

THE  
BIBLIOTHECA SACRA.

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ARTICLE I.

THE LETTERS OF JUNIUS AND THE EPISTLE  
TO THE HEBREWS:

A COMPARATIVE STUDY IN HIGHER CRITICISM.

BY MR. I. WOODBRIDGE RILEY, M. A.

I.

AFTER baffling three or four generations of critics, the Letters of Junius have been allowed to take rank among English classics under a pseudonym. Like the autobiography of a certain famous statesman, "the author has not yet been announced"; and this in spite of a continuous stream of conjectural literature coming down from the last century concerning the "Great Unknown." "Junius Rumours," "Another Glance at Junius," "Junius Unmasked," "The Identity of Junius with a Living Character Established"—these and similar titles serve to mark the ebb and flow of the tide of speculation. Such pamphlets, essays, and even elaborate works may be considered mere literary driftwood; they yet testify to the force of an unsatisfied critical curiosity. The question still remains: Who wrote that series of Letters on political affairs which appeared in a London newspaper a decade before the American Revolution? They may be at present

of little intrinsic interest, except for their treatment of the Freedom of the Press, and the Discontents in the Colonies, but at the time they created no small stir in the literary and political world. They were eulogized by Dr. Johnson, and quoted with admiration by Edmund Burke. Of the "invisible state satirist," the latter said: "Kings, Lords, and Commons are but the sport of his fury. Were he a member of this House, what might not be expected from his knowledge, his firmness and integrity? He would easily be known by his contempt of all danger, by his pointed penetration and activity."

The attention paid to these philippics and the celebrity they acquired were not due so much to their bold and pungent style, as to the air of mystery thrown over them by the author himself. Threescore of the Letters, collected in book form, were prefaced by this tantalizing statement: "I am the sole depository of my own secret, and it shall perish with me." On the other hand, the interest arising from concealment was increased by a certain self-disclosure enveloped in the cloud of a fictitious name. Junius was no dim figure. In his forceful vindication of public rights against an obstinate king and a distracted Parliament, he appeared to High Whigs "the very genius of English liberty," and his book became "almost a sort of Bible or inspired exposition of popular principles." Moreover, to the Tories, Junius was no indefinite personality; he was too dangerous to be a shadow. Somehow the "Terrible Unknown" obtained a great quantity of secret intelligence, which he boldly applied in exposing political wrongs. Thus Junius' sources of information became an added cause of interest to his contemporaries. Who was this man so intimate with the inner circle of the court, so familiar with the public offices of government, that he could even anticipate ministerial manœuvres?

Given then a confession which was only a concealment,

a character of public champion, and a surprising acquaintance with state secrets, it was no wonder that there at once arose a host of claimants to the name of "Junius." When but twenty-two out of the sixty-nine Letters were published, one of the Opposition wrote: "Various have been the conjectures formed on the question 'Who is Junius'? I have heard at least twenty persons named, whom suspicion points the finger at. Nay, I have been assured, at different times, that each of them was the author in question." Another contemporary, Wilkes, called this "the most important secret of our times." It was not surprising that a writer's own age exaggerated his importance: it was surprising that the next generation kept up an interest in Junius. It was a literary example of the Man with the Iron Mask. Up to 1832, at least fifteen complete volumes were written on the Junius enigma. And even in a third generation speculation did not cease. In the standard edition of 1855 no less than thirty-seven persons are enumerated, to whom the authorship has been attributed; while at present there are over fifty different claimants.

No less striking than the growth in numbers is the variety of individuals included in this list. There are to be found orators and private secretaries, bishops and army officers, dukes and treasury clerks. Even the joint authorship of a man and woman, Lord and Lady Temple, has been suggested, and as a last absurdity General Charles Lee gravely put himself forward as "Junius Americanus." Lee was reported to have asserted that Lord Chatham was not the author, but the secret remained solely with himself, and would forever remain with him. When questioned as to this avowal, he answered: "I have unguardedly committed myself, and it would be but folly to deny to you that I am the author."

This case of the American pretender may be dwelt upon, for it gives a first clue out of the wilderness of candidates.

Along with the reason for the immense quantity of claims, it exhibits the fallacy of judgment, which has allowed their accumulation. The reason was that love of notoriety led to numberless so-called confessions of authorship, and the fallacy that these confessions, whether direct, tacit, or implied, were accepted as true by blind partisans in their attempts to establish the claims of this or that favorite to the anonymous publication. Now to reverse such procedure is to gain a principle of rejection. Thus among the candidates to be excluded are the Duke of Buckingham and Lord Grenville, who both declared they knew the author, but never gave any definite information on the subject.

In our first glance at the mass of external evidence, we may discard in a lump contemporary statements unless of a negative cast. Suspicion is thus thrown on the modern favorite for the place, Sir Philip Francis, because he replied in a manner variously interpreted, at any rate ambiguous. On the other hand, the contemporary favorite, Edmund Burke, was the only person who gave a prompt and decided answer. Charged with being Junius, he denied it to Dr. Johnson, and to Dean Morley he said, "I could not write like Junius; and if I could, I would not."

Another common test of Junian authorship is the quality of style. In applying this, caution must be observed. To pick out pages of similar words between Junius and this or that Whig writer is to make a list of party mottoes, and nothing more. But to examine the writings, not as if they were corresponding pages of two dictionaries, but for the sustained quality of diction, the result is different. Another effective means is given, of reducing the sum total of aspirants. From their surviving writings at least thirty candidates are proven incapable of the "grand style" of the Letters. It is hard to match the rhythmical periods, the stately and polished eloquence, of the "Great Unknown," in

the literary remains of even the men of distinction of his day. Out of the whole list it is held that Sir Philip Francis, Lords Sackville and Chatham, Wilkes, Tooke, and Burke are the only persons that can be credited with sufficient mental power to have produced the Letters, and out of this limited number the last is the most likely candidate. As Dr. Johnson told Boswell: "I should have believed Burke to be Junius, because I know no man but Burke who is capable of writing these Letters."<sup>1</sup> This judgment was based on Burke's power of assuming or disguising style, as shown in his "Vindication of Natural Society," but it ran counter to Burke's own emphatic denial of Junian authorship.

We are now thrown forward to another means of lessening the number of claimants. It is not because of their literary style or their personal confessions, but from a certain coincidence in career, that five most plausible candidates have been set up. It was because they were clerks in some ministerial department, or secretaries to some eminent statesman, and so had facilities for gaining Junius' prompt and minute information on important state affairs. Yet this criterion has its corresponding fallacy. Because this or that man was familiar with the same events, knew the same persons, in general lived the same life,—all this is not to make him a Junius, but simply a member of the same party. So this argument from similarity of situation, instead of narrowing the field of inquiry, leads back to that original wilderness of candidates, for there is scarcely a Whig of prominence who may not be proved by this sort of reasoning to be Junius.

In examining the three captions,—personal confessions, similarity of style, and coincidence in career,—we have gained three means of judging the final claims to the authorship of the Letters. Now to apply them to the given

<sup>1</sup> Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, iv. 344.

half-dozen favorites is at once to discover that only one of these fulfills all three conditions. Running through the list: Lord George Sackville was early accused of being Junius, and does not appear to have directly denied the charge. Also through his official position he had unique sources of political knowledge such as Junius possessed; yet in one thing is he lacking,—in respect to his style there is nothing to go by. As with Lord Sackville, so with Lord Chatham, there is the same want in each and for the same general reason, the fact that there was scarcely one man in the noble houses of that day who has left any record of his literary workmanship. And even Burke meets but two out of three qualifications. He had the opportunities of the peer and the ability of the commoner; for he was acquainted with all the great characters of the day, and in his speeches employed every brilliant metaphor and striking figure used by Junius. Burke's case would be positive, except for one thing: his confession was an emphatic denial.

We have thus far sought to clear the ground in the search for the real Junius, by the principle of exclusion, rejecting doubtful claimants and narrowing the inquiry to the most probable. But after negation comes affirmation. By applying the three marks of authorship to men who but partially fulfill the conditions, it is shown that the proof, if there is a proof, must be circumstantial and composite. The successful candidate for Junian honors must have had a career which ran parallel with that of Junius; his literary style must show, not only verbal coincidences, but sustained superiority of diction, and he himself must have uttered such a confession that suspicion is pointed to him as the author. In our limited list one candidate remains. It is Sir Philip Francis who is said to fulfill all these requirements, and this is the evidence, in order:—

As to confession, Francis makes none directly; he him-

self writes like one of the general public about Junius: "Junius is not known, and that circumstance is perhaps as curious as any of his writings. I have always suspected Burke, but whoever he is, it is impossible he can ever discover himself." While this is hardly more satisfactory than the original statement of secrecy, prefacing the first edition of the Letters, yet De Quincey, perhaps the most decided of the Franciscans, sees an assertion in the very ambiguity of the denial. He points out that it was "most jesuitically adapted to convey an impression at variance with the strict construction, which lurks in the literary wording."

The argument for style likewise holds good for Francis. It is contended, and rightly, that a man cannot feign a style except by a very brief effort, least of all a weaker the style of a stronger; but here is a writer with brains enough for a sustained effort. The matter has thus been presented by an admirer of Sir Philip: "Note the extraordinary coincidences between the Letters of Junius and the general ability and eloquence of Francis' speeches; the boldness and even fierceness of tone, the studied force and energy of the diction, the pointed and epigrammatic cast of style, the concise and frequent metaphors and the mixture of the language of business and affairs with a certain scholastic elegance and elaborate sarcasm."

Again, coincidence in career points to Francis. Of course this has been carried to extremes. Attempts have been made to show minute correspondence of dates and incidents in the life of Francis, with the date and incidents in the publication of the Letters. It is alleged that the papers of Francis show that his absences from London corresponded with the silence of Junius. Obviously such reasoning is precarious: a single missing link destroys the chain of evidence. The opponents of the Franciscan theory have but to prove an alibi,—that on only one occasion

Francis was too far from London for the publication of a certain particular letter,—and the case, from this side, falls to the ground. For all that, there remain many surprising coincidences in career and situation between the anonymous writer and the eminent statesman. Here are the basal arguments in favor of the title of Sir Philip Francis: “Junius shows an acquaintance with the forms of the Secretary of State’s office, and with the business of the War Office; Francis began life as a clerk in the Secretary of State’s office, and was a clerk in the War Office at the time of the appearance of the Letters. Junius shows a minute acquaintance with the private life of statesmen and with secret political manœuvres; Francis had means of access to such knowledge through his father, as well as through other channels.”

At this point it is possible to summarize the case thus: There are three requisites which must be found in the real Junius; other personages fail in some important particular, but in Francis there is a culmination of the different requisites in one man. And now to these three marks of authorship we may add a fourth, viz. psychological resemblance, or resemblance in both temperament and opinions. The former has been put as follows by an impartial critic: “Francis, whether Junius or not, was a man of great ability and unflagging industry, arrogant and vindictive in the extreme; unscrupulous in gratifying his enmities by covert insinuations and false assertions, yet courageous in attacking great men; rigid and even pedantic in his adherence to a set of principles which had their generous side,—really scornful of meanness and corruption in others, and certainly doing much to vindicate the power of public opinion.”<sup>1</sup> This is the moral resemblance: the mental is no less close. Take as a crucial test their political opinions. On questions of either Colonial or Home government the two men might

<sup>1</sup>Leslie Stephen, *Dictionary of National Biography*, xx. 179.



have radically differed. Yet there is positive agreement between Junius and Francis on the subject of Parliamentary Reform; and as to the right of Great Britain to tax America, both were opposed to it. Junius said, "The right of taxing the colonies is a speculative right merely"; Francis said, "I rejoice that America resisted."

The evidence for Francis is now in. It is, therefore, time to retrace the steps made, and to put over against this positive testimony certain qualifications—to take the salient points in reverse order. As regards mental resemblance the proof stands; it cannot be offset by the fact of the same general agreement and sympathy between Junius and all other opposition men. Sackville and Chatham, Wilkes and Tooke, may have thought largely as did Junius on affairs of state. The point here is that Francis alone meets this, in addition to the other three qualifications. As for moral resemblance, the same holds true. Junius was vehement and combative in temperament; so was Francis—his unpopularity when appointed to office in India bears this out. In truth, life and Letters correspond. Moreover, the proof is strong from its very subtlety. It is claimed by experts that the handwriting of Junius is the handwriting of Francis, disguised by flourishes and embellishments. It is otherwise with the sentiments and opinions of this writer; he does not attempt to conceal his faults nor palliate his defects. Junius, whoever he may be, stands out a zealous, opinionated, hot-tempered partisan. In repeating the principle of combination, we find that psychological resemblance makes a decided count for Francis, provided only the other points hold true; e.g., a trustworthy confession, from the other side, might destroy this entire argument. Thus in a recent work entitled "Junius Revealed, by his Surviving Grandson, H. R. Francis" (1894), proof is sought by narrating various idiosyncrasies and anecdotes preserved in family tradition. But a reviewer of this vol-

ume has correctly objected, "The value of such opinion is only corroborative. It might be nullified at any moment by an authentic disclosure of the real identity of Junius." Moreover in the latest edition of "The Francis Letters" (1901), there is presented, among the evidences against the identification of Francis with Junius, "the discrepancy which exists between Francis's private relations with certain individuals, and the treatment of these persons by Junius."

In fine, any hypothesis of Junian composition is of necessity composite; it stands only as its different parts stand. In particular, the Franciscan theory is strong only as it is fourfold strong. We may take up, then, the other three points in favor of Francis, testing their strength by whatever can be set against them. In general it is internal evidence that first impels to skepticism; the Letters themselves—their statements, their date, their style—arouse certain questions of dissent. As to coincidence in career: In one place Junius says: "I am no lawyer by profession, nor do I pretend to be more deeply read than every English gentleman should be in the laws of his country." It will be said that this is a piece of rhetorical modesty; but strictly, can it be reconciled with the fact that but two years after this Francis was made a member of the Supreme Council in Bengal, an office of great legal importance? Next, as to quality of style and requisite literary ability, here is an apparent contradiction: When Francis was scarce thirty years old, Junius was famous. In other words, was he not too young to have composed the Letters which excited such intense public curiosity? Still the matter is not without parallel. Alexander Hamilton, as a mere undergraduate in Columbia College, wrote an anonymous pamphlet of such sterling merit as to be attributed to the president of the institution. This argument might be settled by analogy, unless there were a further consideration. Again does

the book itself furnish a cause for doubt. The style is the style of youth, the contents is not. The diction of Junius has pungency, vehemence, intrepidity, and power of invective; but his sentiments are apparently those of mature age. In 1771 Junius uses the phrase "after long experience of the world." Now at that time Francis was thirty-one years old. Granted that his experience, like his handwriting, was assumed for a purpose, the general suspicion remains that so young a man could not have held out for a generation as the Oracle of the British Constitution. Lastly, as regards personal confession: The ambiguity of Francis' statement has already been considered. It might be urged that in this Francis was consistent; as his handwriting was disguised and his knowledge of the world fictitious, so his denial of authorship was meant for something else. But the question of date again creates misgiving. Why was Francis' name not mentioned in connection with that of Junius until the next century? De Quincey has ingeniously pointed out that Francis was debarred from making the avowal by fear. The clerk in the War Office, having divulged state secrets, was restrained by a motive of perpetual secrecy. True, but from 1773 to 1813 (the time of the Letters and the time of Francis' disavowal) was long enough for such a condition to pass off. The faults of Junius were forgotten, his fame remained. The authorship of the Letters, instead of being a disgrace, was an honor. Witness the number of candidates and the fact that Francis' claims were pushed by his own relatives.

In attempting a final review, as we go backward we perceive that the positive arguments grow weaker, the negative stronger. Let us sum up the four points in favor of Francis: (1) Psychological resemblance is close. As the man writeth, so is he. The Letters of Junius, like the Diary of Samuel Pepys, is not a disguise, but a disclosure. (2) Coincidence in career is strong. The rank, situation,

and sources of knowledge to be deduced from the Letters of Junius are found in the life of Francis. Such statements as "I am no lawyer by profession, nor do I pretend to be more deeply read," etc., may be discounted as attempts at illusion to be expected from a pseudonymous writer. Here the character of the evidence changes, and significantly half way comes the balancing point in the case. (3) Style, as related to mental power, appears too mature for Francis. Dr. Johnson attributed the Letters to Burke—but Burke was twelve years older than Francis. (4) Confession of authorship is ambiguous and strangely delayed. What we may say in conclusion is this: Either the authorship remains an impenetrable mystery, or it belongs to one whose name was not mentioned in connection with it for many years subsequently.

## II.

If we could imagine the Junius question pushed forward some eighteen hundred years, we should probably find that the pretensions of Francis had settled into a fixed belief, an orthodox literary tenet. Yet the discerning critic of that later age—provided such an interest survived—would suspect that the problem was originally not so simple, but that in all likelihood, in the first stages of the controversy, there were several candidates in the field. To reverse this supposition, to apply it to the past and not the future, is to give the general rule that in the early ages there is great diversity of opinion as to the authorship of an anonymous work. Turning to sacred literature, on its face the Epistle to the Hebrews bears the marks of anonymity. Its superscription does not inform us of the writer,<sup>1</sup> nor does his name appear in the body of the book; while its position in the New Testament, after all the other Epistles, signifies the long hesitation of the ancient church as to its right to

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Revised Version, American Committee.

a place in the canon of Scripture. Now, although a great part of Christendom has assumed the Epistle to be Paul's, there was no such uniformity until the lapse of considerable time. The unqualified statements of mediæval writers as to apostolic authorship simply reproduce the testimony of their predecessors, just as present-day Franciscan theories are but vain repetitions of the dogmatic Macaulay.

Nevertheless, at a time long before the Middle Ages, the church father did not throw the weight of his authority solely on one side. Augustine (†430) in particular, did much to perpetuate the Pauline composition of the letter; he specifies Hebrews as if it were a fourteenth Pauline Epistle, and quotes it as the Apostle's in his sermons; but he also uses such indefinite phrases as "the Epistle which is written to the Hebrews," and "the Epistle which the majority say is Paul's, but some deny."

And Augustine's master is no less hesitant and doubtful. Jerome (†420) at times quotes from Hebrews, calling it Paul's, or the Apostle's, but frequently he speaks otherwise: "If any one is willing to receive the Epistle which has been written to the Hebrews under Paul's name," and "Paul the Apostle speaks, if any one admits the Epistle to the Hebrews."

From the beginning of the fifth century, Paul's claim was generally acknowledged in the West; before that time it was as generally disowned. As Jerome stands midway between the two periods, his mediating view may well stand for the transition of belief. He refers to current doubts, but he concludes thus as to the Epistle: "It makes no difference whose it is, since it belongs to an ecclesiastical man, and is read daily in the churches." It is unfortunate that those who went before were not so discerning, but confused canonicity with apostolicity, disregarded literary and doctrinal value because of the lack of an apostle's signature. It is not surprising that there is a lack of

early testimony in the Latin Church, and that the writings of the Apostolic Fathers, Clement, Ignatius, and Polycarp, are silent. A primitive age has other interests than critical questions. Still the second and third Christian centuries might be expected to contribute more to the problem than negation or meagre supposition. Nevertheless, it is a fact that there was no tradition in Italy, Gaul, or Proconsular Africa in favor of Paul until after the fourth century. Cyprian (†258) does not mention Hebrews, nor make any use of it. Tertullian (†240), denying the Pauline authorship, ascribed the letter to Barnabas. Irenæus (†202) did not attribute the Epistle to Paul, although he could have made effective use of any authentic apostolic writing in his work "Against Heretics." More significant is the testimony of the Muratorian Fragment (*c.* 170), which, like a table of contents in a first folio of Shakespeare, is the earliest extant attempt to give a formal list of those works to be considered valid. Yet the Fragment not only fails to mention this Epistle, but appears to censure it. After specifying the accepted letters, it adds: "There are many other letters (fabricated under the name of Paul) which cannot be received into the Catholic Church; for gall should not be mixed with honey."

The general rule that the earlier the age, the greater the uncertainty as to an anonymous work would appear to hold. But the question of the authorship of Hebrews is not so simple; ancient opinion fluctuates with time,—it likewise varies with place. Until Augustine, who was mainly instrumental in the change of Latin opinion, there was uncertainty in the West. It was not so everywhere. Greek Christian literature discloses a general acceptance of this Epistle in the Eastern Church. From the first generation of readers, the letter is there taken as apostolic. As might be expected from the seat of the most famous library of antiquity, the testimony of Alexandria is earliest and most

explicit. Pantænus (*c.* 175), founder of the Alexandrian catechetical school, believed Paul to be the author. Clement (†220) quotes the Epistle as Paul's, and at the same time attempts to account for the absence of the Apostle's name from the beginning on the ground of modesty. Thus the letter is taken as apostolic from the first generation of readers; in the next, Alexandrian belief appears on the surface to be uniform. Seven times does Origen (†254) cite the Epistle as Pauline, and it is also quoted by Dionysius (†270) without a sign of doubt; while still later Athanasius (†325) counts fourteen Epistles as Paul's. Subsequent to Eusebius, "Father of Church History," who records the foregoing records, this view became fixed. Cyril of Jerusalem (†389) and Chrysostom (†407) were both Paulinists.

So much may be said for Oriental tradition to the beginning of the fifth century. Now remembering that Hilary of Poitiers (†368) was the first writer in the West who unequivocally received the Epistle as Paul's, it might appear that patristic evidence was divided, that the traditions of the two branches of the church conflicted,—unless there were found a note of uncertainty even in the voice of the East. Jerome, foremost scholar of the West, used such phrases as: "The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews, or whomsoever's you suppose it to be"; "The Apostle Paul, or whatsoever other person wrote the Epistle." Equal incertitude appears in the words of the leading scholar of Alexandria. Origen in his notes on Hebrews concludes: "Who wrote the Epistle, God only knows certainly." At present we are not concerned with the number and variety of claimants to this writing, but with the conclusion that the external evidence, with its earlier doubts and scruples, points back to an anonymous author. In short, from the testimony of those nearest in time, the author of the Epistle is no certain, well-known writer like Paul.

Turning to the internal evidence, a first glance discloses

not merely the want of title to the letter, but at the same time the absence of the writer's name, which Paul never omits. And to these two marks of anonymity we may add a third: The author himself confesses he is not an apostle, but only one of those who received his gospel "from those who heard" (ii. 3). Contrast this acknowledgment of second-hand information with the repeated declarations of Paul of his personal experience as a direct witness of the truth. Let the book again speak for itself, and we come to the second test. The difference in style between this and the thirteen acknowledged Epistles of Paul was a commonplace of antiquity. Origen has thus expressed the matter: "The style of the Epistle has not that rudeness of speech which belongs to the Apostle, who confesses himself rude in speech. But the Epistle is purer Greek in the texture of its style, as every one will allow who is able to discern differences of diction."<sup>1</sup> At the very beginning of real biblical criticism, dissimilarity of style aroused the suspicions of the ecclesiastical scholar. Yet, to repeat a former distinction, neither verbal coincidences nor sustained quality of diction bring exact results, without certain additional tests. The writer is confessedly not a first hearer of the gospel, and may have been using merely the stock phrases of Christianity, for such would appear to be many of the so-called Pauline expressions. Linguistic parallels tend in either direction, for or against apostolic authorship; so does the sustained quality of style. Some would make Luke the compiler, because only the second half of the book of Acts can vie with our Epistle in purity of style. On the other hand, "periods regular and rounded, rhythm oratorical and smooth, full-toned expressions and poetic figures," can all be matched in the great Apostle's discourses on Charity and on the Resurrection (1 Cor. xiii. and xv.). Literary style, taken by itself, has long furnished a weapon

<sup>1</sup> Eusebius, H. E. vi. 25.



which cuts both ways: but there are supplementary tests which tend only one way. To state and illustrate certain more anti-Pauline suggestions: If the Apostle were writing to Hebrews, why should he "adopt a purer Greek and higher style of writing in an Epistle addressed to readers who were the worst judges of good Greek"?<sup>1</sup> Were an analogy here permitted, this would be as if Junius had addressed the most carefully penned of his letters, not to Englishmen, but to the French refugees to be found, in his day, in London. Again, if the Apostle were himself an Hebrew, why should his Old Testament quotations be taken from the Greek version of the LXX, and not from the original? This would be like finding that all the Homeric allusions in the Letters of Junius were taken from Pope's translation of the Iliad, and then asserting that Junius was some famous classical scholar like Dr. Johnson.

Thus far only two tests would appear to exclude Pauline authorship. The quality of style is adverse; so are the "confessions," whether of self or others. In brief, internal evidence, combined with early Western skepticism, outweighs the traditions of the Eastern Church. For these reasons there was a compromise in the earliest times, a theory that the thoughts of the Epistle are Paul's, the language and composition another's. It was from a place naturally fertile in such suggestions that this suggestion came: Clement of Alexandria asserts that Paul wrote the Epistle in the Hebrew tongue, and Luke translated it into Greek. Moreover, Origen of Alexandria gave fuller expression to the idea that Paul was not directly, but only mediately, the author: "I should give as my judgment that the sentiments are the Apostle's, but the language and composition belong to some one who repeated from memory the Apostle's teaching, and, as it were, expounded the things spoken by his master." Such a guess, in itself, is

<sup>1</sup> Davidson, *Old Test. Intro.*, 212.

not improbable. In the eighteenth century certain "Discourses on Art" came forth under the name of Sir Joshua Reynolds; the ideas were his, but the literary form was due to Edmund Burke. However, the ancient theory of an amanuensis fits only one of Origen's suppositions. The so-called Epistle of Clement of Rome resembles our Epistle least of any New Testament book. It is a venerable document, and perhaps for that reason, its literary complexion is as rude as the state of culture in the church of Rome at the end of the first century.

In the next place, to scrutinize Origen's alternate candidate: since purity of language and structure speak against Paul, then Luke, who was several years his companion and by descent more familiar with the Greek idiom, was well qualified to put his Jewish master's thoughts into their final shape. The third Evangelist as a follower of Paul and mediate author of Hebrews, would account for a letter with Grecian choice of expression and Hebrew elements of thought. But again the test of career, or birth and position in life, must be met. Turning to our Epistle, we find three qualifications of necessity to be found in the author. He must have been personally acquainted with his readers,—“I exhort you the more diligently to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner” (xiii. 19). He likewise must have been a disciple of the twelve apostles,—the gospel “which having at the first been spoken by the Lord, was confirmed unto us by them that heard” (ii. 3). Finally, the author must have been a Jew, and thus address his hearers as of the same race,—“God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers” (i. 1). Now how are these prerequisites fulfilled by Luke? If the Epistle is addressed to the Jewish Christians in Palestine, he had personal acquaintance with them, since he had accompanied Paul in his last journey to Jerusalem. For the same reason he could have enjoyed inter-

course with the Twelve. However, in the third requirement he is found wanting. The opening words of the book betray composition by a native Israelite; whereas Luke was of Grecian descent, and not of Jewish birth.

We are now thrown forward to another candidate of old, and one who was a favorite in the North African Church. A passage from Tertullian reads: "There is extant an Epistle of Barnabas addressed to the Hebrews, written by a man of such authority that Paul has ranked him with himself."<sup>1</sup> It needs only be suggested how Barnabas meets the demands of career which Luke only partially fulfilled. A single scriptural passage will show his qualifications: "And Joseph, who by the Apostles was surnamed Barnabas, a Levite, a man of Cyprus by race, having a field, sold it and brought the money, and laid it at the Apostles' feet" (Acts iv. 36). We have here in brief form the triple condition of career,—personal acquaintance with his audience, intimate connection with the Twelve, and lastly Jewish descent. We are now ready to examine another essential to be possessed by the author of Hebrews. The opinions set forth in the book form a further and more searching criterion. It is noticeable that the writing, which was so long on the borderland of canonicity, is one of decided peculiarity. Speaking generally, its teaching is throughout typical, symbolical, transcendental. It begins with a pæan on the sublimity of the heavenly Mediator; it continues with an exposition of the perfectness and eternity of his high priesthood; it ends with an admonition to that faith which is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." It is this last definition which gives the characteristic view-point of the author,—the contrast between the visible and the invisible world, the conception of the things of this earth as but faint copies of the things of heaven. Now, applied to ritual law and sacrificial wor-

<sup>1</sup>De Pudicitia, 20.

ship, this makes the Old Testament institutions to be symbols and prophecies of Christianity. The Holy Law itself is but "the example and shadow of heavenly things to come" (viii. 5). The Tabernacle is but a type of the "true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man" (viii. 2). And over this "greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands" (ix. 11), there is to be another and higher priest,—“the priest forever after the order of Melchizedek” (vi. 6). Without further reference to “the better covenant,” “better promises,” the New Jerusalem “whose builder and maker is God,”—it is clear that our author takes the carnal and transitory elements of the old dispensation, and sublimates and etherealizes them into types of the new.

Judging from these single selections as characteristic of the whole, what is the source of this peculiar speculative strain which runs through Hebrews? Paul occasionally typologizes the Old Testament, and once refers to the ancient ordinances as “a shadow of things to come” (Col. ii. 17), but in general he makes no such detailed application of the method of analogy. After all, there is only one other writer of the first century who carries this principle to such extreme. It was Philo of Alexandria, who was to that literary center what Emerson was to Boston. And to read the New England transcendentalist with his insistence on the Over-Soul, the Archetypal third, and the like, is to be reminded of this old idea of the things of earth as “sensual copies of supersensual realities.” Now in the ancient Epistle such “Philonic Echoes” are to be found.<sup>1</sup> Of course we may not assert direct dependence of the sacred upon the secular author. While to Philo the Old Testament was transmuted into Platonism, to the author of Hebrews Judaism was the shadow of which Christianity was the substance. Yet despite their difference in conclusion, their

<sup>1</sup> Beyschlag, *New Test. Theology*, footnote, p. 284.

initial view-point was the same: they both looked upon the biblical material with Alexandrian eyes.

We return to our last candidate and see if he meets this subtle qualification of opinion. Whence could he have derived this unique outfit of ideas? The answer is indirect, yet suggestive. Barnabas was "a man of Cyprus by race," and Cyprus was connected with Alexandria in many ways. Being commercially a half-way station between Egypt and the Levant, it was one of the islands where the Alexandrian philosophy came to be taught; along with the trade-winds came a unique intellectual atmosphere. Barnabas, born and bred a Cyprian, would account for the foreign tone in Hebrews. Nevertheless, certain additional facts of his birth and breeding apparently run counter to the internal evidence. Being a Hellenistic Jew like Stephen, Barnabas might have used the Septuagint version in his scriptural citations, but as a Levite, and therefore familiar with Levitical ritual, he should not so speak as if he derived his knowledge of the temple at second-hand (chap. ix.). Much less could he make such an error, as does the author of our Epistle, viz. that the high priest offered sacrifices daily (x. 11). Another discrepancy in the career of Barnabas is found in the fact of his being set apart as an Apostle to the Gentiles. As such he could scarcely use that tone of authority and command towards Hebrews prevalent in the Epistle.

It is so far evident that no one of the candidates mentioned in ancient tradition fulfills all the requirements of authorship. A short summation will disclose how, even in single separate tests, one after another of the claimants must be disallowed. There is first the confession of the writer, that he was not a direct hearer of the gospel. This excludes Paul. There is next the style of the Epistles—ornate and polished. This excludes Clement of Rome with his Epistle plain and unrhctorical. There is again

the career, or condition of life, which necessitates the writer addressing his readers as fellow-countrymen, the seed of Abraham. This excludes Luke the Greek. Finally, there is required a set of opinions or teaching symbolic and transcendental, and, coupled with this, such a temperament of natural ability and forcefulness as to round out the psychological resemblance.

There is only one man in whom these widely different qualifications are brought together. It is proof of the difficulty of fixing upon an anonymous writer, that his name was not suggested until the Reformation, and yet it speaks for the sagacity of Luther that his conjecture of Apollos is borne out so fully by the ancient description. In Acts we read that Apollos was "a Jew, an Alexandrian by race, an eloquent man, mighty in the Scriptures, fervent in spirit, who powerfully confuted the Jews, and that publicly" (Acts xviii. 24-28). Now see how this tallies with the main requirements and even the sub-conditions of the case. Apollos, as a Jew of the Dispersion, was not an original apostle, but only one of those "confirmed" in his salvation "by those that heard." Next, living in a second Athens of Hellenistic culture, he would naturally write a purer Greek than a Hebrew of the Hebrews. Moreover, as an eloquent man and one noted in the Corinthian church for his "persuasive words of wisdom," Apollos' writings would possess a more stately and polished style than Paul's Epistles. But general superiority of diction is not so decisive a test as the writer's specific quotations from the Old Testament. Apollos was a Jew, but he used a Greek Bible, the Septuagint being a distinctively Egyptian production. And Apollos meets the conditions of career in all their intricacy. He was a Jew, and could therefore address his hearers as descendants of the fathers. Moreover, he held intercourse with the Twelve, not originally, for when first brought to our notice he "knew only the baptism of John." Yet lat-

terly he was confirmed by those that heard—for at Ephesus dwelt St. John, and in Corinth St. Paul. An acquaintance with his readers is more difficult to prove. If the Epistle was an encyclical addressed to "Hebrews" scattered in the Christian Dispersion, Apollos would have known many such communities. He came from Egypt, which had a larger Jewish population than Palestine itself; he held public discussion with Jews in Ephesus; he had a following of Jews—like Aquila and Priscilla—in Corinth. On the other hand, if the Epistle is directed to the Hebrews in Jerusalem, we have only probability that Apollos personally knew his hearers. We know that he went from Alexandria to Ephesus, and from Ephesus to Corinth, and also that he was urged by Paul to "journey diligently" from Crete to Necropolis (Tit. i. 5 and iii. 13). Apollos' travels were extended. It is, therefore, probable that he went to Jerusalem, whether on a devout pilgrimage to the Holy City, or to visit the headquarters of the church.

There remains, as a last and most intricate test of Apollos' candidacy, his psychological resemblance to the author of Hebrews. The little that can be said as to moral identity may be left to the end; the mental identity, as disclosed by internal evidence, needs a more thorough elucidation. As we have seen, the opinions set forth in the book were throughout typical and symbolic. In brief, the priestly arrangements of the past were considered to be obscure reflections of new truths. Now the man most skilled in this kind of interpretation was Philo, who was teaching in Alexandria in Apollos' own lifetime. But for all this congeniality with the Neo-Platonic philosopher in ideal concepts and even single expressions, the writer of our Epistle had a different end and purpose. What is said of Apollos in Ephesus describes this, "He taught carefully the things of Jesus." Thus both the agreements and disagreements of the two Alexandrians will explain two marks

of our Epistle,—its strain of speculative loftiness and its Christocentric aim.

From the doctrinal contents of the Epistle arises another distinction; our author does not entirely depend on Philo, no more does he on Paul. One example will suffice. The Pauline view of the law was realistic,—it was a dead weight which hung about the sinner's neck. The view here set forth was idealistic, the Law was a "shadow of good things to come." In other words, our Epistle was one of decided originality. It had Philonic tendencies, yet it borrowed the Hellenist's figurative method alone. It had Pauline affinities—it taught Christ's humiliation and exaltation—yet it was not an adaptation, but a new presentation. "The main doctrine which runs through the Epistle, the priesthood of Christ, puts Pauline authorship away."<sup>1</sup> We have noted the attitude of authority used toward those whom our writer addresses (xiii. 19, 22). Along with this goes an attitude of mental confidence. In spite of its peculiar and often forced analogies, the doctrinal system of Hebrews is set out with all the assurance of a positive belief. Now Apollos would appear to fulfill this attitude of authority and of mental confidence; he was "fervent in spirit," and he "powerfully confuted the Jews."

We have pretty well exhausted the case for an Alexandrian author of Hebrews. One more point is left. What Apollos accomplished in the propagation of the gospel is the best proof that he had a forcefulness of character such as that manifest in the Epistle. The convert from Alexandria, along with Apostle Peter, became the head of a party in the Corinthian church, and Paul himself acknowledged his share in the work,—“I planted, Apollos watered” (1 Cor. iii. 6). It is needless to sum up the case for Apollos; on every count but one something can be said in his favor. The requisites of style, career, and opinion are all com-

<sup>1</sup> Davidson, Introduction to the New Test.



bined in his personality, and what is to be gathered from the book itself is in close harmony with the description in Acts. But unless this portrayal is considered valid testimony, early external evidence is totally lacking for Apollos as the author of the Epistle. It was not for fourteen centuries that Apollos' name was conjoined with this book, for it was an acute conjecture of Luther that first attributed the Epistle of Alexandrian tone with the learned Alexandrian.

In formulating the final results of our investigations we can do no better than to repeat a former statement: "Either the authorship remains an impenetrable mystery, or it belongs to one whose name was not mentioned in connection with it for many years subsequently." In fine, the answer to the problem of Hebrews may be expressed in terms of that of the problem of Junius; while a general conclusion applying to both these works is this: In view of the difficulty of fixing upon a name when it is not originally given, a book once anonymous is always anonymous.