception of the gospel by the churches, and the grounds on which this reception rested, especially in the case of John's Gospel. Tischendorf, after mentioning the relation of Irenæus to Polycarp, the disciple of John, asks, with reason : “ Are we, nevertheless, to cherish the

supposition that Irenaeus never heard a word from Polycarp respecting the Gospel of John, and yet gave it his unconditional confidence — this man Irenaeus, who in his controversies with heretics, the men of falsification and apocryphal works, employs against them, before all other things, the pure scripture as a holy weapon?"¹

Tertullian was the son of a Roman centurion. He was born in Carthage, North Africa, about A.D. 160, and died between A.D. 220 and 240. Richly endowed by nature, he received an extended culture, especially in the Roman law. Eusebius describes him as "a man accurately acquainted with the Roman laws, and among the most distinguished men in Rome,"² whence we certainly infer that he once lived in Rome, though it is uncertain whether Eusebius speaks of the Christian or the heathen period of his life.³ It is generally thought that the place of his Christian labors and writings was Carthage.⁴ He is supposed to have been converted to Christianity between his thirtieth and fortieth year.⁵ Naturally of a rigid temperament, impetuous in his feelings, and inclined to asceticism, he went over to the sect of the Montanists about A.D. 202. But this fact does not affect his testimony respecting the origin and universal reception of our four canonical Gospels. His works are very numerous, and in them he insists abundantly and with great earnestness that the gospel narratives, as also the other apostolic writings, have been received without corruption as a sacred inheritance from the apostolic churches. His work against Marcion, whom he accuses of employing a mutilated Gospel of Luke, is particularly instructive, as showing how deep and settled was the conviction of the early churches that nothing could be a Gospel which did not

¹ In his essay: Wann wurden unsere Evangelien gefasst, p. 8.

² Hist. Eccl. ii. 2. These words cannot well mean that he was "inter nostros scriptores admodum clarus," "very distinguished among our" — the Roman — "writers," as Rufinus translates, and Heinichen approves.

³ Schaff in Hertzog's Encycl. Vol. xv. p. 556.

⁴ See in Torrey's Neander, Vol. i. p. 684.

⁵ Hertzog's Encycl., ubi supra.

proceed from apostles or apostolic men, and how watchful they were against all attempts to mutilate or corrupt the primitive records. Equally instructive is this same treatise as showing that Marcion himself could not deny the universal reception, from the beginning, of the true Gospel of Luke.¹

Clement of Alexandria was a pupil of Pantaenus, and his successor as head of the celebrated catechetical school at Alexandria in Egypt. He was of heathen origin, and is supposed to have been born about the middle of the second century. Having a philosophical turn of mind and an ardent desire to know the truth, he made trial of the different systems of heathen philosophy, but found satisfaction in none of them. The Christian religion at last satisfied the earnest longings of his soul. "He convinced himself of the truth of Christianity by free inquiry, after he had acquired an extensive knowledge of the systems of religion and the philosophy of divine things known at his time in the cultivated world."² After his conversion he travelled widely, and made extensive researches under various teachers, as he himself tells us, in Greece, in Italy, in Syria, and in Palestine. At last he met with Pantaenus in Egypt, whom he preferred to all his other guides, and in whose instructions he rested. The testimony of Clement to the universal and undisputed reception by the churches of our four canonical Gospels agrees with that of Tertullian; and it has the more weight, not only on account of his wide investigations, but because, also, it virtually contains the testimony of his several teachers, some of whom must have known, if not the apostles themselves, those who had listened to their teachings.

The above are the chief writers of the period now under consideration whose works have come down to us. We

¹ See in note A of the Appendix the extracts from Tertullian on this point. The general subject of the integrity of the gospel narratives is reserved for the next Article.

² Torrey's *Neander*, Vol. i. p. 691.

may add *Theophilus* of Antioch, whose three books to Antiochus are admitted to be genuine, and, according to the judgment of Lardner, were written about A.D. 180.¹ He quotes from Matthew and Luke, and mentions by name the Gospel according to John. According to Jerome he composed a harmony of the four evangelists.²

Let us now consider briefly this combination of testimony in its true significance. The competency of the witnesses cannot be called in question. They were not rude and illiterate men, but scholars of extensive research. Earnestness and sincerity are traits which will not be denied to them. Their writings breathe throughout the spirit of truthfulness. It is manifest that they are contending for a religion on the historic reality of which rests their own hope of salvation. They were not wanting in common discernment, and they had full means of knowing both the belief of the churches in respect to the origin of our canonical Gospels and the grounds on which this belief rested. Irenaeus united in himself, as we have seen, the traditions of the East and the West, and of Rome also. In his youth he sat at the feet of Polycarp, the disciple of John. In his mature age he was intimate with Pothinus, whose recollections went back to the beginning of the second century. The sturdy and impetuous Tertullian, with his bluff Roman mind and his accurate knowledge of Roman law, was not likely to be carried away by his imagination in a grave question of fact, and he knew very thoroughly the traditions of the Italian and African churches. It was through an earnest and protracted search after the truth that the philosophical Clement came to the knowledge and belief of Christianity; and after his conversion he travelled widely in search of the apostolic traditions, and thus became acquainted with "eminent Christian teachers of different tendencies of mind in different countries."³ His testimony,

¹ *Credibility of the Gospel History*, Vol. ii. chap. 20.

² See in Appendix, note A, where may also be found the testimony of the churches of Lyons and Vienna.

³ *Torrey's Neander*, Vol. i. p. 691.

therefore, is of the most comprehensive character, including in itself that of his different teachers, among whom was Pantaenus, his predecessor as the head of the Alexandrian catechetical school. The above-named witnesses, then, represent, not one particular church or section of Christendom, but Christendom as a whole. They are, moreover, independent witnesses, no one of them drawing his information from the others, but each giving the results of his own separate investigations.

It should be remembered, too, that this was in an age when great freedom of inquiry prevailed. No such thing as a general or synodical council had as yet been thought of; consequently there had been no formal attempt to bring the judgment of the churches into harmony. In all that respects the essence of the gospel they had a substantial agreement with each other, but of their minor differences they were very tenacious, and they sometimes discussed them with much warmth. In their relations to each other they were jealous of their freedom and independence, and the churches of one province were slow to adopt from another beliefs or usages contrary to their own traditions. Of this we have a notable example in the controversy between the churches of the East and the West in respect to the time of the annual passover-festival. Polycarp's visit to Anicetus, bishop of Rome, on this question, in A.D. 162, did not avail to bring the two sections of Christendom into agreement with each other. The controversy, though moderated for a time, still remained, and finally about A.D. 190, Victor, bishop of Rome, published a sentence of excommunication against the churches of Asia Minor for their persistence on this point. The history of the disputed books of the New Testament—the so-called Antilegomena—furnishes another instructive example. It shows that the reception of a writing as apostolic in one division of Christendom did not insure its reception elsewhere. Two illustrations of this will be sufficient. The unanimous belief of the Eastern and Alexandrine churches ascribed to Paul, either immediately or virtually, the authorship of the

epistle to the Hebrews; but in the Western churches its Pauline authorship was not generally admitted till the fourth century. The Apocalypse, on the contrary, found most favor with the Western or Latin churches. The Syriac-Peshito, which represents the judgment of the East, does not contain it; but it is included in the Muratorian canon, which is of Latin origin. Had it been possible, then, that a spurious book should be imposed as genuine on the churches of one region, it would certainly have encountered opposition from the churches of other regions. Their steadfast answer would have been: "We have possessed from apostolic times no such writing." Even a genuine book that had, from the influence of circumstances unknown to us, been restricted in its circulation in apostolic times to certain regions, would obtain general reception only by a slow process. But our four canonical Gospels were everywhere received without dispute as of apostolic origin. This fact admits of but one explanation: the churches had from their first appearance indubitable evidence of their genuineness.

Let it be further remembered that this testimony relates, not to books of a private character, that might have lain for years hidden in some corner, but to the public writings of the churches, on which their faith was founded, of which they all had copies, and which it was the custom from apostolic times to read in their assemblies along with the Law and the Prophets.¹ Let any man show, if he can, how a spurious Gospel, suddenly appearing somewhere after apostolic days, could have been imposed upon the churches as genuine, not only where it originated, but everywhere else in Christendom.

In bringing our remarks under this head to a close we only notice, further, a phenomenon respecting the testimony of the church Fathers generally which might seem, at first sight, to militate against its validity, but which, when rightly considered, is a mark of its authenticity; we mean, *its diversity in minor details*. It is well known, for example, that there is a mass of tradition respecting the apostle Peter and Mark's

¹ Justin Martyr, Apol. ii. p. 98 (larger Apology near the end).

connection with him which is discordant in some of its particulars. But all are agreed upon the two grand facts: (1) that Mark was the companion of Peter, and had a special relation to him — his “interpreter” they call him; (2) that he was the author of the Gospel which bears his name. So, also, in respect to the other Gospels. Such agreement in substance with diversity in respect to details is everywhere the characteristic mark of authentic history, where the witnesses write independently of each other.

Testimony of Christian Writers — Middle of the Second Century.

The most important writer of this age is Justin Martyr. He was of Greek descent, but born in Neapolis (the ancient *Sichem* and modern *Nablás*) about the close of the apostolic age, or soon after the beginning of the second century. Before his conversion to Christianity he was a heathen philosopher earnestly seeking for the truth among the different systems of the age. At last, he met in the solitude of a quiet sea-shore, whither he had retired for meditation, a grey-headed man of mild and venerable aspect, who was the means of turning him from the schools of heathen philosophy to Christ.¹ After his conversion he traversed the Roman empire from east to west in the character of a Christian philosopher, everywhere commending to men the religion of Jesus Christ. Of his numerous works only three remain to us: (1) A larger Apology, addressed to the emperor Antoninus Pius, about A.D. 138 or 139; ² (2) A shorter Apology, addressed to the Roman Senate, somewhere after A.D. 147; (3) A Dialogue with the Jew Trypho, after A.D. 139. Since he lived so near the apostolic age, and enjoyed every facility for investigating the history of the gospel narratives, he has ever been regarded as a very weighty witness on the question now under consideration. In modern times, however, a persistent attempt has been

¹ Contra Tryph. chap. 8.

² This and the two following dates are given on the authority of Semisch in Hertzog's Encycl. Vol. vii. p. 185.

made to set aside his testimony on the alleged ground that he quotes, not from our canonical Gospels, but from some other writings. The extreme improbability of this supposition is manifest at first sight. Justin had travelled widely through the Roman empire. He represents his discussion with Trypho to have taken place at Ephesus. According to Eusebius he made his residence at Rome,¹ where he is said to have suffered martyrdom. We cannot suppose him to have been ignorant of the traditions of the churches respecting the origin of the Gospels. He certainly knew what Gospels were received as authentic in his day at Rome, in Asia Minor, at Alexandria, and elsewhere. Equally certain it is that these are the very Gospels which he quotes under the title of the "Memoirs of the Apostles"; and, more fully, the "Memoirs which I affirm to have been composed by his [our Lord's] apostles and their followers."² These he elsewhere says "are called Gospels,"³ and, in a collective sense, "the gospel."⁴ It should be carefully noticed that he speaks in the plural number of both the apostles who composed the Gospels, and their followers. This description applies exactly to our canonical Gospels — two written by apostles, and two by their followers. Now, the supposition that the Gospels which Justin used — those received by the churches as authentic in his day — were wholly supplanted by others in the days of Irenaeus who was of full age at the time of Justin's death (between A.D. 161–168), is incredible. But Irenaeus, in common with Clement, Tertullian, and others, quotes our present four canonical Gospels as alone possessing apostolic authority, and expressly rejects all other alleged Gospels. It follows that the "Memoirs" of which Justin speaks can be no other than the same Gospels. We cannot conceive that in this brief period an entire change of Gospels should have been made anywhere; much less, that it should have been made throughout all the different and distant provinces of the Roman empire at a time when general councils were as

¹ Hist. Eccl. ii. 11.

² Apol. Vol. ii. p. 98 (larger Apol. near the end).

³ Dial. chap. 103.

⁴ Dial. chap. 10.

yet unknown, and therefore, made without any concert; least of all, can we believe that this mighty change, affecting the very foundation of Christianity, should have taken place without discussion, and in so silent a way that no record of it exists in the history of Christianity. Without irrefragable proof, this supposition that the Gospels known to Justin were different from those known to Irenæus, is not worthy to be even seriously entertained. But no such proof exists. Justin's quotations, taken as a whole, have such an agreement with our present Gospels as can be explained only from his actual use of them. The arguments on the other side may be reduced to two: his want in many cases of verbal agreement, and his introduction of a few incidents and sayings not recorded in our present Gospels. Both of these have been already anticipated in our remarks on the manner in which the very early Fathers refer to the writings of the New Testament. They more frequently quote from memory, often in a loose way, sometimes blending together different passages, and intermingling with the words of the sacred writers their own explanatory remarks. Since, moreover, they lived so near the apostolic age, they occasionally introduce from tradition incidents or words not recorded in the canonical Gospels.¹ These are precisely the phenomena which belong to Justin's quotations and references.

(1) His *manner of citation*. This is well given in the following words of Kirchhofer: "Many of these citations agree word for word with the Gospels, others with the substance, but with alterations and additions of words with transpositions and omissions; others give the thought only in a general way; others still condense together the contents of several passages and different sayings, in which case the historic quotations are yet more free, and blend together, in part, the accounts of Matthew and Luke. But some quotations are not found at all in our canonical Gospels; some, on the contrary, occur twice or thrice."²

(2) His *introduction of new matter*. Two or three more

¹ See above, pp. 86-88.
VOL. XXVI. No. 101.

² *Quellensammlung*, p. 89, note.
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important variations from our present Gospels are, perhaps, due to the readings in the manuscripts employed by Justin, since the later church Fathers, who, as we know, used the canonical Gospels, give the same variations.¹ But over and above these, he gives some incidents and sayings not recorded in our present Gospels. In this there is nothing wonderful. In his address to the elders of Ephesus, Paul introduces one of our Lord's sayings not found elsewhere.² "Be ye tried money-changers," is a saying referred to our Lord by Origen and others.³ The new matter found in Justin's references is inconsiderable compared with the whole. Since he lived so near the apostolic times he may well have received it from tradition. But if in any case he drew it from written documents, there is no proof that he ascribed to such documents apostolic authority. In one passage he accurately distinguishes between what he gives from tradition or other written sources, and what from the apostolic records. "When Jesus came," he says, "to the river Jordan, where John was baptizing, as he descended to the water, both was a fire kindled in the Jordan, and as he ascended from the water, the apostles of this very Christ of ours have written that the Holy Spirit as a dove lighted upon him."⁴

Justin quotes the Gospel of Matthew very abundantly. Next in number are his quotations from Luke. His references to Mark are comparatively few, from the circumstance that he has so little matter peculiar to himself; yet they are enough to show Justin's acquaintance with his Gospel. It has been doubted whether indubitable references to the Gospel of John can be found in his writings. But an examination of the passages quoted in the Appendix⁵ will make it plain that Justin used this Gospel also. We sum up the

¹ See in Westcott on the Canon, pp. 155-160.

² Acts xx. 35.

³ See in Westcott's Introduction to the Study of the Gospels, Appendix C., a collection of these apocryphal sayings.

⁴ Dial. chap. 88.

⁵ See in Appendix, note B.

result of modern investigations in the words of Semisch : " An accurate examination in detail of his citations has led to the result that this title [the Memoirs of the Apostles] designates the canonical Gospels—a result in no way less certain because again called in question in modern days."¹

Another witness belonging to the same age is Papias, who was bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia in the first half of the second century. It is not necessary to our purpose that we enter at large into the questions that have been raised concerning the character of Papias as an ecclesiastical writer. Eusebius says : " He appears to have been a man of very small mind, as one might affirm judging from his words."² The correctness of this judgment is evident from the specimens that Eusebius has given from his work in five books entitled : " An Exposition of the Oracles of the Lord,"³ which the early churches deservedly allowed to pass into oblivion. But, as Norton well remarks, " weakness of intellect does not enable one to speak of books as existing which are not in existence."⁴ Now, in the work above referred to, Papias related of Matthew that he " composed the oracles in the Hebrew dialect, and every one interpreted them as he was able."⁵ As to the question whether these " oracles were our present canonical Gospels, it is sufficient to say that Eusebius,⁶ Irenaeus,⁷ Pantaenus,⁸ Origen,⁹ Jerome,¹⁰ and others, so understood the term ; for they all mention the tradition that Matthew wrote his Gospel in Hebrew. Of the source and character of Mark's Gospel Papias gave a more particular account, the correctness of which in its details we

¹ Life of Justin Martyr, 4. 1.

² *Σφόδρα γὰρ τοι σμικρὸς ἦν τὸν νοῦν, ὅς ἦν ἐκ τῶν αὐτοῦ λόγων τεκμηριώμενον εἰπεῖν, φαίνεται.* Hist. Eccl. iii. 39.

³ *Λογίων κυριακῶν Ἑξηγησις.*

⁴ Genuineness of the Gospels Vol. iii. p. 122.

⁵ Eusebius's Hist. Eccl. ubi supra.

⁶ Hist. Eccl. iii. 24.

⁷ In Eusebius's Hist. Eccl. v. 8.

⁸ In Eusebius's Hist. Eccl. v. 10.

⁹ In Eusebius's Hist. Eccl. vi. 25.

¹⁰ De Vir. Illustr. iii. and elsewhere.

need not here discuss, since the one point now to be insisted on is, that in Papias's day this Gospel was current in the churches.¹ But it has been objected that Eusebius quotes no statements of Papias respecting the other two Gospels. The obvious answer is, that Eusebius's notices of the authors to whom he refers are confessedly imperfect. He says, for example, that Polycarp, in his letter to the Philippians, "has used certain testimonies from the first Epistle of Peter,"² but says nothing of his many references in the same letter to the epistles of Paul, in some of which he mentions the apostle by name. We have, nevertheless, through Eusebius, an indirect but valid testimony from Papias to the authorship of the fourth Gospel, resting upon the admitted identity of the author of this Gospel with the author of the first epistle ascribed to John. Eusebius, namely, speaking of Papias, says: "But the same man used testimonies from the first epistle of John."³ The ascription of this epistle to John is virtually the ascription to him of the fourth Gospel also.

A very interesting relic of the period now under consideration, is the "Epistle to Diognetus." The authorship of this work is uncertain, but its date cannot be later than the middle of the second century. "Its origin falls somewhere about the middle of the second century, when the church, already sharply separated from the Jews and widely spread after many a baptism of blood, was rising more and more to the consciousness of her world-wide destiny."⁴ This epistle, notwithstanding some erroneous views, contains a noble defence of Christianity, in which the author shows his acquaintance with the Gospel of John by the use of terms and phrases peculiar to him. Thus he calls Christ "the Word" and the only-begotten Son" whom God sent to men. In the words "not to take thought about food and raiment," there is an apparent reference to Matt. vi. 25, 31.⁵

¹ See further in Appendix, note C.

² Hist. Eccl. iv. 14.

³ Hist. Eccl. iii. 39, end.

⁴ Schmisch in Hertzog's Encyclopaedie, Vol. iii. p. 408.

⁵ Sect. 9. See further in Appendix, note C.

Testimony of Christian Writers — Apostolic Fathers.

It has been already remarked that as we approach the apostolic age the references of the Fathers to the writings of the New Testament become loose and general; that they quote for the most part anonymously, aiming only to give the general sense, and sometimes blending together words of different authors. We have seen how this manner of citation is illustrated in the works of Justin Martyr. Further examples we find in the writings of the so-called apostolic Fathers. They use language which implies a knowledge of the first three Gospels — the synoptical Gospels; and Polycarp's epistle to the Philippians contains also an indirect but valid testimony to the Gospel of John.¹

Testimony of Ancient Versions.

A different class of witnesses will now be examined, whose testimony is of the most weighty and decisive character. We have two very ancient versions — the Syriac-Peshito and the Old Latin. With the latter we may conveniently consider the Muratorian fragment on the canon of the New Testament, for it represents the canon of the Latin or Western church.

In point of antiquity the old Latin version (as it is called in distinction from Jerome's revision, called the Vulgate) probably deserves the first place. Respecting its character various opinions have been maintained. Some have assumed the existence of several independent Latin versions, but the preferable opinion is, that there were various recensions, all having their foundation in an original version, the Old Latin, which, says Westcott, "can be traced back as far as the earliest records of Latin Christianity. Every circumstance connected with it indicates the most remote antiquity."² "This version," says Tregelles, "must have been made a sufficiently long time before the age when Tertullian wrote, and before the date of the Latin translator of Irenaeus for it

¹ See in Appendix, note D.

² Canon of the New Testament, chap. 3.

to have got into general circulation. This leads us back towards the middle of the second century at the latest; how much earlier the version may have been we have no proof; for we are already led back into the time when no records tell us anything respecting the North African church."¹ The canon of this version is represented by the Muratorian fragment on the canon, discovered by the Italian scholar Muratori, in the Ambrosian library at Milan, in a manuscript bearing the marks of great antiquity. The composition of this canon, which has come down to us only in a mutilated form, is referred to the third quarter of the second century. It is sufficient to say in the present connection, that it recognizes the four Gospels, and all the remaining books of the New Testament, except the Epistle to the Hebrews and some of the Catholic epistles; that is, it contains the very books included, in all probability, in the original Old Latin version, for this version has not come down to us in a perfect form.

Let the reader consider, now, the significance of this fact. We have a very ancient Latin version not of one Gospel alone, nor simply of the four Gospels, but of the great body of books belonging to our present New Testament. The version itself dates back at least towards the middle of the second century. But the existence of such a version implies the previous existence in the Greek original of the collection of books from which it was made. We cannot reasonably suppose that the translators fixed the canon. Rather did they take it as they found it existing in their day in the Latin church. The existence, again, of a collection of authoritative sacred books in the original Greek, that is, of a Greek canon, implies the previous existence of the separate books; for they were not composed in a body, but one by one as the necessities of the churches required. The Gospels, then, with which we are now concerned, were first written separately at intervals, then embodied in the Greek canon, then transferred by translation into the canon of the

¹ In Horne, Vol. iv. p. 238.

Old Latin version, and all this process, which necessarily required a considerable space of time, was completed as early as the middle, or towards the middle, of the second century. The obvious inference is that the Gospels themselves must have been in existence in the first quarter of the second century, when many of the associates of the apostles were yet living.

The same argument might be drawn from the Old Syriac version, called the Peshito, which learned men are agreed in referring to a date not later than the close of the second century, while some assign it to an earlier period. The canon of this version contains all the books of the New Testament except the second Epistle of Peter, the second and third Epistles of John, the Epistle of Jude, and the Apocalypse; and it testifies, like the old Latin version, to the existence of our four Gospels, not only when it was made, but at an earlier date. It carries us up also to the first quarter, or towards the first quarter, of the second century. The combined testimony of these two ancient versions, with that of the Muratorian canon, is exceedingly strong.

Testimony of the Heretical Sects.

A very important fact in regard to these sects is, that they never attempted to disprove *on historic grounds* the genuineness of any one of the four Gospels. Had they done so, the Fathers who wrote against them at such length would have noticed their arguments. Marcion, one of the most distinguished leaders of those who separated themselves from the Orthodox church, came to Rome in the second quarter of the second century. It is well known that, in accordance with the grand principle of Gnosticism, he separated Christianity from all connection with Judaism, making the Jehovah of the Old Testament a different being from the God of the New Testament. Concerning his Gospel, called by the ancients the Gospel of Marcion, there has been in modern times a voluminous controversy, which belongs more properly to the question of the *integrity* of our present canonical Gospels.

We simply anticipate here the result of this protracted discussion, which is, that Marcion used a mutilated form of Luke's Gospel, rejecting the other three. Of course, it became necessary, on dogmatic grounds, that he should reject all of the first chapters of Luke which pertains to our Lord's genealogy in the line of Abraham and David, and should otherwise alter the Gospel to suit his views. On the same general ground he took certain of Paul's epistles with such changes as he thought needful. But in this matter he did not proceed on the ground of historic evidence. His position was wholly dogmatic. He took the ground that *he* could judge better of the truth than the writers themselves, whom he represented to have been misled by the influence of Jewish prejudices. Irenæus well says of the liberties taken by Marcion: "He persuaded his disciples that he was himself more trustworthy than the apostles who have delivered to us the gospel; while he gave to them, not the gospel, but a fragment of the gospel."¹

Another distinguished leader of the Gnostics was Valentinus, who came to Rome about A.D. 140, and continued there till the time of Anicetus. His testimony and that of his followers is more weighty than that of Marcion. His method, according to Tertullian, was not to reject and mutilate the scriptures, but to pervert their meaning by false interpretations. Thus he says of him: "For, though Valentinus seems to use the entire instrument, he has done violence to the truth with a more artful mind than Marcion. For Marcion has used the sword awkwardly and openly, not the pen; since he has cut down the scriptures to suit his matter. But Valentinus has spared the scriptures, since he has invented, not scriptures for his matter, but matter for the scriptures."² "The entire instrument" (*integro instru-*

¹ Contra hæres. i. 27.

² Neque enim, si Valentinus integro instrumento uti videtur, non callidior ingenio quam Marcion manus intulit veritati. Marcion, enim, inepte et palam machaera, non stylo usus est, quoniam ad materiam suam caedem scripturarum confecit: Valentinus autem pepercit, quoniam non ad materiam scripturas, sed materiam ad scripturas excogitavit." — Adv. hæres. chap. 38

mento) includes, in Tertullian's usage, the whole inspired record.¹ Clement of Alexandria and Hippolytus have preserved quotations from Valentinus in which he refers to the Gospels of Matthew, Luke, and John.² Respecting the Gospel of John, in particular, Irenæus says that "the Valentinians make the most abundant use of it."³ Heracleon, whom Origen represents to have been a familiar friend of Valentinus, wrote a commentary on John, from which Origen frequently quotes. But if Valentinus and his followers, from the second quarter of the second century and onward, used "the entire instrument," they must have found its apostolical authority established before their day on an immovable foundation. This carries us back to the age succeeding that of the apostles, when Polycarp and others who had known them personally were yet living. The testimony of the Valentinians, then, is of the most decisive character.

Another prominent man among the heretical writers was Tatian, a contemporary and pupil of Justin Martyr. According to the testimony of Eusebius,⁴ Epiphanius,⁵ and Theodoret,⁶ he composed a Diatessaron, that is, Gospel of Four, which can be understood only as a harmony of the four Gospels, or of such parts as suited his purpose; for Theodoret accuses Tatian of "cutting away the genealogies, and whatever other things show that the Lord was born of the seed of David according to the flesh."⁷ With this Diatessaron Theodoret was well acquainted; for he found among his churches more than two hundred copies of it, which he caused to be removed, and their places supplied by the four canonical Gospels.⁸

As to other Gospels of the second century, which are

¹ Thus Tertullian calls the scriptures collectively "totum instrumentum utriusque testamenti." — Adv. Prax. 15, 20.

² See in Westcott on the Canon, iv. 5.

³ See in Appendix, note A.

⁴ Hist. Eccl. iv. 29.

⁵ Haeres. xlv. quoted in Norton, Vol. iii. p. 274.

⁶ Haeret. Fab. i. 20.

⁷ Ubi supra.

⁸ Ubi supra.

occasionally mentioned by later writers, as "The Gospel of Truth," "The Gospel of Basilides," etc., there is no evidence that they professed to be connected histories of our Lord's life and teachings. They were rather, as Norton has shown,¹ doctrinal works embodying the views of the sectaries that used them.

The above is a cursory survey of the external evidence for the genuineness of our four canonical Gospels. Considering how scanty are the remains of ecclesiastical writings that have come down to us from the first half of the second century, we have all the testimonies from that period that could be reasonably demanded, and they are met by no rebutting testimonies that pretend to rest on historic grounds. The authorship of no ancient classical work is sustained by a mass of evidence so great and varied, and the candid mind can rest in it with the composure of full assurance.²

Internal Evidences.

This is a subject of vast extent, and capable of being presented in many different lights. Our limits will allow us only to indicate a few prominent lines of argument. We begin, then, with considering the relation of the first three Gospels—commonly called the *synoptical* Gospels—to the last.

And first, with respect to *time*. Each of the three synoptical Gospels records our Lord's prophecy of the overthrow of Jerusalem. If we examine the records of this prediction, one by one, we shall find in all of them evidence that they were written before that great event, not after it. They are occupied, almost exclusively, with the various *signs* by which its approach might be known, and with admonitions to the disciples to hold themselves in readiness for it. Matthew, for example, devotes *fifty* verses to the account of the prophecy and the admonitions connected with it. Of these,

¹ Vol. iii. p. 4.

² The testimonies from heathen writers are omitted. They may be seen in Kirchofer's *Quellensammlung*, pp. 329–357.

only four (chap. xxiv. 19-22) describe the calamities of the scene, and these in the most general terms. Now, upon the supposition that the evangelists wrote before the event, all this is natural. Our Lord's design in uttering the prophecy was not to gratify the idle curiosity of the disciples, but to warn them beforehand in such a way that they might escape the horrors of the impending catastrophe. He dwelt, therefore, mainly on the signs of its approach, and with these, as having the chief interest for the readers, the record of the prediction is mainly occupied. It is impossible to conceive, on the other hand, that one who wrote years after the destruction of the city and temple should not have given, in various ways, a historic coloring to his account. We may safely affirm that to write a prophecy *after* the event in such a form as that which appears in either of the three records, transcends the powers of any uninspired man; and as to inspired narratives, the objectors with whom we are now dealing deny them altogether.

But there are, in the records now under consideration, some special indications of the time when the evangelists wrote. According to Matthew, the disciples ask (v. 3), "When shall these things be?"—the destruction, namely, of the buildings of the temple—"and what shall be the sign of thy coming and the end of the world?" These two questions our Lord proceeds to answer in such a way that the impression on the minds of the hearers (to be rectified only by the course of future events) must have been that the destruction of the temple and city and his second coming at the end of the world would be nearly connected in time. "Immediately after the tribulation of those days," says Matthew, "shall the sun be darkened," etc. The probable explanation of this peculiar form of the prophecy (the correctness of the record being assumed), is a question upon which it is not necessary here to enter. The important fact to which we call attention is, that the evangelists in their account of the prophecy are evidently unconscious of any discrepancy, real or apparent, that needs explanation. This could not have been the case

had they written years after the fulfilment of the prediction. "It may be safely held," says Professor Fisher, "that had the evangelist been writing at a later time, some explanation would have been thrown in to remove the *seeming* discrepancy between prophecy and fulfilment."¹

It should be further noticed that the evangelists Matthew and Mark, in reference to "the abomination of desolation," standing in the holy place, throw in the admonitory words, "Let him that readeth understand." These are not the Saviour's words, but those of the narrators, calling attention to a most important sign requiring immediate action on the part of the disciples. *Before* the overthrow of the city they had a weighty office; *after* its overthrow they would have been superfluous. Their presence in such a connection indicates that the record was written before the event to which it refers.

But the internal character of the fourth Gospel is in harmony with the ancient tradition that it was written at Ephesus late in the apostle's life. That it was composed at a distance from Judea, in a Gentile region, is plain from his careful explanation of Jewish terms and usages, which among his countrymen would have needed no explanation. No man writing in Palestine, among those who habitually attended the national feasts at Jerusalem, would have said: "And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh";² "Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand";³ etc. The absence of all reference to the overthrow of the Jewish polity, civil and ecclesiastical, is naturally explained from two facts: first, that the apostle wrote some years after that event, when his mind had now become familiar with the great truth that the Mosaic economy had forever passed away to make room for the universal dispensation of Christianity; secondly, that he wrote among Gentiles, for whom the abolition of the Mosaic dispensation had no special interest. In general style and spirit, moreover, the Gospel of John is closely allied to his

¹ Supernatural Origin of Christianity, p. 172.

² Chap. vi. 4.

³ Chap. vii. 2.

first Epistle, and cannot well be separated from it by a great interval of time; but the Epistle undoubtedly belongs to a late period of the apostle's life. The result of the whole is that the fourth Gospel must have been written some years later than the last of the first three, not less, at least, than fifteen.¹

Let us now consider the relation of the fourth Gospel to the first three in regard to *character*. Here we must say that it differs as widely as it well could while presenting to the reader's view the same divine and loving Redeemer. Its general plan is different. For reasons which we can only conjecture, the synoptical Gospels are mainly occupied with our Lord's Galilean ministry. Besides this they record only his last journey to Jerusalem, and the momentous events connected with it. John, on the contrary, has little to say of the Saviour's ministry in Galilee, but records his visits to Jerusalem year by year. Hence, his materials are, to a great extent, different from theirs; and even where he records the same events—for example, the miracle of the loaves and fishes, and the last supper—he connects with them long discourses which the other evangelists have omitted. Particularly noticeable are the Saviour's discussions with the unbelieving Jews, and his confidential discourses to his disciples, in both of which we have such treasures of divine truth and love. How much this Gospel differs from the other three in its general style and manner, and how perfectly independent it is of them, every reader feels at once. It bears on every page the impress of John's individuality, which connects it immediately with the epistles that bear his name. Every scholar knows, moreover, that the harmonists have labored, with no very satisfactory results, through many successive centuries to explain the apparent disagreement between John and the synoptical Gospels in respect to the time when our Lord ate his last passover with his disciples.

¹ On the supposed argument for the early composition of this Gospel from the evangelist's words, chap. v. 2, see Meyer, *Commentar in loco*; Alford, *Prolegomena to John's Gospel*, sect. iv.

The essential point of the above comparison between the fourth Gospel and the other three in respect to both date and character is this: Notwithstanding the later date of this Gospel, and its striking differences from the earlier synoptical Gospels, it was at once received by all the churches as of apostolic authority. Now, upon the assumption of its genuineness, both its peculiar character and its undisputed reception everywhere are easily explained. John, the bosom disciple of our Lord, wrote with the full consciousness of his apostolic authority, and his competency as a witness of what he had seen and heard. He therefore gave his testimony in his own original and independent way. And when this original Gospel, so different in its general plan and style from those that had preceded it, made its appearance, the apostolic authority of its author secured its immediate and undisputed reception by the churches. All this is very plain and intelligible. But upon the supposition that this Gospel is a spurious production of the age succeeding that of the apostles, let any one explain, if he can, how it could have obtained universal and unquestioned apostolic authority. Its very difference from the earlier Gospels must have provoked inquiry, and this must have led to its rejection, especially at a time when some who had known the apostle yet survived; and no one now pretends to assign it to a later period.

We designedly restrict ourselves to this *lower plane* of reasoning, forbearing to urge the argument that weighs with us more than all things else; namely, that no one but John *could* have written such a Gospel, and that to read it with a mind open to conviction is to be assured that it came from the pen of the bosom disciple.

Let us next consider the internal relation to each other of the *synoptical* Gospels. Here we have remarkable agreements and remarkable differences. The general plan of all three is the same, and there lies at the foundation of each a basis of common matter — common, not in substance alone, but, to a great extent, in form also. It is manifest, nevertheless, that the three evangelists wrote independently of

each other. Matthew, for example, did not draw his materials from Luke; for there is his genealogy of our Lord, and his full account of the sermon on the mount, not to name other particulars. Nor did Luke take his materials from Matthew; for there is his genealogy also, so strikingly different from that of Matthew, with large sections peculiar to himself. Mark has but little absolutely new matter; but into his narratives are interwoven numerous little incidents not found elsewhere in a very vivid and graphic manner. They are introduced, moreover, in such a natural and artless way that no one can doubt their genuineness. Another point to be noticed is, that the three synoptical writers do not always agree as to the *order* in which they record events, nor as to the *accompanying circumstances*.

Yet these three Gospels, one written by an apostle, the other two by apostolic men, were all received from the first as of equal authority. The natural explanation is, that their authors all wrote in the apostolic age, and, consequently, all had access, each of them independently of the other two, to the most authentic sources of information. How far these sources lay in written documents, like those referred to by Luke,¹ and how far in the current apostolic tradition, it is not necessary here to determine. Suffice it to say, that each evangelist selected from the common mass such materials as suited his purpose, and the churches everywhere unhesitatingly received each of the three Gospels, notwithstanding the differences above noticed, because they had undoubted evidence of their apostolic origin and authority. *After* the apostolic age three Gospels, bearing to each other such relations as do these, could not possibly have been imposed upon the churches; least of all could they have been imposed as of equal apostolic authority. We know from the resistance which those churches made to Marcion's mutilated gospel how fully alive they were to the character of their sacred records. On apostolic authority they could receive—to mention a single representative example—both Matthew's

¹ Chap. I. 1.

and Luke's account of our Lord's genealogy, difficult as is the problem of bringing them into harmony with each other. But it is certain that they would not have received the two on the authority of men who lived after the apostolic age. More than this, no gospel, appearing for the first time after the age of the apostles and apostolic men, and claiming apostolic authority, could possibly have met with undisputed and universal reception, not only in the region where it originated, but in all the different and distant provinces of Christendom.

Did our limits permit, we could go through the gospel records, and show that the severest scrutiny has been able to detect in them *no trace of a later age*; that every age has its peculiar impress of thought and reasoning by which it is distinguished from every other age, and that in this respect the Gospels, with the other canonical books of the New Testament, *wear their own proper livery*, which no writer of the following age was able successfully to counterfeit; that the *peculiar form of the Greek language* employed by the evangelists belongs to the apostolic age, when the teachers and writers of the church were Jews; and we could adduce other arguments drawn from the internal character of the Gospels. But we pause here, simply remarking that these internal proofs, coinciding as they do with a great and varied mass of external testimony, place the genuineness of our four canonical Gospels on a foundation that cannot be shaken.

APPENDIX.

NOTE A.

Testimonies belonging to the Close of the Second and the Beginning of the Third Century.

For a full account of these the reader may be referred to works specially devoted to the subject, like Lardner's *Credibility of the Gospel History*, Vol. ii., Kirchofer's *Quellensammlung*, and the critical commentaries and introductions to the New Testament. We restrict ourselves to a few of the more important passages.

Irenaeus. "Matthew published a writing of the gospel among the Hebrews in their own dialect, when Peter and Paul were preaching in Rome and founding the church. But after their departure [that is, probably,

their decease; compare Luke ix. 31; 2 Pet. i. 15, where the same word *ἐξόδος* is used], Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, himself also delivered to us in writing the things preached by Peter; and Luke the follower of Paul, recorded in a book the gospel preached by him. Afterwards John, the disciple of the Lord, who also reclined on his bosom, himself also published the gospel when he lived in Ephesus of Asia.¹

"Such is the certainty in respect to the Gospels that even the heretics bear testimony to them, and every one of them endeavors to establish his doctrine by making these his point of departure. For the Ebionites, who use only the Gospel according to Matthew, are convicted by that very Gospel of making false assumptions respecting the Lord. But Marcion, who mutilates the Gospel according to Luke, is shown by what is still kept in his Gospel to be a blasphemer of the one existing God. But they who separate Jesus from the Christ, and say that the Christ remained impassible while Jesus suffered, if they will read with the love of truth the Gospel of Mark, to which they give the preference, can be corrected by it. But as to those of Valentine's sect who make a very abundant use of the Gospel according to John for the exhibition of their syzygies,² it can be made plain from that very Gospel that they affirm nothing rightly, as I have shown in the first book."³

The above passage is very important as containing the testimony of the heretical sects also. The universal reception and use of the four Gospels was so ancient and firmly established that the teachers of error could not deny their authority, but rather sought to avail themselves of it for their own ends. In this same chapter Irenaeus goes on to argue from various supposed analogies that the number of the Gospels could have been neither more nor less than four. They correspond, he tells us, to the four regions of the world and the four cardinal winds; they are the cherubim with their four faces upon which the incarnate Word sits, each Gospel answering to one of the cherubim: that of John to the lion, that of Luke to the ox, that of Matthew to the human face, that of Mark to the eagle, etc. The reasoning is fanciful, but it all rests on the historic fact that the Christian church had possessed from apostolic times four authoritative Gospels, and only four.

In connection with Irenaeus we may consider the testimony of the churches of Lyons and Vienne in Gaul, in a letter addressed by them to "the churches of Asia and Phrygia," which Eusebius has preserved for us,⁴ and which describes the severe persecution through which they had recently

¹ In Eusebius's *Hist. Eccl.* v. 8.

² For the meaning of this term, which the Latin translator of Irenaeus expresses by the word "conjugationes," the reader may consult Torrey's *Neander*, Vol. i. pp. 416-434.

³ *Contra haeres.* iii. 11.

⁴ *Hist. Eccl.* v. 1.

passed in the reign of Antoninus Verus, about A.D. 177. In this they say: "So was fulfilled that which was spoken by our Lord, 'The time shall come in which whosoever killeth you shall think that he doeth God service.'"¹ In speaking again of a certain youthful martyr, they first compare him to Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, affirming in the very words of Luke that he "had walked in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless;"² and then go on to describe him as having the Comforter in himself, the Spirit, more abundantly than Zacharias, where they apply to the Holy Spirit a term peculiar to the apostle John. The Gospels of Luke and John, then, were well known and in common use in Gaul in the West, and Asia Minor in the East, in the days of Pothinus, bishop of these churches, who suffered martyrdom in the persecution. But Pothinus was ninety years old, so that his knowledge of these Gospels must have reached back to the first quarter of the second century, when many who had known the apostles were yet living.

Tertullian. The testimony of this Father will come up again under the head of the integrity of the gospel narratives. At present we simply give two short extracts. Having shown that the Gospels have for their authors not apostles alone, but also apostolic men, he goes on to say: "In fine, of the apostles, John and Matthew infuse into us the faith; of the apostolic men, Luke and Mark renew it, beginning as they do from the same principles as it respects one God the Creator, and his Christ, born of a virgin, the fulfilling of the law and the prophets."³

"In a word, if it is manifest that that is the more true which is the more ancient, that the more ancient which is also from the beginning, that from the beginning which is from the apostles; it will certainly be in like manner manifest that that has been handed down from the apostles which was held as inviolable among the apostolic churches." And, after defending the canonical Gospel of Luke against Marcion's mutilated Gospel, he adds: "The same authority of the apostolic churches will defend the other Gospels also, which we have in like manner through them and according to them—I mean, those of John and Matthew; although that which Mark published may be also called the Gospel of Peter, whose interpreter Mark was."⁴

Clement of Alexandria. "But in the same books [the lost books entitled *Ἰστορικώρεως*] Clement has given a tradition of the primitive presbyters⁵ concerning the order of the Gospels to the following purport. He said that of the Gospels those which contain the genealogies [that is, those of Matthew and Luke] were first written; but that the history of that according to Mark was as follows: When Peter had preached the word publicly in Rome and promulgated the gospel by the Spirit, those present, being many in number, entreated Mark, as one who had followed Peter for a long time

¹ John. xvi. 2.

² Luke i. 6.

³ Adv. Marcion, iv. 2.

⁴ Adv. Marcion, iv. 5.

⁵ παρδοσιν τῶν ἀνέκαθεν πρεσβυτέρων.

and had his words in memory, that he would write down the things spoken; that Mark having composed the Gospel gave it to those who had asked it of him, which when Peter had learned he neither forbade nor encouraged it."¹

Theophilus of Antioch. Of this man we find the following notice in the writings of Jerome: "Theophilus, the seventh bishop of the church at Antioch after the apostle Peter, who has left to us a monument of his genius in constructing a single work out of the words of the four evangelists, has spoken thus in his commentaries concerning the present parable."² In his books to Antolycus, Theophilus quotes from Matt. v. 28, 32, 44, 46; vi. 3,³ and from Luke xviii. 27.⁴ Also the following from John: "Whence the holy scriptures teach us, and all the inspired men, one of whose number, John, thus speaks: 'In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God,' showing that in the beginning God was one, and the word in him"⁵

NOTE B.

Justin Martyr's Citations.

Respecting the character of the documents cited by Justin there has been a very extended discussion. We only notice here a few writers of different countries and different ecclesiastical connections.

Among Americans Professor Norton, in the first volume of his work, entitled "Evidences of the Genuineness of the Gospels," has discussed the question at some length.⁶ In the fifth of his "Additional Notes" marked E, is a valuable classification of Justin's citations, with remarks on the quotations of the Fathers generally.

Westcott of England, in his work "On the Canon of the New Testament," has examined the same matter with great thoroughness and candor, devoting particular attention to the passages which contain more or less important variations from our canonical Gospels, or which introduce matter not found in them.⁷ The discussion will richly repay a careful and repeated perusal.

The labors of Professor Semisch of Germany in this field of investigation are well known to biblical scholars. His judgment respecting the sources of Justin's citations has already been given.⁸

In Kirchofer, *Quellensammlung*, Justin's citations may be found arranged under the appropriate heads, with some valuable foot-notes. It is superfluous to add that the subject is discussed more or less fully in the modern critical commentaries.

We pass by Justin's citations from Matthew and Luke as too numerous to need specification.

¹ In Eusebius's *Hist. Eccl.* vi. 14.

² *Epist. ad Algas.* Vol. iv. p. 199.

³ *Ad Antolycum*, iii. p. 126.

⁴ *Ad Antolycum*, ii. p. 92.

⁵ *Ad Antolycum*, ii. p. 100.

⁶ Part ii. ch. 2, and additional note E.

⁷ pp. 109-206.

⁸ See above, p. 97.

The following passage has been adduced as containing a reference to Mark's Gospel: "But in what condition of sensation and punishment the unrighteous shall be, hear from the following words which are spoken in like manner with reference to this thing, 'Their worm shall not cease, and their fire shall not be quenched.'" But it is not decisive; for the words quoted may be from the Septuagint version of Isa. lxvi. 24, to which passage, indeed, Justin's words have the closer resemblance, as will be evident from the following comparison:

Isa. lxvi. 24: Ὁ γὰρ σκώληξ αὐτῶν οὐ τελευτήσει, καὶ τὸ πῦρ αὐτῶν οὐ σβεσθήσεται.

Mark ix. 44, 46, 48: Ὅπου ὁ σκώληξ αὐτῶν οὐ τελευτᾷ καὶ τὸ πῦρ οὐ σβέννυται.

Justin Apol. ii. p. 87: Ὁ σκώληξ αὐτῶν οὐ παυθήσεται καὶ τὸ πῦρ αὐτῶν οὐ σβεσθήσεται.

But the following passage is decisive, for it contains a notice peculiar to Mark: "And the statement that he [Christ] changed the name of Peter, one of his apostles, and its having been written in his memoirs; and also that he changed the name of two other brethren, sons of Zebedee, to that of Boanerges, which signifies sons of thunder."¹ The notice respecting the epithet "Boanerges," as given to the two sons of Zebedee, is found only in Mark iii. 17.

The following passage cannot be regarded otherwise than as a free quotation from John iii. 3-5: "For Christ said, except ye be born again, ye shall by no means enter into the kingdom of heaven. But that it is impossible that they who have once been born should enter into the wombs of those who bore them is manifest to all."* To affirm that a passage so peculiar as this was borrowed by both Justin and the evangelist John from a common tradition, is to substitute a very improbable for a very natural explanation. Besides, Justin uses phrases peculiar to John, calling our Saviour "the Word of God," "the Word made flesh," and affirming that "he was in a peculiar sense begotten the only Son of God," "an only-begotten One to the Father of all things, being in a peculiar sense begotten of him as word and power, and afterwards made man through the virgin"; and calling him "the good rock that sends forth (literally, causes to bubble forth, compare John iv. 14) living waters into the hearts of those who through him have loved the Father of all things, and that gives to all who will the water of life to drink."²

NOTE C.

References of Papias and the Epistle to Diognetus.

Papias's account of Mark's Gospel is as follows: "Mark, having become the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately what things he remem-

¹ Apol. ii. v. 333. ² Apol. i. 61. * See in Kirchhofer's *Quellensammlung*.

bered; not indeed as recording in order the things spoken or done by Christ. For he was not a hearer or follower of the Lord; but afterwards" — after the Lord's ascension — "of Peter, who imparted [to the people] his teachings as occasion required, but not as making an orderly narrative of the Lord's words. Mark, then, committed no error in thus writing some things as he remembered them. For he was careful of one thing, to omit nothing of the things he heard, and not to repeat anything among them incorrectly."¹ These words of Papias are not very definite, but the fair interpretation of them seems to be that Mark composed his Gospel from materials furnished by the preaching of Peter, who imparted to the people his instructions as occasion required. We need not press the words "some things" and "not in order" (*οὐ μὲν τοι τάξει*), as if Papias intended to say that Mark's Gospel was only a loose collection of a few narratives without connection or arrangement. He meant simply to say that it was not exhaustive, and that he did not restrict himself to the chronological order of events.

The author of the epistle to Diognetus sees in Judaism no divine element, and wholly ignores its relation to Christianity; for the last two sections of the epistle are admitted to be spurious. In this grave error he approaches to the position of Marcion and the Gnostics; yet the epistle contains none of the peculiar tenets of Gnosticism. It is not by direct quotation, but rather by his allusions, that he betrays an acquaintance with the Gospel of John and the Epistles of Paul also. Thus he says: "He who is truly the Almighty, and the Creator of all things, and the invisible God, himself founded from heaven among men and established in their hearts the truth, and the holy and incomprehensible Word, not sending to men, as one might naturally suppose, some minister or messenger or some ruler of those that manage earthly matters, or some one of those entrusted with the administration of affairs in the heavens; but the very Artificer and Maker of the universe, by whom he created the heavens, by whom he enclosed the sea within its proper bounds, whose mysteries [hidden laws] all the elements faithfully observe, from whom the sun has received to keep the measures of his daily courses, whose command to shine by night the moon obeys, whom the stars obey that follow the course of the moon, by whom all things are disposed and limited and subjected, the heavens and the things in the heavens, the earth and the things in the earth, the sea and the things in the sea, fire, air, the deep, the things above, the things beneath, and the things midway. This one [this Word, mentioned above] he sent to men," etc.² And again: "Having formed a great and ineffable conception [the plan of man's redemption] he communicated this to his only Son.³ As long, therefore, as he kept secret his wise counsel, he seemed to neglect and disregard us. But when he revealed by his beloved Son⁴ and

¹ Eusebius's Hist. Eccl. iii. 39.

² ταύτην ἐκουάσατο μόνη τῆ παιδί.

³ Epistle, § 7.

⁴ διὰ τοῦ ἀγαπητοῦ παιδός.

made manifest the things which were prepared from the beginning, he gave at the same time all things to us," etc.¹ "He himself gave his own Son a ransom for us, the Holy for the unholy," etc.² "For God loved men for whose sake he made the world, to whom he subjected all things in the earth, to whom he gave reason, to whom mind, to whom alone he gave the privilege of looking upward to himself, whom he formed after his own image, to whom he sent his only-begotten Son,³ to whom he promised the kingdom in heaven, and will give it to those that love him."⁴

If the former passages (with the exception of the term "word" as applied to the Son of God) remind us as much of Paul's Epistles as of John's Gospel, this last contains an expression peculiar to the latter.

NOTE D.

Citations of the Apostolic Fathers.

Clement of Rome is the earliest among these. Many among the church Fathers identify him with the Clement mentioned by the apostle, Phil. iv. 3. But this seems to be nothing more than conjecture without valid foundation. The question of his relation to the church of Rome, of which he is represented to have been one of the early bishops, need not be discussed here. Of the numerous writings ascribed to him, the great mass is acknowledged to be spurious. But the first of the two Epistles to the Corinthians that bear his name is generally admitted to be genuine. From its contents we infer that it was written shortly after some persecution (chap. 1), which Grabe, Hefele, and others suppose to have been that under Nero; Lardner, Cotelerius, and others, that under Domitian. Upon the former supposition it was written about A.D. 68 — a supposition apparently favored by the way in which the author refers to the temple and service at Jerusalem as still in existence (chaps. 40, 41); according to the latter, about A.D. 96 or 97. Clement frequently refers to the Epistles of Paul, and especially the Epistle to the Hebrews. Of his references to the synoptical Gospels the following are examples:

"For thus he [the Lord Jesus] said: Be merciful, that ye may obtain mercy; forgive, that ye may be forgiven; as ye do, so shall it be done to you; as ye give, so shall it be given to you; as ye judge, so shall ye receive judgment; as ye are kind, so shall ye receive kindness; with what measure ye measure, with that shall it be measured to you."⁵

"Remember the words of Jesus our Lord, for he said: Woe unto that man; it were good for him that he had not been born, rather than that he should offend one of my elect. It were better that a millstone should be

¹ Epistle, § 8.

² πρὸς οὓς ἀπέστειλε τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ τὸν μονογενῆ.

³ Epistle to the Corinthians, chap. 13

² Epistle, § 9.

⁴ Epistle, § 10.

placed around him [that is around his neck] and that he should be plunged into the sea, than that he should offend one of my little ones."¹

Since the Epistle of Clement is about as old as the fourth Gospel, we cannot expect to find in it any allusions to that Gospel.

Ignatius was bishop of Antioch, and suffered martyrdom A.D. 107, or according to some accounts 116. We give from those of his epistles which are generally received as genuine² the following selection :

"Be wise as the serpent in all things and harmless as a dove."³

"For what is a man profited if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"⁴

The other passages may be seen in Lardner, Kirchofer's *Quellensammlung*, etc. Of the passages which have been supposed to contain allusions to the fourth Gospel we give the following: "He [Christ] is the door of the Father, by which enter in Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and the prophets and the apostles and the church."⁵

"I desire the bread of God, the heavenly bread, the bread of life; which is the flesh of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was afterwards made of the seed of David. And I desire the drink of God, his blood, which is incorruptible love and perennial life."⁶

Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, was a disciple of the apostle John. He suffered martyrdom about A.D. 166. Of his writings only one short epistle remains to us, addressed to the Philippians. This abounds in references to the books of the New Testament, especially the Epistles of Paul. Of his quotations from the Gospel of Matthew the following are specimens :

"But remember the things which the Lord said in his teaching: Judge not, that ye be not judged; forgive, and it shall be forgiven to you; be merciful, that ye may obtain mercy; with what measure ye measure, it shall be measured back to you. And: Blessed are the poor and those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."⁷

"As the Lord said: The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."⁸

The following testimony for the fourth Gospel, though indirect, is decisive: "For every one who does not confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is antichrist,"⁹ a manifest quotation from 1 John iv. 3. But that the Gos-

¹ Epistle to the Corinthians, chap. 46.

² Of which there is a longer and a shorter recension, the former generally admitted to be interpolated.

³ Epistle to Polycarp, chap. 2.

⁴ Epistle to the Romans, chap. 7. On this passage Kirchofer remarks: "The old translation omits it; on which ground Grabe regards it as an addition."

⁵ To the Philadelphians, chap. 9.

⁶ To the Romans, chap. 7, compared with John vi. 32-65.

⁷ Epistle to the Philippians, chap. 2.

⁸ Epistle to the Philippians, chap. 7.

⁹ Epistle to the Philippians, chap. 7.

pel of John and this first Epistle both proceeded from the same author, is an acknowledged fact.

There is an epistle current under the name of *Barnabas*, of which until 1859 the first four chapters were known only through the medium of a poor Latin version. But the Codex Sinaiticus, discovered by Tischendorf in that year, contains the entire epistle in the original Greek. That the author was Barnabas, the companion of Paul, may well be denied. But the composition of the epistle is assigned, with probability, to the beginning of the second century. "Clement of Alexandria at the end of the second century reckoned it as a part of holy scripture."¹ In this epistle occur the following remarkable words: "Let us take care that we be not of those of whom it is written that many were called but few chosen" — a plain reference to Matt. xx. 16; xxii. 14, and that as scripture; for the form of quotation, "as it is written," is employed by the writers of the New Testament only in citations from scripture.

ARTICLE IV.

THE NATURAL THEOLOGY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

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No. V.

EXCHANGE AND CURRENCY.

ONE of the striking features of man is the multiplicity of his desires. There is truly no limit to them. The increase in the number and kinds of internal impulses, when human life is compared with any form of brute life, is very great. Alike significant is the fact of the very limited ability of each individual to gratify these wishes. The circle of attainment is expanded in man to dimensions of which we have no previous prophecy, while the direct organic means of acquisition — the physical weapons of offence and defence and nutrition — seem rather to have fallen away than to have been enlarged.

The most rapacious hunger of the brute is simple in its claims, easily lapses into entire satiety, and comes to the

¹ Tischendorf, Sinaitic Manuscript, chap. 4, where the reader may see this matter discussed at some length.