

genesis of many a diverse report. It is not unlikely that the *lead saying* and the modification were subsequently both preserved in writing, and some of the phenomena of the Synoptic Gospels would thus be explained.

E. LYTTLETON.

### ST MARK AND DIVORCE.

ALL three Synoptic Gospels report a saying of Jesus to the effect that whoever puts away his wife and marries another commits adultery, but the saying is given with characteristic differences. Matthew and Mark give the saying in connexion with a question asked of our Lord by adversaries when He was the other side of Jordan on the way to Jerusalem (Mark x 11, 12 = Matt. xix 9); with some change of wording it had been already given by Matthew as part of the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. v 31, 32), while Luke gives it only in a detached form practically without context (Luke xvi 18). It is a natural preliminary inference that the saying had a place in both the chief sources of our Gospels, viz. in the lost document commonly called the 'Logia', as well as in Mark (or *Ur-Marcus*). Moreover Matthew inserts in both places an exception *μη ἐπι πορνεία*, or equivalent words: it is evident that the stringent rule given by Mark, or his source, needed some modification when regarded as the basis for the law of a Christian society.

According to Mark the woman who divorces her husband is declared to have committed adultery as well as the man who divorces his wife. This condemnation of the woman is not found in the other Gospels and is pretty generally assumed to be a secondary addition, 'based on Roman Law', says Dr Schmiedel in *Ency. Biblica*, 1851. It is supposed to have been monstrous and unheard of that a Jewess should divorce her husband.

Monstrous it was, no doubt, but not quite unheard of. I venture to think that to appreciate the historical meaning of the passage we must apply the familiar maxim *cherches la femme*. Not that we have to look very far: we know the woman and her history—her name was Herodias. Her husband, whom she left in order to live with Antipas, was the man whom Mark calls 'Philip' but Josephus only knew as 'Herod'. Antipas also was guilty: he had put away the daughter of the Arabian king Aretas to take up with Herodias his half-brother's wife, she herself being his half-niece.

A curious side-light can be thrown on the public actions of our Lord from this point of view. In the estimation of many the Galilean

Prophet was first and foremost the successor of John the Baptist, who had lost his life in protesting against the loose pagan morals of Antipas and Herodias. On the news of the murder of John our Lord had retired at once to 'a desert place' (Mark vi 31), and soon afterwards we find Him and His disciples taking a quite extended journey to the north away from the dominions of Antipas (Mark vii 24 ff). Scarcely is He back than we find Him again on a journey in the district of Caesarea Philippi, i. e. the NE. district of Herod the Great's realm, outside Antipas's tetrarchy (Mark viii 27-ix 29). After a stay there, important indeed for the inner circle of disciples but short in time, He passes through Galilee on His way to Jerusalem, 'and He would not that any man should know it' (Mark ix 30). This policy of concealment lasts until He comes 'into the borders of Judaea'. There He is outside the jurisdiction of Antipas: 'multitudes come together unto Him again and, as He was wont, He taught them again' (Mark x 1).

It was no part of our Lord's plan to get embroiled with the civil power, especially just before this Passover, but for that very reason questions about Divorce might be used to entangle Him into inconvenient pronouncements. He was now once more teaching publicly, and some of those who heard—Matthew calls them Pharisees—took this occasion to ask whether it were lawful for a man to put away his wife. Probably neither legal curiosity nor scruples of conscience prompted the questioners, but no doubt it seemed an excellent test question. The answer can scarcely have pleased. It offered no palliation for the loose Roman manners of the Herods, but the course of conduct commanded was based on the natural constitution of man as opposed to the Mosaic Law, and the teaching which reads most like a special condemnation of Herodias was reserved for the circle of disciples indoors. Here as elsewhere our Lord had as little taste for the leaven of the Pharisees as for the leaven of Herod.

While treating of this subject I should like to say a word in conclusion on Mark viii 15. A few weeks before the utterance on Divorce which we have been considering, just before Jesus started from Bethsaida to go to the villages of Caesarea Philippi, the disciples had come in the boat to the place called Dalmanutha or Magadan, an unknown spot not so very far from Tiberias. They were met by 'Pharisees' who ask for a 'sign', which is refused (Mark viii 10-12). When they have hurriedly re-embarked to go to the border town of Bethsaida on the north of the Sea of Galilee, Jesus bids the disciples beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod (Mark viii 15). Why Herod? The sudden move to Bethsaida, so sudden that they forget to provision the boat, suggests a flight from imminent danger. May we not combine this narrative of Mark with the detached anecdote

Luke xiii 31-33? According to this passage the Pharisees say 'Get thee out and go hence, for Herod would fain kill thee'. The answer gives the reason for the actual course taken by our Lord. He accepts the warning and leaves the territory of Antipas, concealing Himself and keeping quiet when it was necessary to pass through Galilee, because He was determined that the inevitable crisis should come at Jerusalem and nowhere else. If this general view be accepted, it affords a fresh and welcome proof that the Gospel according to St Mark is a document in touch with the facts of history, and not merely concerned with the ethical needs of some Christian community of later times.

F. C. BURKITT.

### READINGS SEEMINGLY CONFLATE IN THE MSS OF THE LAUSIAC HISTORY.

THERE is no need to dwell on the importance of the rôle played by Conflate Readings in textual work in general, and in the textual criticism of the New Testament in particular. That Conflation is a corruption of frequent occurrence is unquestionable, and the deductions drawn from it, when it is detected, are in general valid. This Note is intended only to serve as a warning of the circumspection that is necessary in the employment of one of the textual critic's best instruments.

In the passages to be discussed all the references are to the recent edition of the *Historia Lausiaca* (Cambridge *Texts and Studies* VI 2), and the nomenclature is that which is there employed. In order fully to understand and control what follows, it would be necessary to examine the full apparatus to the various passages, and to master the discussions in the *Introduction* on the character and relations of the MSS and versions; but I hope to be able here to supply information which will roughly but sufficiently indicate the textual facts, and make intelligible the line of argument in each case. The terms 'best MS' and 'second best MS' are of course relative, and vary in denotation according to the MSS extant for each passage.

(1) P. 41, 14.

τῶν ἐπισκόπων μετὰ τὸ εὐξασθαι ἐξερχομένων

best MS (W, p. 173) and all the versions (two Latin, two Syriac).

τῶν ἐπισκόπων μετὰ τὴν ἐπίσκεψιν ἐξερχομένων

second best MS (P).

τῶν ἐπισκόπων μετὰ τὴν ἐπίσκεψιν εὐξαμένων καὶ μετὰ τὴν εὐχὴν ἐξιώντων  
inferior MSS (B).