

# *The Journal* *of* *Theological Studies*

JANUARY, 1931

CUTHBERT HAMILTON TURNER

I

THE death of Cuthbert Turner is perhaps the greatest loss that could have befallen this JOURNAL. Its first editor from 1899 to 1902, he has contributed to nearly every volume since the beginning. He could always be relied upon for some paper of first-rate quality on textual criticism, or on some biblical or patristic subject. But his loss will be felt far more widely than by this JOURNAL: it will be felt by all who value exact scholarship or who are touched by the charm of genuine friendship; so it will be felt by University and Church alike.

Born on 7 July 1860, he went as a scholar to Winchester in 1872, and came up to New College as a Winchester scholar in 1879. Here he took the most educative course in the Schools—Classical Moderations, Literae Humaniores, and Theology, and his performance in the last marked him out at once as a teacher in that School. He soon became assistant to Dr William Bright, Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History, and was elected a Fereday Fellow of St John's. In 1889 he was elected Fellow of Magdalen, of which, after the death of H. A. Wilson, who had succeeded him for a short time as editor of the JOURNAL, he became senior fellow. From 1906 to 1910 he was Speaker's Lecturer in Biblical Studies; from 1914 to 1920 University Lecturer in Early Christian Literature and History; and in 1920 he was elected Ireland Professor of the Exegesis of Holy Scripture. This turned the balance of his work and lecturing to Biblical Studies rather than to Church History, and one result of it was his contribution of a Commentary on the Gospel of St Mark to the recent one-volume Commentary on the Bible, an excellent piece of work, remarkable not only for exact scholarship but also for reverent and interpretative understanding of the Lord's mind and aims in dealing with His followers. From 1925 to 1927 he also held the

VOL. XXXII.

I

Grinfield Lectureship on the Septuagint. Meanwhile he was engaged on his greatest work, the *Monumenta Iuris Antiquissima*, an edition of the earliest sources of the Western Canon Law, of which many parts appeared between 1899 and 1913, but which remains uncompleted. In 1912 he published a more popular octavo volume of *Studies in Early Church History*. Many papers have been left, some of which it is hoped may yet be published. He was suddenly seized with illness on the afternoon of October the 9th, and after nearly twenty-four hours of unconsciousness died in the evening of the following day.

But our loss goes far beyond the loss of a great scholar. It is the loss of a warm-hearted generous friend, whose presence and friendship were a cheering and uplifting power. He was so human. One indication of this was that in every house in which he was a visitor he was as welcome to the children as to the grown-ups. He was very proud of, and used to keep framed in his dining-room, a little poem which some such children composed, treating him as the modern Santa Claus, of which this is a part. After recalling his belief, as a child, in Santa Claus, the writer continues:—

‘When to the cynic’s age I got  
 And trousers were my manly joy,  
 I found that Santa Claus was not,  
 And nothing to a grown-up boy.  
 But now I know where Santa Claus  
 May be beheld by mortal eyes ;  
 He walks in daylight out of doors :  
 But soft—he always wears disguise :  
 A robe of black instead of red,  
 A tasselled board upon his head.  
 But children who have once believed  
 Will recognize his merry eye,  
 And know that they were not deceived  
 By Santa Claus in days gone by :  
 I know he’s real because, you see,  
 He leaves his lovely books for me.’

Although his work was cut short and many details left incomplete, yet in many ways it was a complete life, a life that gave and received love, and accomplished work that received full recognition. He was thoroughly recognized by his own University by

the positions in it which it gave him ; he was made an Hon. D.Litt. by the University of Durham and LL.D. by that of Aberdeen, and was elected a Fellow of the British Academy ; and more and more he was recognized by the Church as one of its most loyal and learned champions, and in 1927 he was elected by the diocese of Oxford as one of its representatives in the Church Assembly. He was also recognized and well known on the continent, and in 1928 was elected a Corresponding Member of the Bavarian Academy of Sciences, and was much gratified to receive the congratulations of the Academy on reaching the age of 70 in the summer of last year.

As we think of his quiet persevering brilliant work in his own study, and the brilliant lecturing when he was called to the front by his University, there comes into the mind the beautiful description which the writer of the Epistle of Baruch gives of the stars :

The stars shined in their watches and rejoiced :  
 When He calleth them, they say, Here we be ;  
 And so with cheerfulness they shewed light unto him that made them.

W. LOCK.

## II

My first acquaintance with the work of C. H. Turner was his paper on ' the Day and Year of St Polycarp's martyrdom ', which appeared in the Oxford *Studia Biblica*, vol, ii pp. 105-155. The date of the volume was 1890, but a good deal of it had appeared in the *Guardian* two years before. There could be no doubt about the quality of the work : curious learning gathered from a wide acquaintance with patristic literature, a quick appreciation of the bearing of minute details upon the question in hand, and great ingenuity in dealing with difficulties as they arise in the course of an argument. Further, this Mr Turner of Magdalen evidently had a sense of proportion : the change proposed by him was comparatively slight, namely, 22 Feb. 156 A. D. in place of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb. 155, championed in the brilliant paper of Mr Randell (*Studia Biblica*, vol. i) ; but the writer knew that it was a pivot

in Church chronology, a fixed point where nearly everything was more or less vague. The whole history of early Christianity in Asia was more or less affected.

The impression made by the paper on St Polycarp's date was confirmed by a paper in *Studia Biblica* iii, published in 1891, on the MSS of Cyprian's works. It was characterized by that minute knowledge of the actual facts of the MS tradition, which runs through all Turner's work and makes so much of it of permanent value.

I venture to put my impressions of the earlier stages of Turner's writing in this form of personal reminiscence, because my next impression was that of his review of my edition of the *Rules of Tyconius* in the *Guardian* for 17 June 1896. I well remember the salutary shock it was to me as a young author, who had delved rather deeply into a little-known by-way of Church literature, to find the *Guardian* Reviewer divining the sense of passages which neither I nor even Dr Armitage Robinson had made out.<sup>1</sup> It was therefore very good news to hear, when the new JOURNAL OF THEOLOGICAL STUDIES appeared in 1899, that Dr Swete and his colleagues had chosen C. H. Turner to be chief Editor.

Turner's own contributions to the JOURNAL opened with a careful and characteristic Note on John i 14, shewing that *πλήρης* was, as often elsewhere, indeclinable and that the weight of ancient evidence was to connect it with *τὴν δόξαν*, not with *ὁ λόγος*.<sup>2</sup> This was in the very first number. But his most notable contribution to this first volume was the two papers on the Early Episcopal Lists, pp. 181-200, 529-553. The first was a very careful and instructive examination of Eusebius's methods of dating, and a correction of various misconceptions into which Harnack had fallen. The second treated of the Jerusalem List, shewing that the List used by Eusebius was a forgery made by the upstart community of Aelia. I cannot but think that this iconoclastic paper was one of the most brilliant of Turner's achievements, and I looked forward eagerly to the promised

<sup>1</sup> E. g. *Tyconius* p. 63 l. 11: C. H. T. suggested *interficiētis* for *interficiētes*, with a change of punctuation.

<sup>2</sup> On p. 123, note that the Curetonian Syriac really connects 'full' with 'glory', not with 'the Word'.

studies on the corresponding Lists of Bishops of Antioch and Alexandria. Alas, I had to wait till 1917, when a study of the other Lists appeared (vol. xviii pp. 103-134), including the Roman List also. I cannot but regret that other work claimed his time at the earlier period.

Amongst these other occupations, however, was one that was extremely useful, namely, the Article on the 'Chronology of the New Testament' in Hastings's *Dictionary of the Bible*, which came out in 1900. This well-known work consists of 22 double-column pages, much of it in small print. It discusses almost every conceivable problem of N.T. chronology, with a very full presentation of the evidence, and it took its place from the first as a classic.

Turner remained Editor of the JOURNAL for the first three volumes only, but his own contributions poured into it in a continuous flood of articles and notes, even reviews. Every volume contains something of his; and often his contributions were outstanding investigations of the greatest weight. The special quality of his work (which he shared with the late Edmund Bishop) was that the hours he spent in examining MSS were hours of pleasure and not of conscientious drudgery, and this often gave freshness and precision to his views. There is a beautiful example in *J. T. S.* ii, where he proved that the Toulouse MS of Canons was as old as the 7th century, a fact which enabled him to correct the views of no less an authority than Maassen.

It is difficult to know where to begin in this immense series of learned Notes. They are all, as Dr Mercati said of Edmund Bishop's *dicta*, 'hints worthy of being carefully treasured, and capable of fruitful application' (*J. T. S.* xviii 99). The future editor of Cyprian will find his way smoothed for him in *J. T. S.* vi, ix, and xxix. In vol. v Turner published a recollection of Cod. Bobiensis (*k*), made before the destructive fire which seriously damaged that most important MS. Special mention should be made of documents from the Chapter Library of Verona, published by Turner in collaboration with the late Don Antonio Spagnolo, including an Arian Sermon and a fragment of the Apostolic Constitutions in Latin (vol. xiii): others are in vols. xvii and xx. In vols. xxii and xxiv Turner republished the tracts of Niceta of Remesiana on 'Vigils' and the 'Advantage

of Psalmody', which Dr Andrew Burn had published in 1905. Turner had discovered a much better and older MS than any Dr Burn had used, and (as Turner himself claimed, vol. xxiv p. 225) 'it is hardly too much to say that the two treatises are for the first time presented in a consecutive and intelligible form'. Finally, in the five vols. xxv-xxix Turner produced a remarkable series of Notes on the grammatical and linguistic characteristics of the Gospel of Mark. Any future editor or translator of Mark will need to examine them most carefully: it was just this careful and systematic study of Marcan usage that gave Turner a sure grasp in his Commentary on Mark in the S.P.C.K. Commentary (1928).

Of the volumes of Western Councils which have already appeared I am incompetent to speak. They already form a stately row, and we may hope that the Notes of Turner's Birkbeck Lectures, delivered at Trinity College, Cambridge, two years ago, will be found to contain Prolegomena to the still unfinished series.

F. C. BURKITT.