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## The Exegesis of the School of Antioch.

*A Criticism of the Hypothesis that Aristotelianism was a Main Cause in its Genesis.*

PROF. HENRY S. NASH.

IF we take exegesis not as a science with an idea given it by the historic spirit of our time, but as an experimental art, it may be defined as the history of the endeavors of men to find authority for public and private conduct in books or oracles held to be sacred. In this sense the history of law is a chapter in the history of exegesis, and legal fiction is parallel to allegory. The history of pious frauds is another branch of the same subject. The history of the manifold sacramental symbols of secret societies in ancient times is yet another. Pseudepigraphy may furnish still another example. The history of exegesis, then, is the history of the dogmatic relations which men have at different times conceived to exist between themselves and a sacred past.

Thus defined, the subject becomes so broad that its boundaries seem to be lost; but this vagueness brings one advantage, — we are forced to look on exegesis as a single chapter in the intellectual history of the race. To understand it as it was pursued in any given period, we must know the whole mental life of the period. The solidarity of concepts has to be emphasized. Since exegesis, or eisegesis (and in all times save our own the two things have been about the same), is a search for authority, we cannot separate it from ecclesiology, nor from the history of law, nor from the history of philosophy. And this leads us still deeper into the concept of God and the concept of man, the relations between them, and the working notions concerning society which grow out of them.

Exegesis, in its earlier periods, is the art of translating the sacred past into the present so that under its authority the present may find shelter. It is not at all an abstract science like mathematics, not even so much so as philosophy; it is the immediate expression of a religious life which is under bonds to find a harmony between itself

and its sacred texts. It exists solely for the sake of that religious life, having no function save to be its tool. Exegesis, therefore, is almost as near to practical religion as liturgics. Hence the exegesis of the Christian church in the third and fourth centuries must be approached from the side of the church's life and mind. That life was, on the one side, the life of the Græco-Roman Empire, christened, but only partially Christianized, and, on the other, the life of Judaism. To exegesis, therefore, on these two sides, we must turn.

When Greece came out of her prehistoric and sub-historic period she brought with her Homer and Hesiod. These two, said Herodotus, gave Greece her gods. The saying, of course, puts the cart before the horse, but it does not over-emphasize the part they played in the education of Hellas. With them were soon associated collections of oracles, which, because of their indefinite antiquity and flexible form, could be readily and persistently worked by the religious consciousness. Homer, Hesiod, and the oracles formed the sacred texts of Greece.

The great colonizing movement of the eighth and seventh centuries set the native Greek powers in free play. Greek philosophy appeared in Ionia; and almost at the first blush was seen the necessity of an exegesis more versatile than the unconscious process by which, in patriarchal times, the old and the new were harmonized. Allegory begins in the very school of that Heraclitus who had started a Puritan crusade against Homer. Its development was stopped for a time by the sophistic movement of the fifth and sixth centuries, which bade fair to make all exegesis needless by exploding all religion. But the moment that Socrates drew religion back from the low ground of mere tradition to the higher and safer ground of the inner reason, the exegetical movement began to pick up its lost momentum. Plato goes quite as far as Heraclitus in his denunciation of Homer; yet when he folds the wings of the pure idea which flies through the Republic, and walks on the common earth in the Laws, he shows a disposition which, with allegory for its right hand, might eventually make him good friends with Homer. Aristotle, because of his realism, is expected to do better; yet he does not, and the fact is noteworthy. Aristotle is not so free from Homeric allegory as Plato, and to find the reason does not seem to me difficult. Had he been a realist of the eighteenth century kind, he would have freed himself from the allegorical tendency; but he was, on the contrary, a thorough believer in the supreme reality of reason. He set himself to organize the whole material of existing knowledge. Of that material, the state, in

its nature and history and aim, formed a large part. This state was also a church. The roots of political and religious existence had for Aristotle a common tap-root ; and so, while not religious by feeling, he was religious by reason, and saw the absolute necessity of a religious foundation for the state. Hence he could not free himself from Homeric allegory. He allegorized because he was a statesman, or a churchman, as you choose to put it.

If even he could not free himself from allegory, much less could the religious Greek mind after him ; for the only way in which exegesis could be improved was by the development of a purely scientific desire of knowledge for knowledge's sake. But the motives of all post-Aristotelian philosophy are practical. The Sceptics, the Epicureans, and the Stoics have the same end, though they differ so radically in their means. The first two improved exegesis out of existence by destroying its subject-matter, traditional religion. But they cut themselves off thereby from the popular consciousness, and became either the dens of Bohemians and the clubs of swells, or the cosey societies of well-bred gentlemen who had no stake in the Empire. But the Stoics, as preachers to the people and father-confessors to princes, were drawn headlong into exegesis ; the allegory by which they harmonized their sacred texts with present culture was the obverse of the medal whose reverse was the unification of all the gods in the Roman pantheon.

From the more strictly Roman side came a similar stream of tendency. When Cicero and other like-minded Romans amused themselves with Academic philosophy, they made good fun of the Stoic allegories. But the moment that Cicero became practical and thought of the state, he rushed headlong into that legal fiction which is just another form of the eisegesis whereby present and past are harmonized. For he believed with all his heart that the Twelve Tables contained the whole of legal wisdom ; and, although not a great lawyer, he represents herein that long line of legal theorists in whose hands the grand structure of Roman law took shape.

The history of opinions leads us into the history of conceptions. What were the underlying conceptions which made these exegetical processes necessary ? The Christianity of our own day needs authority, and the problem of Biblical science as a Christian discipline is to re-shape the doctrine of the authority of the Word of God. But we have gained at last a concept which makes it possible to organize our Biblical knowledge without sacrificing the Bible itself, and that is the concept of evolution, or orderly growth. This thought is the logical

analogue of the Messianic idea, and it alone can give an organon to the doctrine of God as progressively self-revealed and to the cognate doctrine of the progressive perfectibility of the church. Without it, unless we cease to be Christians, we shall fall back helplessly into the **hands** of that old-fashioned doctrine of infallibility which, in both its Biblical and ecclesiastical forms, we have outgrown. But this conception of progress is the **latest born** of the world's great concepts. It came into consciousness only yesterday or the day before. As Maine and Bagehot have said, it is utterly alien to the mind of the whole world, except certain small parts of Europe and America. And even with us its range is narrow, and its work has barely begun.

Such a concept was wholly foreign to Greek thought. Its philosophy from the start hinged on the contrast between being and becoming. The first period in its history gave up in despair the problem of thinking them together. Only being is ; non-being is not ; there is no becoming. Nor did the second period win any lasting success. Plato saw the difficulty clearly, but his differentiation of all things into ideas and phenomena merely reaffirmed the problem as its own answer. Aristotle, with his comparatively non-religious and teleologic bent, could go much further ; but even he stopped far short of firm ground. His doctrines of eternal creation and the perfection and unchangeableness of the cosmos are Greek to the bottom. The whole Greek attitude was non-teleologic ; it was thoroughly æsthetic. The cosmos stood finished, like a statue of Phidias. Taken as a whole it could undergo no change. Real being, both divine and human, was immutable. Changeableness was sinfulness.

This concept of being as immutable is the central category of Greek thinking. It shows its hand in ethics by making any real ethic impossible ; for ethic stands or falls with the will, but Greek thought, in its theory of conduct, could clear no ground for the will. Everything came down to a distinction between what is and what is not. The category showed itself again in theology by defining God as the infinite and man as the finite. Once more it showed itself in law as the Stoic conception of the law of nature. That law had not in it the elements of change which are involved in our modern international law. It was the Imperial law of a single vast state. Its category was the category of immutability, and its aim was the same as that of the Deists, to define the essentially and immutably human.

Where this category of immutability rules the mind, God cannot be conceived as the living, absolute personality ; he can only be conceived as abstract being, and the doctrine of æons and emanations is

devised to rid him of the necessity of having a will. Man cannot be conceived as a creature progressively perfectible ; so far as he is man, he is homoousia with God, part and parcel of deity, and so far as he is not that pure, essential being — so far as he becomes — he is a sinner.

Where this category of immutability reigns there can be no exegesis that is not also eisegesis. Exegesis, in its early stages, is the art of harmonizing the present with the authoritative past. That harmony can only be brought about by proving a perfect equation between the present and the past. There cannot be any more truth in the world at one time than at another ; the quantity of truth is unchangeable. The famous saying, *Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus* is bound to go on all fours. Therefore any given sacred text is confronted by the dilemma, destructive scepticism or religious eisegesis. Pagan exegesis is either non-religious, and then, of course, it wholly ceases to be exegesis, or it is religious, and so far as religious it is harmonistic. An equation between past and present must be proved ; it is a matter of life and death to religion to prove it. Plutarch attempts it in his defence of the oracles and in his Apologia for Isis. Plotinus, the last great thinker of antiquity, attempts it, when he tries to prove a harmony between Plato and Aristotle. Proclus, the last of the Neoplatonists, gives pathetic expression to the difficulty of the harmonistic problem, when he expresses the wish that no books had come down from antiquity save the Timæus and the oracles.

We turn now to Judaism. The work of Rabbinism was a double one ; to finish the sacred texts, that is to shape the canon, and to build a hedge around it. This hedge was the oral law. In it we have the first example in the West of an exegesis continuous in momentum through being the work of an undying school. Compared with Greek exegesis, it is as a Greek phalanx to a skirmish line ; as a result, its exegesis is vast in bulk. So far as its shape goes, however, it is only kept from becoming amorphous by the great underlying assumption of the whole Talmud. That assumption is the great legal fiction, or pious fraud, concerning the antiquity of the oral law down to its last details. There was, of course, no conscious fiction or fraud ; the assumption was as easy and natural as the process by which a silk-worm weaves its cocoon. The work cut out for Judaism was to preserve and develop a nationality which was not dependent upon political powers. This could be done only by making the law the public and private conscience of the people, and that could be done

only by striking every nail-head with the mighty hammer of divine authority. So the present shelters itself under the sacred past; an equation between past and present is established. It is achieved in principle by the fiction just spoken of; and in detail by all sorts of pettifogging exegesis through which not only was the sacred text pried open like a strong-box, in order that the present might put all its treasures into it, but the text itself was in some cases, as Geiger has shown, worked over and changed.

In the exegesis of Alexandrian Judaism we have an object lesson which makes plain the point I am attempting to prove; namely, that the whole exegesis of antiquity, however it might differ in its matter and even in its apparent methods, had at bottom the same principle. In the hands of the Alexandrian Jews the allegorical exegesis of the Greeks was more thoroughly developed than by the Greeks themselves. This was due, first, to the fact that the Alexandrian Jews had a text which was far more sacred to them than the sacred texts of the Greeks were to them. The Jews in exile had nothing sacred but a law. But the Greeks were not in exile, and so their mind, even when most religious and therefore most in need of authority, had a thousand conscious and unconscious associations which served as authority. The Jew in exile had but one thing, — his sacred text; that was his "portable fatherland." In the second place, the Hellenistic Jew whose mind got open to Greek philosophy saw that philosophy in its bulk and impressiveness, if not in its beauty, even more clearly than the native Greek, just because he came to it as a stranger and had not grown up in it. These two causes taken together account for the superior allegorical system of the Alexandrian Jews.

Now Alexandrian exegesis made the same assumption, no more and no less, which Palestinian exegesis made, that the sacred past contained full authority for the present, and that the present can nowhere find authority save in that past. In principle, therefore, the one exegesis is no better and no worse than the other. The great differences between them lay in the different quantity and quality of the ideas which were interpreted into the sacred text. Greek philosophy gave Alexandrian exegesis, for its stock in trade, an abstract conception of God, the philosophical infinite, and a dualistic view of God's relation to the world and of man's relation to himself. These ideas were in irrepressible conflict with the ideas of the sacred text. And besides, the ideas came in great bulk. More even than that, they were thoroughly mobilized, so that the whole system might in a given case press on a single verse or context. It was the attack of a phalanx, not the scattering fire of light-armed troops.

In broad contrast with all this was the position of Palestinian Judaism. In the first place, Palestinian Judaism had a country. The associations of the Holy Land lessened to some extent that pressure which a national mind, seeking for authority, brought to bear on the sacred text. Again, Palestinian Judaism from the very first was more or less a state. Hence, the Palestinian exegetes were primarily legislators and not philosophers. Another part of the same thing is that the Palestinian exegetes were practical ecclesiastics, seeing the necessity of church institutions, while the Alexandrian exegetes were more or less rose-water Broad-Churchmen. Being thus in the position of lawyers, of statesmen, and practical churchmen, their mental habit was that of the lawyer. As a total result, the ideas which Palestinian exegetes had to import into the text, had real elective affinity for the text itself. Thus Palestinian exegesis was more or less in touch with the Old Testament. Hence, the worst it could do to the sacred text was but a superficial perversion of the letter, while the Alexandrian exegesis changed its whole nature and spirit.

Quantitatively, too, the difference was in favor of the Palestinians. Their ideas were not organized into a system, could not be mobilized, and so the hostile fire on any given passage was not concentrated.

The Palestinian exegesis was not allegorical, but prophetic and potentially typical: although the clear development of types could not be until an historic figure, the Christ, gave typology a plain objective point. The virtues of Palestinian exegesis, however, were wholly unintentional. It did all the harm it knew how. Everything imaginable was imported into the text. And if Akiba's enthusiastic love of Canticles be evidence, it tells us what we might expect, that Palestinian exegesis had no assurance save accident against drifting into allegory. Palestinian exegesis and Alexandrian exegesis made the same fundamental assumption, — a perfect equation between an authoritative past and a self-helpless present. The differences in actual exegesis grew out of no exegetical principles, but out of the differences in the quantity and quality of ideas which had to be imported.

The central category of all the Jewish thought, both Alexandrian and Palestinian, was none other than that which we have seen to be the main spring of Græco-Roman thought and exegesis, — the category of immutability. It sticks out everywhere in Philo, being the explanation of his Logology. In the Palestinian, it does not stick out, for there are many things which keep it down, but nowhere is it far from the surface. The Palestinian Logology as seen in the theologoumena

of the Memra, the Shekina, etc., is the small change of Philo's Logology. Even so the ways in which the category of immutability in its exegetical application shows itself, are the small change of Philo's clear concept. The complexion of Palestinian ideas is very different. The position of Palestinian Judaism, and its firm hold on the dogma of creation, brought this about. But it never fairly utilized that dogma and the kindred dogma, the Messianic idea, for the benefit of historical exegesis. And no wonder. It is only in very recent times that Christianity has begun to do so.

The conclusion so far is, that wherever there is on the one side a text charged with the authority of a sacred past, and on the other side a mass of ideas essential to a present which is greedy of authority, those ideas must press on the text, until, by some exegetical sleight of hand, it opens and admits them. So long as the central category of all thinking is immutability, this is inevitable. There is no alternative, no way to relieve the text from this dangerous pressure, save by throwing overboard the ideas themselves, that is, by thorough-going scepticism, by a clean break with the religious past. The sleight of hand may be allegory or typology. In the Græco-Roman field, we have no typology because the matter to be imported was philosophical and the whole habit of thought was abstract. In the Jewish field we have one section, Alexandrian Judaism, where allegory reigns for the same reason: But in the other section, Palestinian Judaism, the habit of thought is realistic; it is a mass of events, institutions, and laws which have to be introduced. Hence, along with a far-reaching use of prophecy, there is a possibility of typology. Unless, then, the appearance of our Lord causes a sudden change in the categories of the common mind, we shall look for like causes and like effects.

But our Lord brought no sudden revolution in the mental habits of mankind. His person, as the incarnate Son of God, consummating the logic both of creation and of the Messianic idea, held in itself the promise and potency of a reconstruction of man's concept of God and of himself. That person, however, was as the leaven working in the lump of traditional concepts. He caused no break.

The apostolic church found a Bible ready made, — the Jewish Old Testament. The apostolic mind, not consciously needing any other Bible, wrote the New Testament, in the main, as a book of apologetics. We have the argument from prophecy in the gospels, notably the first, in the early sermons, and in the Petrine and Pauline epistles. Along with this, we have the argument from types. St. Paul's so-called allegory in Galatians iv. is not a metaphysical but a realistic

allegory, and is therefore quite as much a type as an allegory. The Epistle to the Hebrews abounds in such types. Now the argument from types is a supplement to the argument from prophecy. The type is the unspeaking prophecy; the prophecy the speaking type. The clear words of the Old Testament are filled out by its pregnant works. Type and prophecy taken together cover the whole field of revelation when looked on in the light of history.

Typology, which existed as a possibility in Palestinian exegesis, may now become a conscious art. The life of the Saviour lies finished on the page of history; its events give a definite point of departure and a definite goal. When Christianity shall have ceased to be a Jewish sect and when the cord of union with the mother church being cut, the mass of exegetical matter which Rabbinism had accumulated shall have slipped off the sacred text, then the Catholic Church is sure to develop the doctrine of types out of her own resources.

So far I have considered the exegesis of antiquity as resulting from the pressure which a mass of ideas either directly or indirectly religious brought to bear on sacred texts, when the category of immutability ruled the whole mind. Now it is easy to find the work of this category in the Catholic Church, for it is thrown about everywhere. One form of it is Tertullian's "Prescription against Heretics," the appeal to the changeless traditions of the apostolic sees; and this is but a small part of that universal process by which the tradition of apostolicity came to be the touchstone of both life and mind. The growth and solidification of the episcopate is the ecclesiological equivalent. That is what the bishops were for, — to maintain the changeless traditions. The theory of infallibility, everywhere in the air, and settling quickly on almost any chance Council, in spite of occasional satirists like Gregory, is the dogmatic expression of it. At the end of the fourth century, the lines of infallibility along which oriental and occidental Christianity were to run were clearly marked out. Vincent of Lerins was the spokesman of the universal consciousness.

Another manifestation of the category is the shape which apologetics took on. As a rule, in arguing with the heathen, the main point, after the nastiness of the heathen gods has been exploited, is the superior antiquity of Christianity. One finds this in all regions, east and west. To our momentary surprise, we find it fully developed in Clement of Alexandria. We might expect that, with his hearty faith in the Logos Spermatikos, he would not have fallen into this pit; but

it is the most striking testimony to his essentially Neoplatonic concept of God and to the dominance in his thought of the category of immutability, that he makes himself quite at home in it. For, with that category ruling him, he could not utilize the dogma of the Incarnation. The Logos *ἀσαρκος* and the Logos *ἐν σαρκί* involve the same amount of ideas about God. The quantity of truth is unvarying: all the truth of the New Testament was known to the Old. The only superiority of the New is its kindergarten method of teaching through the Incarnation, so that even children might understand.

The category shows itself again in ethics. The ethic of Ambrose is the ethic of Cicero with a sprinkling of holy water. And the ethics of out-and-out monasticism are the ethics of Seneca with a little less holy water.

Cognate to this is the striking fact that the line of approach of the whole Eastern Church to the doctrine of the person of Christ is through the old Greek category of Being. Even Athanasius is herein thoroughly Greek; his master-word is not "righteousness," but "being."

The same concept crops out plainly in a man like Eusebius, who could be thoroughly representative because he had not a spark of originality in him. The core of his "Demonstration," aside from the argument from prophecy, is that Christianity is as old as the creation. It was the original revelation. It was the religion of Abraham; Judaism was a lapse. The truth was republished by our Lord and confirmed by miracles. The identity of concept, under great differences of surface opinion between Eusebius and the Clementines, or between Eusebius and Toland, is striking.

What the fathers aimed at by this argument from the antiquity of Christianity, modern apologetic accomplishes by showing the congeniality between revelation and reason. But just as Plato had to harden the progressive perfectibilities of the mind into fixed and changeless innate ideas, so with the fathers. The contrast between being and non-being was the radical contrast. Even for them there was no true becoming.

Other illustrations might be given, but lack of space forbids. The conclusion for me is perfectly clear that the category of immutability ruled nearly all the thinking of the Catholic Church. Given this category, and given a Bible ready-made, the Old Testament, under whose shelter the New Testament canon was slowly shaped; given also the life of the Saviour, clear and complete on the page of history, and typology was inevitable and spontaneous. We find a touch of it

in Clement of Rome ; we find much of it mixed with allegory in Barnabas ; there is a hint of it in Ignatius ; there is no end of it in Justin Martyr, supplementary to his argument from prophecy ; in Melito, it approaches a system, though here also it is mixed with allegory ; it springs spontaneously in Tertullian, and Irenaeus, and Cyprian, and Hippolytus. Just as spontaneously did it grow in the East-Syrian church, as we may infer from its abundance in Aphraates and Ephrem.

Allegory is just as spontaneous in Alexandria, but the range of allegory is necessarily limited. It could grow only where philosophy as a system had taken the mind captive. Now, even in Greece the philosophers were comparatively few ; the Bœotians were the great majority. Much more, then, in the Catholic Church. The range of allegory, therefore, was necessarily narrow. For that reason it was sure to fall under suspicion ; for the mass of men always suspect what they do not understand, and hate what is foreign just because it is foreign. Hence to the masses of the early church, allegory was sure to be suspicious. Besides this, the Gnostics had brought allegory into discredit by their nihilistic use of it. The church, with true instinct, saw in the Gnostics ecclesiastical anarchists. Thus the refined allegory of Alexandrian churchmen suffered from the bad company it was obliged to keep. For both reasons allegory naturally came under the suspicion of the whole non-philosophical church. But this anti-allegorical tendency of the main body of the Catholic Church did not bear fruit save in one place. To start with, it rested on no principle. It hated allegory not because of its exegetical form, but because of the matter within the form. Hence, if by mischance some half-philosophical idea got into its head, it allegorized without knowing it. In the second place, the North African and even the Italian churches, which were very like the Syrian church in practical bent, had no continuous literary life, and no intellectual centre where the hap-hazard thinking of common-sense could be shaped into a system. Rome was a vaster New York. All systems of thought went there, sooner or later, but no system was ever born there. There were only two great church centres which might shape systems ; one was Alexandria, the other was Antioch.

This leads us to consider the special causes at work in the Syrian church. 1. As I have just said, Antioch was the only centre of Christianity which could rival Alexandria in practical importance and at the same time come anywhere near it in intellectual and doctrinal significance. 2. Syria was the richest province of the Empire.

Through it passed the great highway of trade between East and West. Hence the commercial habit of mind was very strong there. Mommsen says that the Syrians were a people who lived only for the day ; they never lived for ideas. It is certain that the culture and literature of Syria in the Hellenistic period ran wholly to prose and rhetoric and pasquinades, with a tendency towards popular novels. The mercantile mind has no fondness for philosophy. 3. Syria, being on the highway of commerce between East and West, was also on the highway of religious syncretism, for religion follows the trader. Hence the two cognate facts that Syria was the mother country of the Stoics in the centuries before Christ and of the Gnostics in the centuries after. This seems to gainsay what was said under the last head, but does not, for it was just what the mercantile habit of mind would do with religion when it was got, — it would organize it into a society. Now, concerning the Gnostics, it is a noteworthy fact that they sought to establish churches. The purely Alexandrian tendency in Gnosticism was not practical enough for that ; it kept its membership in existing churches. But the Gnostics everywhere set up meeting-houses. Hence Syrian Christianity recoiled from allegory with double force, because of the quantity of it in Syria and because of its schismatic tendencies. 4. Cognate with this is the fact that, because of her position, the Syrian church felt the first shock of Manichæism, and always bore its main brunt. The last two causes together would lead the Syrian church more than any other to emphasize the simplicity and clearness of revelation. This was everywhere the effect of the recoil from Gnosticism, as we learn from Irenæus and Hippolytus ; it would surely be especially strong in Syria. We know that the first books against allegory, as well as the great majority of all books against allegory, were written there. 5. Proofs of a peculiarly vigorous and practical church life in Syria are found in the attempts early made there at text-revision in the composite or Constantinopolitan text which ultimately issued from Syria, and in the fact that the church's architecture began there, for from Syria came the builders of St. Sophia. 6. We may add the contact of Syrian Christianity with Palestinian Judaism. One result of this may have been stricter views of the canon of the Old Testament ; and, as a corollary, of the canon also of the New. Again, the knowledge of Aramaic would emancipate students from a slavish dependence upon the LXX. And, once more, Palestinian Judaism might give to Syrian scholars an object-lesson concerning the nature of the Old Testament ; for while the Greek Old Testament was in one block, the Palestinian Bible was a

group of books. Thus the Syrian church derived some benefit from Palestinian Judaism, while unburdened by the mass of rabbinical commentary.

Syrian Christianity was not open to ideas, and so had no philosophy to carry into the sacred text. While like the churches of North Africa, Gaul, and Italy in this, she was unlike them in that her position gave her a quicker intellectual life and a sharper eye for the dangerous practical tendencies of allegory. We may therefore conclude that the tendency to types, everywhere native in the great body of the church, would here be stronger than anywhere else. And since more thinking was done in Antioch than in any other great practical church centre except Alexandria, we should expect that typology would there first shape itself into a conscious art.

Now, at last, we are ready to examine the claims made in behalf of Aristotelianism, that it was a main cause in the genesis of the school of Antioch. This is asserted by Harnack with great emphasis, and in a milder and somewhat incidental way by Kihn; while by Ueberweg and other outside writers it seems to be assumed as a matter of course.

If I have not misjudged the currents and under-currents of Catholic thinking, this hypothesis dies of inanition. There is nothing left for such a cause to do; the main work is over before it comes on the ground. For exegesis in its earlier period had in it nothing of an abstract science. It was a vital process of translation, by which the life and mind of the past were brought into solidarity with the present. Without this solidarity, the past could not keep its sacredness nor could the present get the authority it needed. The mental and spiritual laws which controlled Christian exegesis were a part of the system of universal mental and spiritual gravitation. That same equation between the past and the present was made by the exegesis of India and Egypt, as well as by Jewish, and Mohammedan, and Christian exegetes. Christian exegesis did, indeed, start with two great advantages. In the first place, it had a Bible in two distinct parts, so that from the outset, a firm footing was offered for a theory of inspiration that allowed of various degrees. The second advantage was the person of Christ. Christ is Christianity. Buddha is not Buddhism, and Mohammed is not Mohammedanism. But Christ is Christianity, and his life, at the heart of the New Testament canon, and in the broad day of history, gave a lever of vast power for the use of the historic spirit in exegesis. But the church could not take full advantage of these things, so long as she had no category save

that of immutability. While that ruled the mind, she must for her own salvation make a perfect equation between the whole of the sacred past and the needy present. Under the grip of this category, the essential differences between the Old and New Testament, even the historical significance of the Saviour, were bound to be eliminated. So long as exegesis is religious, the equation must be made. Even a Chrysostom makes it to the full. He has eight pronounced types, several of them violent ones, in one short oration against the Manichæans. The equation must be made ; the only question is, How shall it be made ?

Where philosophy reigned, allegory was inevitable. In the great body of the church, where there was no philosophy, where the main interests were practical and ecclesiastical, typology was inevitable. Hence types sprouted spontaneously. In every part of the church we find them. Even with the Alexandrians, they mix in with allegory ; and it is noteworthy, that under the stress of the Arian debate, Alexandrian exegesis becomes much less allegorical and much more typological. In Syria there were special causes which made the conscious rejection of allegory secure and permanent. That done, the only work left for exegetical science was to take the instinctive exegesis of the Catholic Church and elaborate it into an art.

Here comes in the real influence of Aristotelianism. Aristotle's logical works gave an organon and demanded a system. For the Syrian church, as for the mediæval church, they gave a grand intellectual drill. Under their influence the common typology was shaped into an art and equipped with definitions. We are reminded here of the saying that writing makes a clear mind. The truth of the saying is that in the effort at full self-expression, the things that lie in the mind pell-mell are likely to pass into some sort of system. A system calls for a central thought. When the central thought comes into the foreground, the things that in the mind were mixed up with it fall into the background. This, I take it, was the function of the Aristotelian logic and rhetoric in the exegesis of Antioch. It provided an apparatus for clear and systematic self-expression. In that self-expression the art of typology became self-conscious. Deeper influence it did not have. It did not at all change the essential texture of thought in the Syrian church. It gave the church the power to write clearly, and a sense for the value of definitions. The church's genius did the rest.

More than this the church did not need. More than this the kind of Aristotelianism that worked on the church could not give. Of

course, I do not deny the inherent differences between Platonism and Aristotelianism ; those differences are a philosophical commonplace, but another and more important commonplace is that it takes subject and object together to produce a thought. Now, on the side of the object, it may be said with emphasis that the Aristotelian Logic and Rhetoric were the only parts of Aristotle's system which exerted any appreciable influence on the church. The reasons for this go very far back. It was with the logic of Aristotle that the Stoics were mainly concerned. The same was true of the Neoplatonists, with the exception of Plotinus. Porphyry made his reputation by a commentary on the Categories. The study of the book was wide-spread in the Christian Church. Gregory of Nazianzus, who studied at Athens, made it the basis of a hand-book. It was a text-book in the rhetorical school of Antioch, where Libanius, the teacher of Chrysostom and Theodore, made so large a figure. The Logic and Rhetoric passed to Boethius and Cassiodorus, through whom they became the trivium of the mediæval university course. Finally, it was the Logic and Rhetoric of Aristotle which the Syrians carried out of the Empire. For when the Arabians came to learn of the Syrians, they got from them these parts of Aristotle and nothing else. When their vigorous appetite outran their first instructors, they had to import the metaphysics and psychology for themselves.

On the side of the subject, it is to be remembered that philosophy after Aristotle lost more and more the love of knowledge for its own sake. The central motive of Stoics, Sceptics, and Epicureans alike was quietistic. The revival of religion from Augustus to Marcus Aurelius, a revival which became universal in the third century, made a scientific interest in philosophy wholly alien to the mind of the Empire. Neoplatonism was religious to the core ; purely scientific not at all. The two great schools of Syria were the school of rhetoric at Antioch and of law at Beirut. Is it not clear that such an age was incapable of discovering and appropriating the deeper qualities of Aristotelian thought? A blind man cannot see the most gorgeous sunset. An age whose interests are wholly religious and practical cannot see or feel the bearing of Aristotelianism as a system.

The church created no fresh appetite for secular knowledge. She brought with her no love of knowledge for its own sake. Religious knowledge was the only knowledge she wanted. The greatness even of Origen had its root in the wish to know all about the supreme religious authority, the Bible. The inspiration of his scholarship passed into the school of Antioch, freed from the allegorical garb in which

Alexandria had dressed it. It blent with the forces native in the Syrian church. Their combined influence was strengthened by the impetus toward Bible study which the church gained from the Arian debate. The Aristotelian rhetoric, above all the Aristotelian logic, came as a midwife. Syrian Christianity had what was central in its mind brought into clear light and clothed with definitions. More than this the Syrian church did not need to receive of Aristotelianism. More than this, such Aristotelianism as the Syrian church knew could not give.