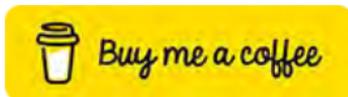


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statements, whereas the Cistercian has founded himself rather upon concrete instances. In addition to the taunt with which the Dialogue ends, we may notice the quotation again from S. Bernard *Epist.* i 11,¹ with its keen personal edge: 'If salvation (i. e. the state of *salus*) consists in fine clothing and rich banquets, rather than in plain food and modest attire, why do I delay here (at Clairvaux) and not follow you (to Cluny)?' To the Cistercian St Bernard is a revered intimate; to the Cluniac he is but a distinguished stranger.

WATKIN WILLIAMS.

THE CONCLUSION OF THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO SAINT MARK

THE last twelve verses of the received text of the Gospel according to St Mark are missing in $\aleph B$, the old Syriac, codex *a*. Codex *k* gives an alternative ending, which is also included in four later Greek uncial MSS. It is universally agreed, on grounds of attestation, style, and content, that neither the last twelve verses of the received text, nor the alternative ending, have any claim to be part of the original Gospel according to Mark. Mark's book ends for us at v. 8: 'and [the women] came out and fled from the tomb; for trembling and amazement held them; and they said nothing to any man, for they were afraid.' This is a very abrupt conclusion to the Gospel, and many scholars are inclined to conjecture that a further paragraph recounting at the least the appearance of the risen Jesus to the disciples in Galilee, which the angel predicts in v. 7, has disappeared. The primary purpose of this note is to argue that the present text renders it very improbable that the genuine Gospel was ever longer than it now is. The argument is not entirely novel, and the conclusion is in the main that of Wellhausen and E. Meyer. But the argument has not, to my knowledge, been stated quite in the form which it has taken in my own mind.

Before submitting my main point, I will briefly notice the hypotheses which have been framed to account for the supposed incompleteness of the Gospel.

It has been suggested that the author died before completing his work. That, of course, is possible. But that the writer of a comparatively short book like this should have been cut off before writing the last few lines would be a strange coincidence. The chances against it are overwhelming.

¹ *Ibid.* iii 33.

Another theory is that a longer text was mutilated of set purpose. But it is hard to imagine what the purpose could have been. There is every probability that Matthew and Luke knew no more of Mark than we do. The mutilation was therefore early in date, and this decreases the probability that it would be due, as has been suggested, to difficulties in harmonizing the narrative with other received traditions. Moreover, the other Gospels themselves testify how little the early readers of the Gospels were inclined to stumble at discrepancies. Professor Kirsopp Lake suggested that the motive for the mutilation was doctrinal: 'It certainly is a hypothesis which explains the facts if we suppose that the end of Mark contained an account of an appearance in Galilee of the Risen Lord in a form which was not that of flesh and blood.'¹ But a Marcan narrative with such a speculative interest behind it would be quite out of keeping with the general character of the Gospel. A Marcan vision of an appearance of Jesus might, like the Matthaean, have failed to emphasize the physical properties of the risen body, but that it should have been concerned to establish negatively that the appearance was *not* bodily, seems wholly improbable.

A more attractive suggestion is that the mutilation was accidental. But such mutilation of a Gospel is not easy to account for. Once the book was in circulation, the conclusion would be known and a defective copy could be completed without difficulty. And there would be an overwhelming interest in a restoration of the complete text at this crucial point. It would seem better, therefore, to push back the supposed mutilation to the very beginning of the book's history. But the earlier we suppose the mutilation to have taken place, the greater the likelihood that the author was himself within reach to supply what was wanting.

These general considerations, though not entirely conclusive, appear to be weighty enough to discourage resort to the conjecture that the text is incomplete, unless we are compelled to do so by the document itself.

I intend to suggest at the conclusion of this note that when the second Gospel is set against the background of the traditions which may be supposed to lie behind it, the abruptness of the conclusion is less remarkable than it appears at first sight. I will now state the case for thinking that the Gospel was never longer than it now is.

It is an observation familiar to critics that the Marcan narrative shews a strange incoherence. At v. 7 the angel charges the women with a plain message to the disciples: 'but go, tell his disciples and Peter, He goes before you into Galilee; there ye shall see him, as he said to you.' In the next verse we read that the women left the tomb, and said nothing to any man, for they were afraid. When once it has been

¹ *Resurrection of Jesus Christ* (1907) p. 73.

pointed out, this juxtaposition of the angel's message and the women's silence is a very startling phenomenon, but it is possible to read the Marcan story again and again without remarking it. The reason is that in v. 7 our whole attention is concentrated upon the message and the promise which the angel brings: Jesus is risen; the disciples are to see him in Galilee. In v. 8 our whole attention is occupied by the awestruck women. 'They said nothing to anybody'; but this was not because they were unmindful of the angel's words: 'fear and trembling held them, and they said nothing to anybody, for they were afraid.' We have forgotten by now that the angel's news had in part been couched in the form of a message to a definite group of persons. There is incoherence in the Marcan narrative—significant incoherence—but it is latent. So long as we stop at v. 8 it does not really matter. But, on the theory of the lost conclusion, how are we to proceed? The latent incoherence will at once become intolerable. For we must suppose one of two things: either the lost conclusion was continuous with the story of the women, or else it made a fresh start with the disciples and their vision of the Lord in Galilee. It is hard to combine either supposition with verses 7 and 8 of chapter xvi. For v. 8 has effectively dismissed the women from further immediate participation in events, while v. 7 urgently demands their intervention.

In the new commentary on the Bible, edited by Dr Gore, Professor C. H. Turner comments a conjectural reconstruction of the supposed lost conclusion. Mark, he thinks, may have gone on to relate that Jesus appeared to the women and quieted their fears; that the women then carried the angel's message to the disciples; that Jesus appeared to Peter—possibly to the eleven as well—in Jerusalem; and that, lastly, the eleven in company with others—the 'five hundred brethren' of 1 Cor. xv—beheld the Lord in Galilee. Professor Turner's conjecture is perhaps as good as any, if we begin by thinking it probable that the supposed end of Mark contained the main threads of all the other traditions. But if we do not rate this probability high, his conjecture is not likely to commend itself. Particularly difficult is the suggested identification of the appearance to the disciples in Galilee implied in Mark xvi 7, with the appearance to 'above 500 brethren'. But there is another objection, which more nearly concerns the argument of this note. Professor Turner's conjecture requires us to give a more definite meaning to the words *οὐδενὶ οὐδὲν εἶπαν* than the words naturally suggest. We have to contrast the behaviour of the women before the conjectural appearance of Jesus with their behaviour after: they did not deliver the message at once because they were frightened, but when they had been reassured, they did as they had been bidden. But the words *οὐδενὶ οὐδὲν εἶπαν* ought to mean, 'they kept their experience to them-

elves', 'they said nothing to anybody about what they had seen and heard'; not 'they did not deliver the message'. In other words, Professor Turner's reconstruction is made to hinge upon a seeming discrepancy which is discerned by the critical reader in the Marcan narrative, but which is not presented as a discrepancy by the narrator.

If the narrative of the women at the tomb is to be linked up with narratives of the appearances, it is essential that the women should deliver the message. Both Matthew and Luke have made the connexion, and they have both done it, as they could hardly avoid doing it, by suppressing the tell-tale words, 'they said nothing to anybody', and substituting the direct statement that the women carried the message or the news to the Apostles—as Mark xvi 7 leads us to expect that they would.¹ If Mark made the connexion in narrative, it can only have been by some roundabout way like that conjectured by Professor Turner. And this for the reason I have already given seems unlikely.

The other alternative is to suppose that Mark broke off from the proceedings of the women, and made a fresh start with the journey of the disciples to Galilee and their vision of the Lord. One form of this solution was favoured by Professor Kirsopp Lake in his book on the Resurrection, from which I have already quoted. He there wrote (p. 75): 'All the hints which can be gathered from Mark point to the probability that the lost conclusion implied a return to Galilee by the panic-stricken disciples, followed by an appearance of the Risen Lord to St Peter and to the others. This view has the advantage that it not merely agrees with, but explains, the silence of the women, which is perfectly intelligible, if the disciples, to whom they would naturally have narrated their experience, were not within reach.' Whatever may be said for or against this as a conjectural reconstruction of the original circumstances, as a conjectural reconstruction of the supposed lost end of Mark—the only question with which we are here concerned—it is open to one decisive objection. The angel, on this theory, gives a message to the women which it was impossible for them to deliver. This ought not to be, and we may securely assume that it was not so. This particular objection would not arise if we supposed that the disciples were represented as being still in Jerusalem on Easter Day. But after v. 7 is it likely that Mark narrated the journey of the disciples to Galilee and the appearance of the Lord without allusion to the words of the angel at the tomb? Yet how could he have done this without making the women the bearers of the angel's message?

¹ So also *k* which for Mk. xvi 8 reads *illae autem cum exirent a monumento fugerunt, tenebat enim illas timor et pavor propter timorem*, and then proceeds to the 'shorter ending': *Omnia autem quaecumque praecepta erant et (lege eis) qui cum puero (lege Petro) erant breviter exposuerunt.*

It is worth while at this point to call attention to the exact nature of the argument which is here put forward. It is not denied that a considerable number of conceivable conclusions to the Gospel might be devised. But it is argued that any conceivable conclusion is faced with the alternatives either of leaving the angel's message hanging in the air, or else of introducing at some point a cumbersome explanation as to why the message was not delivered. The latter alternative would involve the introduction of a *motif* which is not suggested by Mark, which has left no trace in our existing traditions, and which seems unlikely in itself. The former alternative is obviously unsatisfactory.

Internal evidence, therefore, as well as external probability, seems to point to the conclusion that the Marcan narrative never went beyond the words *ἐφοβούντο γάρ*.

But, it is urged, it is inconceivable that the evangelist should have ended his Gospel with this abrupt sentence.¹ Not necessarily. Our judgement will depend upon the opinion which we entertain as to the manner of the making of Mark's Gospel. If we think of the evangelist as sitting to write more or less *de novo*, collecting information on his own account, and putting into literary form for the first time the personal reminiscences of Peter and others, then no doubt we shall say the ending is impossible, and it will be natural to conjecture that something has been lost. But the case is altered if we suppose that Mark's work was in the main that of a compiler and editor of traditional material. On this view the originality of Mark's Gospel lies rather in its structure than in its content. We may conjecture that the earliest readers of the Gospel would find little that was not already current. But they would find the familiar stories of the ministry and the familiar traditions of the crucifixion and of its sequel arranged for the first time in a definitive manner as a consecutive narrative. Taking this view of the Marcan Gospel as a working hypothesis, we shall reckon with the probability that different sections of the Gospel have had their own history prior to their incorporation in Mark. In the main the particular narrative is the unit. It will be reasonable to allow for a certain amount of editing and co-ordination on the part of Mark, but on the whole it is likely that the traditional form of a given section has been faithfully preserved. Let us now reconsider the conclusion of St Mark's Gospel. Literally it is true that Mark ends his work with the abrupt sentence : *ἐφοβούντο γάρ*. But that is the wrong way to state the case. Mark ends his Gospel with the story of the burial of Jesus and the empty tomb. And it is in every way a proper ending. We may fairly suppose

¹ The sentence itself, as has often been pointed out, is fully in keeping with Marcan style. Cf. ix 6 *οὐ γὰρ ἤδει τί ἀποκριθῆ, ἔκφοβοι γὰρ ἐγένοντο*, and for the absolute use of *φοβῆσθαι*, x 32 *οἱ δὲ ἀκολουθοῦντες ἐφοβούντο*.

that the narrative of the women at the tomb was already widely known—though possibly it had but recently come into circulation—and it is likely that it had already assumed more or less definitely the literary form which Mark has preserved. Our difficulty is now on the way to disappear, for as the paragraph is a good end to the Gospel, so is Mark xvi 8 a good end to the paragraph. ‘The women fled from the tomb, and said nothing to any one, for they were afraid.’ It was not superfluous to add this, for it explained what needed explanation. All the Church knew that Jesus after his resurrection had appeared to Kephas, then to the twelve. That was the foundation on which faith in the resurrection had been built. The story of the women at the empty tomb was a welcome corroboration of the faith, but there was a felt need to explain how it came about that this new tradition had not won its way from the first. The last words of the story explain how this came to be. ‘The women fled from the tomb, for trembling and amazement held them, and they said nothing to anybody, for they were afraid.’

St Mark has preferred not to incorporate a narrative account of the appearance to Peter and to the twelve. Instead he has expanded the words of the angel at the tomb by introducing a message to the disciples that they are to go to Galilee, where Jesus will appear to them as he had promised that he would. Following Wellhausen and E. Meyer, we may conjecture that v. 7 is an interpolation—not, however, an interpolation into Mark or, as Wellhausen preferred to think, into an Urmarcus, but, with E. Meyer, interpolation by Mark into his source. This naïve addition proved to be a momentous modification of the tradition. As Wellhausen observes, it represents the beginning of the literary connexion of the story of the empty tomb with the stories of the appearances. When the connexion was fully carried out by the later evangelists, a new link was necessary: the report of the women to the disciples. The absence of that link in Mark is an indication that in his Gospel no narrative followed. Mark had not seen the confusion which his interpolation has caused—a confusion which must have become at once apparent had he prolonged his tale.

J. M. CREED.

THE PRAETORIUM OF PILATE

It appears safe to suppose with Schürer (*History of the Jewish People*, Engl. transl., div. 1, vol. 2, p. 55) that ‘in Jerusalem there was stationed only one cohort’. This is the *τάγμα* spoken of by Josephus in his *Jewish War* bk. 5 ch. 5 § 8, as always stationed in the Antonia. He cannot mean a legion, and Schürer (*ibid.*, p. 52) also