THE COMPOSITION

OF

THE FOUR GOSPELS

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A CRITICAL INQUIRY

BY THE

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London
MACMILLAN AND CO.
AND NEW YORK
1890

ἵνα ἐπιγνῷς περὶ ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων τὴν ἀσφάλειαν.

S. Luke i. 4.

CAMBRIDGE: PRINTED BY C. J. CLAY, M.A. AND SONS, AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS.

PREFACE.

THESE chapters were written during the leisure of a sea voyage in the long vacation of the year 1889. I had with me Mr Rushbrooke's *Synopticon*, Drs Westcott and Hort's Greek Testament and a pocket concordance, but no other books bearing on the subject nor even my own notes. I mention these facts to account for the paucity of reference to the works of other writers. A few passages I revised after landing in England.

The publication of Mr Rushbrooke's *Synopticon* in 1880 greatly facilitated the study of the Gospels. I only regret that the necessarily high price keeps this book out of the libraries of many young students. Those who wish to work out for themselves the line of study suggested in these chapters should if possible procure the *Synopticon*, but, if that is out of their reach, Tischendorf's *Synopsis Evangelica* is cheap and useful.

Though my opinions differ widely from some of Dr Abbott's, I owe much to his work and critical insight.

Dr Bernhard Weiss I have often found suggestive. Dr Westcott and the late Bishop Lightfoot have been my chief guides during residence at Cambridge. My obligations to other authors I have tried, as far as possible, to indicate in the course of the book.

Some readers, I fear, will regard this work as an attack upon the Gospels, rather than a defence of them. They will think that it surrenders too much, that its teaching is arbitrary and likely to produce doubt and perplexity. They will prefer the certainty which older expositors offer to the probability with which criticism bids us to be content.

To such objectors I would say that the acceptance of the oral theory of the origin of the Gospels, which has been general amongst English scholars for at least the last thirty years, involves the admission of most of the principles which are expounded in this book. Being convinced that the theory is true and adequate, I have endeavoured to show how it is supported by allusions in Scripture, how it explains and justifies the language of the earliest Fathers of the Church, and what results necessarily follow from it.

We live in anxious times. An effort is making to minimise or get rid of the supernatural in revelation. The Incarnation and the Resurrection are called in question or denied. The resources of scholarship are used to propagate a Christianity without a Divine Christ.

Now, scholarship can only be met by scholarship and criticism by criticism. The old method of ignoring or explaining away difficulties will no longer suffice. Difficulties must be acknowledged, faced and their lessons learned. In this book I have endeavoured to define the conditions under which I think the defence of the Gospels can be maintained. Our citadel may be immeasurably strengthened by abandoning a few untenable outposts. The critical study of the Gospels is still in its infancy. All that I can hope to do is to assist and guide my juniors in bringing it to maturity. "We are powerless against the truth, but we can do something to defend the truth" (2 Cor. xiii. 8). I am confident for the ultimate result, because I believe in the reality of the work of the Holy Spirit and because I see a growing earnestness and honesty of purpose in those whose duty it will be to maintain for the next generation the cause of our most holy faith.

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CHAPTER I.

THE WORK OF THE CATECHISTS.

EDUCATION in the East, I am told, still consists largely in learning by heart the maxims of the wise. The teacher sits on a chair, the pupils arrange themselves at his feet. He dictates a lesson, they copy it on their slates and repeat it till they have mastered it. Then the task is over, the slates are cleaned and put by for future use.

Substitute for the slates and pencils a writing tablet and *stylus*, and you will have a scene which must have been common in the days of the Apostles. The teacher is a catechist, the pupils catechumens, the lesson a section of the oral gospel; for we are thinking of a time when written gospels were not yet contemplated.

Nor must we deem it strange, if many catechists could repeat an amount of oral narrative considerably longer than one of our Gospels. S. Paul, when he sat at the feet of Gamaliel, could do more than this,

for "he made progress beyond many of his class mates, being zealous of the traditions of the fathers" (Gal. i. 14). At that date those traditions were not in writing, and every scribe who was "catechised out of the law" (Rom. ii. 8) could repeat large portions of matter by no means so easy to remember as the gospel sections. Indeed the memory, if you care to train it, is capable of great feats. S. Augustine expected candidates for Holy Orders to know in some degree all the Scriptures, because in those days when manuscripts had no intervals between the words, it was impossible to read aloud in church without hesitation unless you knew the chapter. And many of the Maori of New Zealand now, I am told, would satisfy S. Augustine's requirements in this particular.

S. Luke represents the work of catechising as commencing soon after the great day of Pentecost. The converts, he writes, "were persevering in their attendance upon the teaching of the Apostles" (Acts ii. 42). And S. Peter, Papias indirectly tells us, was the teacher, as indeed that Apostle took the lead in everything in those earliest days.

We may picture his meeting the first class of learners. On his tablet, as I suppose, is written in his native Aramaic some short gospel narrative. We must not think that he had anxiously consulted his fellow Apostles about the exact wording of the lesson. We cannot assert that he had a full idea of the importance

of what he was doing. Expecting daily the return of their Lord, the early Christians took little heed of the distant future. Enough for them to supply the pressing need of the moment. The class may have been small, the learners obscure, the lesson of comparatively little present interest to them. It was some time before even the Apostles seem to have realised what was most important in the message with which they were entrusted. S. Peter did not think his manuscript worth preserving. The same tablet sufficed for all his lessons. None of his pupils inscribed the words on vellum, which might have been legible to this day. They had the living witness amongst them and could consult him at any moment. His presence was worth more to them than anything which he could write. And so the opportunity was lost. We do not possess the handwriting of any Apostle, nor do we possess the first and freshest recollections of S. Peter's memoirs of our Lord.

Day by day and week by week the lessons were continued. Unsystematic and incomplete they necessarily were, for each one was perfect in itself and probably had no connexion with any other. Certain parts of our Lord's life, such as the Passion, were pretty fully detailed: other parts, as the early Judæan ministry, were almost untouched. S. Peter's work at Jerusalem appears to have been cut short before he had either completed his narratives or reduced them to order. Many pupils would become irregular and stay

away, but others would take their place. Many would prove forgetful, carrying away imperfect and distorted recollections. But while all would learn something, a few young men with retentive memories and unflagging zeal would form the crown of the undertaking. These were "instructed in the word" (κατηχημένοι τὸν λόγον, the tense indicating the completion and permanence of their knowledge). From them was organised the new order of catechists, who were not only the recognised repositories of gospel history, but were ordained and authorised to teach others also.

S. Peter then was the author of the first cycle of oral teaching, which, though incomplete, covered more ground than any other and formed the framework of the first three written gospels. S. Matthew, we shall see, was the author of the second cycle, which was supplementary and originated also in Jerusalem. An unknown Christian, perhaps at Antioch, was the author of a third cycle which obtained currency in Pauline churches only. The catechists of the first school could only teach the first cycle. A later school perhaps could teach the second cycle only, but, as time went on, it was found necessary for a catechist to master both the first and second cycles or he could not do the work required of him. S. Paul at first drew his catechists from Jerusalem, but in course of time he employed local catechists who had mastered as much of all three cycles as was current in the Gentile churches.

The name catechist does not occur in the New Testament, for it was not as yet invented. The technical term for the new order was 'the catechisers' (*οἱ κατηχοῦντες*). Participles however are inconvenient for daily use. They do not freely admit of a vocative. And in ordinary language the pupils addressed their master as 'Teacher' (*ὦ διδάσκαλε*), and 'teachers' with the verb 'to teach' and the noun 'teaching' are in frequent use. S. Luke in his preface uses a new phrase "ministers of the word" (*ὑπηρέται τοῦ λόγου*, Luke i. 2), and if this was a usual name for them in the West, it would certainly be abbreviated into 'ministers,' as we shall have occasion to remark hereafter.

Of the number of catechists we can form no certain estimate. There must have been at least one in every considerable church, but the smaller communities may have been served by itinerant teachers. In large churches daily classes must have been required and weekly classes for the less leisured members. It was hard work. "Toil" (*κόπος*) is the term applied to it by S. Paul. And if we would picture to ourselves the life of the church of the earliest time, the catechetical classes must form a prominent feature in it. It may well be that the Gentiles preferred S. Paul's lectures, which resembled more closely the teaching of their own philosophers and which we are told in an interesting Western reading (Acts xix. 9) which is credible though not authentic, S. Paul delivered daily from

the fifth hour to the tenth—11 a.m. to 4 p.m. But S. Paul himself did not encourage his disciples to shirk the wholesome labour of committing gospel narratives to memory. From his frequent mention of the catechists it is plain that he valued and upheld their work.

'Toil' it certainly was: not perhaps carried on five hours a day like S. Paul's, nor making such demands on the intellect. The word 'catechise' (κατηχέω) is derived from ἦχος, which with its collateral forms ἠχή and ἠχώ (our 'echo') signifies an irrational noise or din, a sound apart from its meaning. And κατηχεῖν is to din a thing into a person by noise and repetition. Scarcely was this an intellectual operation. It demanded none of the higher spiritual gifts, but only fidelity, sympathy and patience. It testifies also that learners were dull then as now, and that teaching had its drudgery as well as its rewards.

Many of the scholars must have been older and richer than the teacher who dictated to them: men of position like Theophilus, dignified burghers little accustomed to submit to a junior, grey-headed men who despaired of mastering the lesson. But as years rolled on and Christianity had passed its infancy, the catechumens would be more confined to the children of Christian parents. And at all times there would be one great difference both in East and West between the modern Sunday-school and the ancient catechetical class. No girls would be present. To educate a

woman was considered superfluous. "Let them ask their husbands at home" is S. Paul's advice in a similar case to such as wanted instruction. And so closely were they kept within doors, at least those of the wealthier classes, that they had no desire for better treatment. Though S. Paul taught that "in Christ there is... neither male nor female" time was needed to break down the barriers of sex.

CHAPTER II.

THE *STATUS* OF THE CATECHISTS.

To understand the position which the catechists held amongst church workers in the early days, it is necessary to sketch briefly the different orders of clergy, premising that changes and developements were exceedingly rapid at first.

The Apostles during their life actively superintended everything. Next to them are placed the Prophets, on account of the high spiritual gifts which they possessed for preaching. But prophets were few in number and the routine work of preaching was mostly done by itinerants of lower rank who are called Evangelists, and who, coming from Jerusalem, were often out of sympathy with S. Paul and even corrupted the faith of his converts: for the same zeal which "had compassed sea and land to make one proselyte" distinguished the Pharisees for good and for evil when they became Christians. It is not improbable that these evangelists

went on circuit, never staying long at one station. The Presbyters of the earliest period were, I apprehend, churchwardens rather than clergy. They were, I mean, local governors, prosperous business or professional men, of sixty years old and upwards, chosen for their dignity and probity. Their duty was—not to preach, teach or officiate; they were too old to learn a new profession—but to suppress disorder, superintend money matters, preside at church councils, and above all see that a regular supply of evangelists and catechists was provided to conduct the services of their church. Amongst the Gentiles, however, a patriarchal form of government like this was not popular. Greeks preferred in their rulers the activity of youth to the conservatism of age. As in politics, so in religion, they often appointed men under forty to govern and administer. And as it would be absurd to call such men 'presbyters' or 'elders', they used the title 'overseers' (ἐπίσκοποι, commonly translated 'bishops') instead. This I take to be the true distinction between "elders" and "bishops" in the New Testament. In all other particulars the terms are quite interchangeable. With the later developement of the meaning of the word, I am not now concerned. Deacons and deaconesses were chiefly engaged in visiting the sick, carrying round doles to the widows and poor, giving counsel and admonition privately, nursing and helping. The deacons also prepared the room for public worship, handed the

books and otherwise assisted. They were not, as is commonly thought, finance officers and had no connexion with "the seven" (Acts vi.), who are never called 'deacons' in Scripture. Lastly, the catechists were the teachers.

When we remember the high esteem in which teaching and teachers were held in the East, such men as Gamaliel who were "teachers of the law" being honoured above all their contemporaries, we must not be surprised that the Christian catechist, though he had none of the judicial functions of the Jewish, but had merely the simplest of stories to remember and repeat, received some of the honour which was freely lavished on his class. None of the gospels having been written, he was the sole authority to most converts for the mysteries of their faith. S. Paul always ranks the catechists high amongst Christian workers, but the exact place assigned them is different at different periods according to the changes which were rapidly taking place.

In the Epistle to the Ephesians (iv. 11) S. Paul gives the order thus: (1) Apostles, (2) Prophets, (3) Evangelists, (4) Presbyters and Catechists (*ποιμένες καὶ διδάσκαλοι.*) Here presbyters and catechists are counted as one class, because already at that period the presbyters were "stirring up the gift that was in them by the laying on of hands" and entering the list of church workers. They are not yet preachers, for evan-

gelists still remain: but they are becoming teachers. They have not quite superseded the catechists, but so many presbyters had qualified as catechists, so many catechists had been elected presbyters, that in this encyclical letter addressed to a great variety of churches S. Paul groups them together.

At an earlier period (1 Cor. xii. 28) S. Paul writes before this change had taken place, and arranging them once more not according to social standing but to spiritual gifts, puts presbyters and catechists in a quite different order: (1) apostles, (2) prophets, including perhaps the evangelists, who only differed in degree, (3) catechists, (4) workers of miracles, (5) healers of the sick, (6) succourers of the aged, the sick and the poor (ἀντιλήμψεις, deacons and deaconesses are probably meant), (7) governors, that is to say, presbyters (κυβερνήσεις), (8) speakers with tongues.

In Romans xii. 6 f., S. Paul gives a list of spiritual gifts in a slightly different order: "Having gifts differing according to the grace which has been given us, whether the gift be prophecy, let us prophesy according to the due proportions of the Christian faith, or whether it be the office of a deacon, let us exercise it in the diaconate, or the office of a catechist in catechising, or the preacher (the evangelist) in preaching, let the giver of alms give without favouritism, let the presbyter preside with diligence, the doer of deeds of pity (alluding to the 'gifts of healing') with cheerfulness."

Further back still in 1 Thess. v. 12, S. Paul speaks of those "who toil among you and preside over you and admonish you," that is to say, the catechists, the presbyters and evangelists. He couples the words under the *vinculum* of one article to show that they belonged to one class. "Esteem them," he continues, "very highly in love for their work's sake."

In Galatians vi. 6, he shows how much he valued the catechists' work by singling them out for special mention: "Let him that is catechised in the word give a share in all good things to him that catechiseth." Presbyters at that time had no need of money, evangelists may have been subsidised by the church which sent them out, but, no clerical stipends having been as yet provided, the catechists were unpaid and frequently very poor. S. Paul would not have written thus of them, if their work had not made great demands upon their time and energy.

It is at first sight surprising that in the Pastoral epistles there is no mention of the catechists. There, if anywhere, we should have looked for a definition of their position and their duties. But the reason for this omission is not far to seek. If already in the Epistle to the Ephesians the presbyters were taking the place of the catechists, five years later they had quite supplanted them. Indeed the position of a presbyter was altogether changed. From being a wealthy lay ruler he has become a poor stipendiary clergyman. Drawing

the pay he must do the work. He has therefore taken upon himself the functions of the evangelists and the catechists. Both these orders have become extinct.

The churches must have been greatly strengthened by this revolution. Instead of lay governors, glad to accept volunteer workers, whose orthodoxy they had no means of testing, and sure to fall a prey to the proselytising teachers from Jerusalem, responsible clergy, who understood controversy and were trained in the whole cycle of Christian literature—gospels, creeds and hymns—guided the flock with the sobriety which comes of responsibility. One of the qualifications therefore of a presbyter now is that he should be a good catechist (διδακτικός, 1 Tim. iii. 2), and S. Paul writes "Let the presbyter receive twice the stipend (of a widow on the list) especially those who toil in preaching and catechising" (1 Tim. v. 17).

CHAPTER III.

S. MARK A CATECHIST.

It may be well first to state briefly who S. Mark was from the accounts given of him in the New Testament.

When S. Peter was released from prison by the angel at midnight (Acts xii. 12) he went "to the house of Mary the mother of John whose other name was Mark." It would appear from the house being called hers that she was a widow at that time. She and her son, whom he calls "his son" or convert (1 Pet. v. 12), were not perhaps singled out above all others at that crisis so much for their known fidelity, as because their house being a large one (for it had a porch, a portress and an upper chamber over the gateway, as only the houses of the wealthy had) was a common meeting place for the church.

S. Mark was first cousin (ἀνέψιος) to Barnabas (Coloss. iv. 10) who also once at any rate had been a man of property (Acts iv. 37).

The number of wealthy Christians at Jerusalem must always have been small, and it has therefore been conjectured with some probability that this same house, S. Mark's father being then alive, was that in which our Lord ate the Last Supper and in which the disciples assembled at the following Pentecost. If, as is commonly supposed, S. Mark was the young man with the linen cloth (Mark xv. 51 f.), this conjecture is somewhat confirmed.

Though not a personal disciple of our Lord, S. Mark must have been one of S. Peter's early converts. He attended the catechetical classes and learned the gospel direct from S. Peter's lips. He was amongst the most successful pupils, and having, as a well-educated man, a knowledge of Greek beyond most of his countrymen, who only spoke it colloquially, was "commissioned (Papias tells us) to translate the records into Greek" for the benefit of the Hellenistic Jews, who, although a small minority in Jerusalem, were at that time a majority in the church (Acts vi. 1 ff.). The words of Papias (Πέτρου ἑρμηνευτὴς γενόμενος) clearly indicate a duly authorised appointment.

As a bilingual catechist of the earliest school he accompanied SS. Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey in the capacity of "minister" (ὑπηρέτης, Acts xiii. 5). We have seen that in S. Luke's vocabulary "minister of the word" means catechist, and we have said that so cumbrous a phrase would inevit-

ably be shortened into "minister". I think this is so here, and that S. Mark went as a catechist; for the natural meaning that he went as a servant to wait upon them is unworthy alike of their poverty and of his social position.

For S. Paul himself was not a catechist. S. Luke, it is true, once writes of him that "he taught the facts concerning the Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts xxviii. 31), a phrase which strictly interpreted would imply catechising. But in early times before technical terms become fixed they are frequently used in a non-technical sense. Elsewhere S. Luke correctly describes S. Paul as a lecturer or disputer (Acts xix. 9) and he must mean that here. For S. Paul himself disavows all acquaintance with the oral gospel, "Neither was I taught" (Gal. i. 12), and in his summaries of his labours he never includes the toil of catechising, but rather acknowledges the debt which he owes to those humbler workers. His epistles would surely have more frequently contained quotations from, or allusions to, the gospel sections, if he had been intimately familiar with them. S. Barnabas also who is always called an apostle, can have had no time for routine work. If therefore SS. Paul and Barnabas were to found churches, they must provide a catechist, or their preaching would be as insufficient for the propagation of the faith as S. Peter's preaching in the day of Pentecost had been over those strangers from all parts of the Roman Empire, who

returned immediately to their homes and although many of them had been baptized, found themselves too ignorant to undertake missionary work. And what better catechist could be taken than S. Mark who not only belonged to the earliest school, but himself was the author of that Greek version, which would be most needed amongst the Gentiles?

But whether "minister" here means catechist or otherwise, there is reason to think that S. Mark was a qualified catechist, for he could hardly have translated S. Peter's memoirs into Greek, except by first learning the Aramaic form of them. They did not exist in writing, unless the Apostle submitted his tablet daily for inspection; which is not probable.

But S. Mark did something more than translate, he edited S. Peter's memoirs and adapted them for use amongst Greek-speaking Jews. For example in S. Peter's Aramaic the Old Testament quotations must have been taken from the Hebrew text or from one of the oral paraphrases. Our Lord himself would so give them; for we have no reason to suppose that he used the version of the Seventy, and S. Jerome expressly testifies (*de viris illustr.* III.) that in the Gospel according to the Hebrews (on which see chapter VIII.) he found all the quotations, whether put into our Lord's mouth or not, agreeing with the Hebrew and not with the LXX. But the Septuagint version was the Bible of the Greek-speaking Christians, and to meet

their case S. Mark, instead of giving a literal rendering of his own, deliberately in most cases borrowed the renderings of the LXX., which from him passed all over the Greek-speaking Christian world. These renderings therefore are found in the Petrine memoirs in all three Gospels and (since the same example was followed by the translators of the second cycle) in the Matthæan Utterances of the Lord; but those parts of the first Gospel, which were never in the hands of the catechists, follow the Hebrew text.

Once more, did S. Mark write the Gospel, which for so many centuries has been attributed to him?

First we have the testimony of Papias who must have been born while the first century had still many years to run, for he was bishop of Hierapolis in the earlier part of the second century. What he says is so important that I transcribe it at length, as it is preserved in Eusebius (*H. E.* III. 39). Papias appears to be quoting from the oral witness of John the presbyter, whose pupil he was and whose words he carefully treasured.

"And thus the Presbyter used to say: Mark, having been constituted (γενόμενος) translator of Peter wrote (ἔγραψε) with accuracy what he (Peter) recollected. He did not however write in (chronological) order either the words or the deeds of Christ, for he had not heard the Lord nor been his follower but in later time (as the Presbyter said) had followed Peter, who used to

compose his lessons to meet the need of the moment, and not as though he were compiling a set record of the words of the Lord. Thus Mark made no errors, though he only wrote down certain things, as (Peter) recollected them. For he paid attention to one point only, that he should not pass by anything of what he had heard or be guilty of falsehood therein."

If we couple with this the almost equally trustworthy statement of Irenæus, that S. Mark did not write until after S. Peter's death, we shall better understand S. Mark's position in this matter.

We have in these two very early fathers the express statement that S. Mark wrote something. That our second Gospel is what he wrote is not only the belief of all antiquity, as far back as we can discover that belief, but is very strongly supported by an examination of the nature and contents of our second Gospel. See more on this point in chapter VI.

But in assigning the authorship of our second Gospel to S. Mark, as we confidently do, we must be careful not to weaken our case by claiming too much. Probably thirty or forty years intervened between the time when S. Mark first heard the gospel and that at which he committed it to writing (chapter XIV.), during which period his memory must have lost much of its freshness.

If S. Mark was the author of the second Gospel, we can see why, when he came to write, he put down

nothing but S. Peter's memoirs. Not only would fidelity to his old master incline him to do this, but his own limitations of knowledge may have left him no choice. For S. Mark did not long accompany SS. Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey. Not approving, it may be, of the unconditional admission of Gentiles into the Christian Church, or for some other reason which appeared unsatisfactory to S. Paul, he deserted them and returned to his mother's home in Jerusalem (Acts xiii. 13). Later on his scruples were overcome or the cause for them had disappeared, and he volunteered to join the Apostles on their second journey. His relative S. Barnabas gladly welcomed him, but S. Paul refused (Acts xv. 37 ff.). A bitterness, of which S. Paul afterwards repented (1 Cor. xiii. 5; Eph. iv. 26), arose and separated him from his earliest Christian friend, whose death appears to have prevented the reconciliation which S. Paul afterwards took pains to effect with S. Mark. SS. Barnabas and Mark sailed away to Cyprus. There in their native place they lived as it seems to me in obscurity, out of the reach of the later developments in Christian teaching. It is true that S. Mark was with S. Peter once more when that Apostle wrote his first Epistle, and was at Ephesus when S. Paul just before his martyrdom begged S. Timothy to bring him to Rome. But this does not prevent a lengthy residence in Cyprus. And when S. Mark came to write, S. Peter's memoirs may well have

been the only records which he had ever committed to memory.

If S. Mark, as the authorised translator of S. Peter, was the original instructor of all the Greek catechists, it follows that S. Luke and the author of the first Gospel were his pupils, though not directly but with many teachers intervening. Hence even when they are united against him, they can only prevail when they either produce his earlier recollections as opposed to his later memory, or when by direct appeal to S. Peter or other eye-witnesses they have modified his statements, or when by reference to the Aramaic catechists they have improved upon his translation. All these cases occur, but so seldom that S. Mark's Gospel remains by far our safest guide to the first cycle.

Papias states that S. Mark's Gospel is not arranged in the true chronological order. He would not have made so much of this, if the fault had not been, as it is, glaring. According to S. John, our Lord's ministry lasted three years or more—possibly ten (see Westcott on S. John viii. 57),—during which He visited Jerusalem several times. But S. Mark only takes Him to Jerusalem a week before His death, and certainly leaves us under the impression that His ministry was concluded within a year. It is scarcely credible that S. Peter, if he had completed his work, would have left the chronology thus.

The truth seems to me to be that S. Peter taught

his memoirs, as Papias says, in sections, a lesson at a time, as the occasion required. One day he might narrate some incident connected with the Passion, the next he might relate the Baptism or the Transfiguration. Variety and edification would be his main guide, as it is a modern preacher's. But about twelve years after the Ascension S. Peter's work was suddenly interrupted by his departure from Jerusalem. What reason led to his withdrawal from the city we are not told. Suddenly we find him in retirement at Joppa (Acts ix. 38, 43), and S. James the Lord's brother in his place (Acts xii. 17, xv. 13). S. Paul confirms this by an incidental remark (Gal. i. 19, ii. 9). Henceforth S. Peter only went to Jerusalem occasionally and as a visitor. It is possible that the church at Jerusalem, which had accused him of favouritism (Acts vi. 1), and of improper behaviour (Acts xi. 1), had become impatient of his rule. His opinions were too liberal, his conduct too hasty (Gal. ii. 11) for the majority of the Christians of that church.

S. Mark therefore as the chief catechist appears to me to have put the fragments into the best order he could, with a view sometimes to symmetry rather than chronology. There is a rough attempt at chronology in obvious matters, but little more; and S. Mark's arrangement was accepted by the other Greek catechists and is therefore followed almost without change in our first three Gospels.

If S. Peter had completed his work, he would doubtless have narrated more of Christ's ministry in Jerusalem. But, as it is, he has told us so little, that the three Gospels crowd it all into the one last week.

When therefore the author of the first Gospel in a non-Petrine note tells us that "the blind and the lame came to Christ in the Temple courts and He healed them" (Matt. xxi. 14), I would suggest that, although he puts this into Holy Week, he is really alluding to the well known cases of the man blind from his birth (John ix. 1 ff.), and of the lame man at the pool of Bethzatha (John v. 1 ff.). On the first Gospel's use of the plural in such cases, see chapter XIII. The cleansing of the Temple is placed by S. John at the beginning of Christ's ministry (John ii. 13 ff.), by the other three during Holy Week (Mark xi. 15, Matt. xxi. 12, Luke xix. 45). It is hardly probable that there were two cleansings, and if not, surely S. John's date is the right one.

If in future we are to make progress in recovering the true sequence of events in the gospel history, it must be by freely acknowledging that the first three Gospels are not safe guides in chronology. It is unreasonable to contend that the testimony of three men is necessarily true when we can see that they owe their unanimity to following the same leader. And it is melancholy to think of the time which has been lost in the endeavour to construct exact chronological tables by men who have

taken as their guide S. Luke's Gospel, which we shall endeavour to show is the least chronological of the four.

I cannot close this chapter without anticipating an objection which may be raised. Why, it will be asked, if S. Peter could write excellent Greek himself, as his first Epistle shows that he could, did he employ S. Mark as a translator? The answer is supplied by S. Peter himself, who tells us plainly that he did not write the Greek of that Epistle, but employed Silvanus to do so, although S. Mark also was with him (1 Pet. v. 12). It is not in the least degree probable that a Galilean fisherman was master of literary Greek. If S. John's case be quoted to the contrary, I would reply that S. John is generally admitted to have been a much younger man and therefore more likely to learn.

CHAPTER IV.

ANALYSIS OF THE FIRST THREE GOSPELS.

BEFORE we proceed further it may be convenient to state briefly the six component parts into which the three earlier Gospels may be analysed and the method of ascertaining them. For the present, difficulties and exceptions may be ignored; the time to discuss them will be when we examine the six parts separately. We have already mentioned the three great cycles, and we will now consider them first.

I. Take S. Mark's Gospel as a basis, place in parallel columns by its side, as Mr Rushbrooke has done in his *Synopticon*, the corresponding sections of the first Gospel and of S. Luke with a very few passages from SS. John and Paul, and you will have what is left us of the first cycle of oral teaching, which consisted of S. Peter's memoirs. For further particulars see chapter v.

II. Take chapters iii—xxv of the first Gospel, subtract from them all those sections which you have already assigned to the first cycle, and you will have as a remainder very little else but a collection of parables, discourses and sermons with their settings. Place parallel to these the corresponding sections of S. Luke which frequently add much new matter, and you will have what is left to us of the second cycle of oral gospel which consists of S. Matthew's 'utterances of the Lord'. For further particulars see chapter VIII.

III. Take the great central section of S. Luke (ix. 51—xviii. 14), subtract from it the few verses which belong to the first cycle and the considerable sections which belong to the second cycle, and you will find as the remainder a remarkable collection of discourses, parables and stories. Add to these one narrative of the woman anointing Jesus' feet in the house of Simon the leper, which is found in the first third of the Gospel (vii. 36–50) and three narratives, that of Zacchæus (xix. 1–10), that of the penitent thief (xxiii. 39–43) and that of the two men journeying to Emmaus (xxiv. 13–53), which are found in the last third of the Gospel, and you will have what is left to us of the third cycle of oral gospel, which is the work of a pupil of S. Paul. For further particulars see chapter IX.

These three cycles form the main sources of the first three Gospels, of which S. Mark's Gospel may be called *simplex*, as making use of the first cycle only, the

first Gospel *duplex*, as making use of the first and second cycles, S. Luke's Gospel *triplex*, as making use of all the three cycles.

IV. But certain sections in the first Gospel including the two introductory chapters, and a few sections in S. Luke, do not belong to any of the three great cycles, but were obtained by the catechists from other authorities unknown to us. These are sometimes added to enrich the cycles, sometimes supersede them. I have styled them 'Fragments of oral gospel outside the cycles'. For further particulars see chapter XI.

V. Again some parts of S. Luke's gospel were not derived through the catechists but, as S. Luke tells us in his preface, directly from eye-witnesses or other persons. Such are the two introductory chapters, the genealogy and a few other sections. The sections of this class I have styled 'non-oral gospel'. For further particulars see chapter XII.

VI. Lastly the writers of the Gospels necessarily added a few words or sentences of their own by way of introduction or conclusion or to connect together the sections. All these with whatever else is the writer's original contribution to his work I have styled 'editorial notes'. For further particulars see chapter XIII.

S. Luke's Gospel contains specimens of all the six component parts and is therefore the most interesting to study from our point of view. The first Gospel omits

the third and the fifth ; S. Mark contains only the first and the last. S. Mark's Gospel we may further describe as neutral, the first Gospel as theological, S. Luke's as cosmopolitan.

Of the six classes, which are enumerated above, the first consists of sections which are frequently common to three evangelists, sometimes to four ; the second consists of sections which are generally common to two, but the last four classes consist of sections which are peculiar to one.

We are apt to assume that everything in the last four classes is verbally accurate. Doubt and difficulty are supposed to begin when we have two records, and to increase as we have three or four. A little reflexion however will show that the absence of difficulty in the cases of single attestation is no real guarantee of accuracy. There is no discrepancy, because there is only one account. If we had other accounts, the difficulties might be expected to begin. The very fact that we have only one account usually shows that the record was compiled at a comparatively late date and is therefore the less likely to be exact in verbal accuracy.

It is the province of criticism, in the case of singly attested facts, to examine the authority on which they rest, and in the case of doubly or trebly attested facts to classify the authorities and show their relative importance, that the reader may not pick and choose at haphazard according to caprice or for subjective reasons,

but may have some fixed principles to guide him, for it is plain that the more authorities are multiplied, the better hope he will have of discovering the truth, if he knows how to use them.

We shall endeavour in the following chapters to lay down a few principles of criticism, which for the most part will speak for themselves, believing that Inspiration does not supersede or materially alter the laws of human thought. For as in the person of Christ, the Incarnate Word, there was not only a human body, but also a human mind with all its limitations and needs, existing mysteriously and incomprehensibly in union with the fulness of the Godhead, so in the written Word we have human language and human thought, both of which have full scope though they are pervaded by the influence of the Holy Spirit.

But though this comparison is useful, the analogy must not be pushed too far. We believe that in the person of Christ there was perfect God and perfect man: in the Scriptures we acknowledge the human element to be present in perfection, but not so the divine. That was granted "in different measures and different ways" (Heb. i. 1.) according to the capacity of the prophet and the need of the church; only "by the Son was the Spirit given without measure" (John iii. 34).

A few remarks on Revelation and Inspiration are necessary here, to make my meaning clear. Revelation is objective, Inspiration subjective. Revelation draws

back the veil, which covers from our sight either future events or the mysteries of the invisible world. When once the veil has been drawn back and the prophet has seen and described what he saw, the revelation becomes a possession for all time.

Inspiration quickens the spiritual perception. Although the veil be withdrawn, the vision may be obscure or complex. "We see through a glass and in a riddle" (1 Cor. xiii. 12). The prophet needs help to interpret for us what he has seen. The obscurity of the book of Revelation may illustrate this fact.

Now in the New Testament the person of Christ was the great revelation. They who had seen, heard and handled Him (1 John i. 1) had something to say, which no prophet had ever had before. They were inspired, that they might be able to grasp something of His work, of the meaning of His death, the power of His resurrection and the significance of His teaching. Pontius Pilate or Caiaphas might have written a life of Christ, but it would not have been a gospel. SS. Peter, John, Matthew and Paul received in greater measure than others the help of the Holy Spirit, if we are to judge by the records of their teaching which remain, in "bringing all things to their remembrance" (John xvi. 13) for this purpose. But their gifts varied in degree; some were enabled to see one thing, some another; for the Holy Spirit "divides to every man severally as He will" (1 Cor. xii. 11);

and thus the manifold needs of the Church were met.

This was not all. When the gift was granted, providential guidance, we firmly believe, preserved it. During all the time that the gospel was in the hands of the catechists, the Holy Spirit watched over it, not with such absolute constraint, as to preserve it from all circumstantial change; the changes, as we shall see, were great and rapid; but so that the truth should be handed down to the Church in a form suited to her need.

The same providential guidance directed the three first evangelists in their writing. By them was needed no new revelation; they did but record what they had received from others (Luke i. 1 ff.). To them there was no high measure of inspiration; that was needed rather when the oral gospel was first composed. But the Holy Spirit guided and directed them to write what was helpful.

Their writings therefore must be regarded as human histories, though they are the Revelation of God. And it is only from the human side that scholarship can approach them. But it is our duty to do this, boldly, though with reverence, for the more we understand the human, the more are we in a position to search into the deep things of God.

CHAPTER V.

THE FIRST CYCLE OF ORAL GOSPEL.
S. PETER'S MEMOIRS.

THREE editions, all nearly complete, of S. Peter's memoirs have been preserved for us, one in each of the first three Gospels. But that given by S. Mark is so much nearer the original in form than the others, that for the purpose of the present chapter we shall consider it alone. In chapter VII. we shall discuss the divergences from it presented in the other Gospels.

Papias draws particular attention to the care which S. Mark took to give us the whole of S. Peter's memoirs. And this praise, as far as we can tell, is well deserved. Only one section—the healing of the centurion's servant (or son?) (Matt. viii. 5–13, Luke vii. 1–10)—is omitted by S. Mark, though it appears to me plainly to be Petrine.

Papias tells us that S. Mark wrote because he had been constituted S. Peter's translator. We have no

reason to think that he wrote till, as Irenæus affirms, after S. Peter's death; but as his translation was current East and West wherever Greek was spoken, it must have been made many years before it was committed to writing. Indeed as Greek-speaking Jews were at first a majority in the church at Jerusalem and were not backward in letting their influence be felt (Acts vi.), S. Mark's translation was probably made for them almost as soon as the Aramaic original was composed.

That S. Peter's work was really finished and translated within twelve years after the Ascension we shall endeavour to prove in chapter x. Suffice it now to say that the relative antiquity of the first cycle, as compared with the other two, is abundantly shown by the meagreness of its contents. There is a singular absence in it of all that is most interesting and popular in our Lord's *teaching*. S. Mark, in short, never has been a favourite author in the Church, and however much critics may extol him for historical fidelity, they will never win for him the admiration of the common people. Except the *Catena*, no patristic commentary on his Gospel has been preserved. The fathers of the Church most falsely regarded it as a mere *epitome* of S. Matthew. Most of those writers who in ancient or modern times have commented on all the Gospels, treat S. Mark slightingly, referring their readers to the notes upon the parallel sections in S. Matthew. Until our own day, few commentators have singled him out for a

separate treatise. And he has been as much neglected in the pulpit as the study.

Nor is this surprising. A gospel which omits the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord's Prayer, all the parables except four, and all the longer discourses except that on the Second Advent, must needs seem an inadequate record of our Lord's teaching. It has none of the attractive narratives of His birth, His infancy and boyhood; nothing of the manger at Bethlehem, of the shepherds watching their flocks by night or the *Magi* visiting the cradle; nothing of the tears shed over Jerusalem, or the Father's yearning for the prodigal son, nothing of the Samaritans, nothing of the penitent thief on the cross or of the woman who had been a sinner, none of the sublime discourses of S. John.

The Petrine memoirs are comparatively cold and deficient in theological and spiritual teaching. If we wished to prove the law of progress in Revelation, we could not do better than compare the first cycle with the second and third and these again with S. John. The developement is like the change from childhood through youth to manhood. For thus was the promise fulfilled "When the Spirit of truth shall come, he shall guide you into all the truth; he shall glorify me, for he shall take of mine and shall show it unto you" (John xvi. 13, 14). It is not so much that S. Peter's spiritual insight was less than S. Matthew's, but that he wrote at an earlier date, when the Church under

the guidance of the Holy Spirit was learning the meaning of her message. History also necessarily comes before doctrine. The fact of the crucifixion and resurrection must be established, before their purport could be understood.

Nor is the priority of the Petrine memoirs attested only by internal considerations like these, but still more plainly by their universal acceptance. They were current everywhere, as no other cycle was. They are given almost complete in each of our three first Gospels. They had, we shall see, a formidable rival in the second cycle, and a still more formidable rival in the third. But though the third cycle succeeded in preventing large portions of the second cycle from circulating in the West, it had no such power against the first, which remained almost intact amongst Jews and Gentiles alike. No one ever thought of committing the second or third cycle separately to writing in Greek: it is our greatest loss that no one did: but S. Mark did deem it important thus to distinguish the first, as containing the historical facts on which our faith is based.

We need not here give a list of the sections of the first cycle, as we have thought it necessary to do with the second and third, because the reader will find them ready to hand in S. Mark's Gospel, of which any good commentary will give an analysis; but it may be useful to point out some of the general characteristics.

The chief glory of the Petrine memoirs is the full account which they contain of the last Passion, written however from the human side and appealing chiefly to our sense of pity and shame. The Resurrection—that cardinal fact of Christianity—is not only thrice predicted (Mark viii. 13, ix. 9, 31), but in the last chapter an account is given of the empty tomb and the words "He is risen, he is not here." S. Mark gives no more, because the last page of his Gospel (xvi. 9 ff.), which like the other New Testament writings was through the writer's poverty written upon *papyrus*, was apparently torn away before it came into circulation.

For the rest we may notice that, though some of the greater miracles—such as the healing of the man born blind, the raising of Lazarus, and the raising of the widow's son at Nain—find no place in the Petrine memoirs, yet the miraculous element is as strong as it is weak in the second and third cycles.

Thus we have the raising of the daughter of Jairus, the cure of the Gadarene demoniac, the stilling of the storm, the walking on the sea, the feeding of five thousand and of four thousand, the restoration of sight to Bartimæus, and the healing of the epileptic boy at the foot of the mount of Transfiguration.

But if the acts of Christ are vividly detailed, His words are treated as still more important. Indeed many miracles appear to be narrated for the sake of the

conversation which attended them or the controversy to which they gave rise. Only one considerable section—that of the murder of John the Baptist (Mark vi. 14–29)—does not centre round the person of our Lord. Prominence is given to the Sabbath controversy, which first raised popular feeling against Christ (ii. 23–28, iii. 1–6); to the disputes with the Pharisees about eating with unwashen hands (vii. 1–7), about the Corban (vii. 9–13), about divorce (x. 1–12), about the blasphemy of claiming to forgive sins (ii. 7–12), about the nature of the baptism of John (xii. 27–33), paying tribute to Cæsar (xii. 13–17), and to the dispute with the Sadducees about resurrection (xii. 18–27).

Although the sayings of our Lord which are preserved in the Petrine memoirs are short, and seldom touch His higher teaching, many of them are striking, and were evidently intended to arrest the attention of non-Christians or neophytes. Such especially are, "There are some standing here who shall not taste death..." (ix. 1). "Whosoever shall blaspheme against the Holy Spirit..." (iii. 29). "If thy hand offend thee, cut it off..." (ix. 47). "What shall it profit a man...?" (viii. 36).

Our Lord's sayings in the Petrine memoirs are seldom enigmatical. We should hardly have gathered from S. Mark that at one stage of His teaching "without a parable spake he not unto the people" (iv. 34). But we have at least one example of this: "Beware of

the leaven of the Pharisees and of the leaven of Herod." (viii. 15).

The Petrine memoirs, though meagre and incomplete, sketch for us in outline a considerable part of our Lord's history. They form in this way the historical framework of the three Gospels. The other cycles, though full of His teaching, contribute hardly anything to a knowledge of His movements. It is only when we come to S. John that we get new information on this important head, except such notices of His earlier life as we find from sources outside the cycles.

And surely it is most important for us as serious historical students to know that we have so firm a foundation for the facts which so nearly concern us. It is better in the controversy against unbelief to bring into prominence the unique attestation of S. Mark's Gospel, than to take up the untenable position that all the Gospel narratives are equally exact and can be verbally reconciled with each other. If we can vindicate S. Mark's claim to be heard the other Gospels will vindicate themselves. Let the facts of Christ's life be once assured, and His teaching will necessarily be accepted.

Let us not, however, claim too much even for S. Mark's Gospel. Recollections of recollections are not the same thing as facts. There is room for subjective opinion. But even S. Peter's original memoirs did not

convey absolute truth, which is not attainable by us. Inspiration does not confer infallibility. The Old Testament was fully inspired, yet our Lord pronounced some of its precepts to be transitory (Mark x. 5), and some of its morality to be wrong (Matt. v. 21–48). S. Paul will not admit that the fuller revelation of the New Testament is perfect. "We know in part and we prophesy (*i.e.* preach and teach) in part" (1 Cor. xiii. 9). He contrasts our present knowledge with that for which we look hereafter. "Now we see by means of a mirror and in a mystery, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I was known" (1 Cor. xiii. 12).

S. Mark's Gospel may narrate facts in an imperfect form. Take for example the case of demoniacal possession which the Petrine memoirs teach in its naked and literal simplicity, for they appear to attribute such maladies as mania, melancholy, epilepsy, nay even deafness, to the indwelling of a malignant spirit. They say that these spirits on one occasion went forth from a man and entered a herd of swine.

Most English commentators maintain the literal truth of this teaching. Some hold that demoniacal possession is possible, and not uncommon now; others that Satan had unusual activity during our Lord's ministry.

This may be the true view of the case, and in support of it I would plead our complete ignorance of

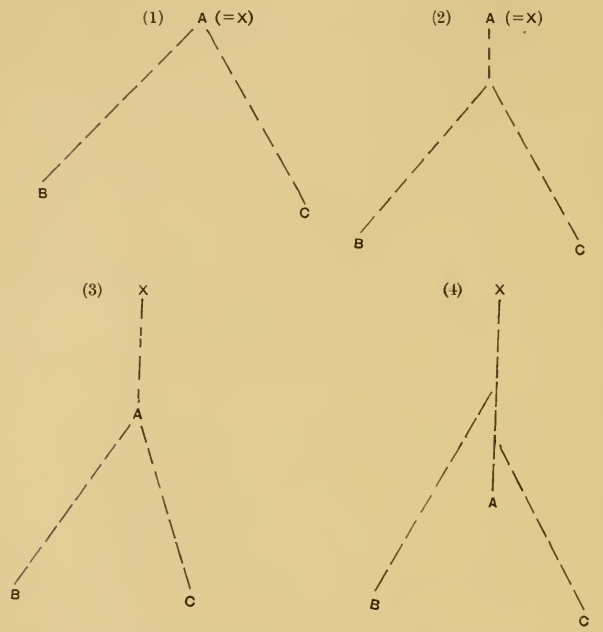
things beyond our ken. But the Dean of Wells suggests delay and suspension of judgement about this difficult question. It may be our true wisdom to act on this advice. At any rate a Christian teacher may hesitate to force his own view of this matter upon those who look to him for guidance.

CHAPTER VI.

GENEALOGY OF THE THREE EXTANT EDITIONS OF S. PETER'S MEMOIRS.

If I have three manuscripts A, B and C of a work X, full of various readings of great divergence and perplexity, my first task is to examine their genealogy; and if after an exhaustive comparison I find that A presents by far the oldest type of text, and that B and C may have descended from A, but have little in common except what they derive from it, I conclude that A is either the *exemplar* from which B and C are descended or an early copy of that *exemplar*. I conclude that B is the remote descendant of A in one line, and that C is the remote descendant of A in another. As for A, it may be either the original work X itself, or it may be an early or a remote descendant from it, according as the time at my disposal is long or short.

The principal possible genealogies may be represented thus, each stroke standing for a manuscript.



By the same process we may trace the genealogy of the three widely different editions of the Petrine memoirs which are preserved in our three first Gospels. And we find that the second Gospel (S. Mark) presents a very early type of text, from which the first and third Gospels may have been derived; the first Gospel presents a much later type of text, diverging in one

direction, and the third Gospel a much later type of text, diverging in another direction.

The first Gospel could not have been derived from the third, nor the third from the first; neither could the second Gospel have been derived from the first or the third or from both combined.

Any one may test these facts for himself by a few hours' careful study of the Greek text. He must however be prepared to find much greater changes than he would in manuscripts, because the living catechist exercised far greater power to alter than the scribe whose work is mechanical.

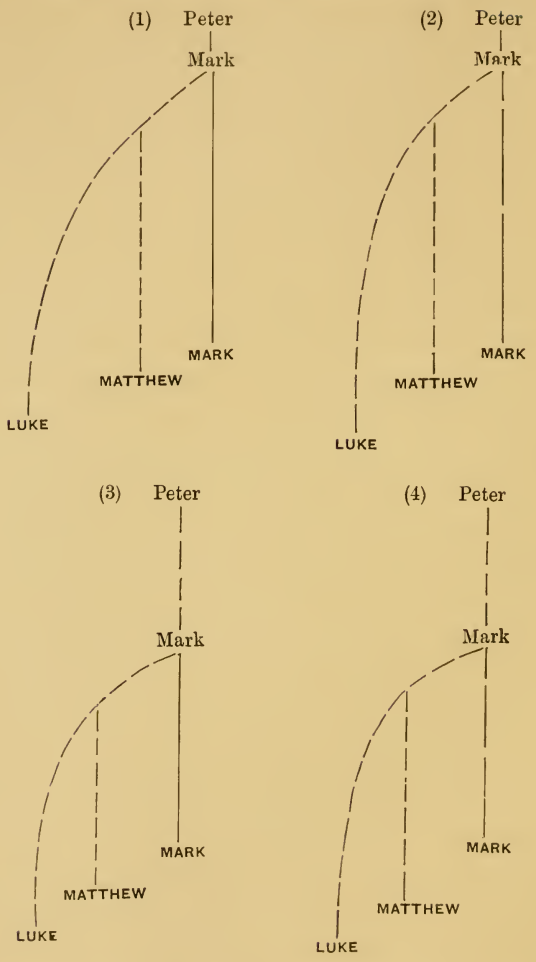
Thus, if you grant, what I shall try to establish in chapter XIV., that our present three Gospels were written in the decade 71–80 A.D., we get the following diagrams, in which I have used ordinary type for oral gospels and capitals for written Gospels. For brevity I have put MATTHEW to represent the first Gospel.

(1) Here S. Mark is S. Peter's immediate disciple and is the author in his old age, represented by the long stroke, of the second Gospel.

(2) Here S. Mark is S. Peter's immediate disciple, but a pupil of his, once or twice removed, is the author of the second Gospel.

(3) Here S. Mark is S. Peter's disciple indirectly, receiving the oral gospel at third or fourth hand, but he is the author of the second Gospel.

(4) Here S. Mark is S. Peter's disciple indirectly,



receiving the oral gospel at third or fourth hand, and a

pupil of his once or twice removed is the author of the second Gospel.

No. 1 is both supported by the testimony of the Fathers of the Church, and best fits into what we know of the history of the time.

No. 2 supposes that Papias and the other Fathers confused S. Mark's oral work with a written Gospel.

No. 3 supposes that the Hellenistic Christians at Jerusalem were neglected for some time.

No. 4 labours under all the difficulties.

Nos. 3 and 4 leave less time for the changes in the tradition and for the working in of the other cycles.

Although therefore any of the above four is possible, the first seems decidedly the most probable and alone has proper historical attestation.

A few more remarks on the diagrams may be acceptable.

It will be seen that all the Greek catechists were ultimately instructed by S. Mark, and that the Gentiles received the Gospel from the Church at Jerusalem, but soon broke their connexion with that Church.

The length of the strokes represents the period during which any particular catechist controlled the tradition before handing it on to his successor. S. Mark therefore in the first and, as I hold, true diagram has a stroke nearly equal in length to eight or ten

of the others. Of course a catechist did not retire from work as soon as he had instructed a pupil; many catechists may have continued to work as long as S. Mark himself, and these must have exercised a conserving influence to check rapid changes. Some catechists had many pupils, and all catechists were more or less affected by the teaching of their fellows, so that much mixture in the tradition arose. But it is undesirable to attempt to represent all this in a diagram.

On the other hand, we must not be surprised that the older catechists did not check changes more than they did. Events move rapidly, and individuals must move with them or make way for younger men. S. Mark himself, if he had reappeared in Jerusalem in his old age, could not I presume have held his own as a catechist. He would have been thought old-fashioned. For there is a fashion in teaching as well as in manuscripts. Theoretically it is supposable that a thirteenth century cursive manuscript is a direct copy of a fourth century uncial, but in practice this could only be done for some scholar or pedant. In the thirteenth century the spelling, the grammar, the readings were different, and men demand that to which they are accustomed and which they think correct. A bookseller who did not give the latest 'improvements' could not sell his manuscripts.

So with catechists. The introduction of the second cycle at Jerusalem and of the second and third cycles

in the West had greatly extended the knowledge of Christ's teaching. The catechist who would hold his own must master the new sections. And to keep abreast with the age it was necessary for a man not to indulge too freely any taste which he may have had for the older form of teaching.

CHAPTER VII.

DETERIORATION IN THE ORAL TEACHING.

THE ideal catechist would be one, who could boast like the Rabbi that he had never said anything new, but had scrupulously repeated the very words that he had been taught.

Unhappily such catechists were not common, least of all so in Gentile Churches. The desire to improve upon the original by correcting its supposed mistakes, improving its style or adapting it to the special needs of your class had a strong hold on the fertile Hellenic mind, and produced a gradual deterioration in oral teaching. Even at Jerusalem a contempt for interesting but unimportant details was reducing the picturesque Petrine memoirs to a jejune chronicle.

Thus we observe the existence of two schools of catechists, who deviated in opposite directions from the primitive text. First came the Jewish school, which

was verbally exact but endeavoured to make work easier for the pupil by reducing its length. Next came the Gentile school, which was careless about verbal precision and endeavoured to present the work in a more attractive literary form. Both these changes seem to be due to popular demand in the different Churches.

The Petrine memoirs therefore have come down to us in three forms. In S. Mark we have a neutral text representing the original with a considerable degree of precision; in the first Gospel we have an abbreviated text, some parts of which are reduced to less than half the original length; in S. Luke we have an altered text, not much shorter, but full of slight changes which irritate the reader, who has been trained, as most Christians are, on the first Gospel, producing that kind of impatience which is unfortunately felt by most persons on reading the revised English version.

S. Mark's text is that of a primitive catechist; the first Gospel's that of a late catechist of the Jewish school; S. Luke's that of a late catechist of the Gentile school. For it is almost certain that all these authors were themselves catechists. Their work would be extremely difficult if they were not.

And the changes which we observe in the two later Gospels, I mean the first and third, are not the work of one mind but of many. The extraordinary similarity of the narratives amid a multitude of minute and often

unaccountable divergences could only be produced by transmission through a long line of catechists, each of whom contributed something to the general result.

Great as the deterioration is in the two later Gospels, it must have been still greater in the least efficiently served Churches.

These remarks must now be justified by a few examples. And first let us take an alteration for the better, obtained by correcting the Greek version.

S. Mark, owing to an imperfect knowledge of Greek and slight acquaintance with classical literature, had used the word "metamorphosed" (*μετεμορφώθη*) to denote the change which came over our Lord at the Transfiguration (Mark ix. 2). There was however, no change in the permanent form (*μορφή*), but only in the outward appearance (*σχῆμα*). The narrative describes a glory and a brilliancy, but no alteration in the features. *Μετεσχηματίσθη* would have been the right word; both "metamorphosed" and its Latin equivalent "transfigured" are clearly wrong, though "transformed" would have been worse. The Jerusalem catechists, however, knew less Greek than S. Mark and did not feel the difficulty. In the first Gospel therefore "metamorphosed" remains (Matt. xvii. 2). But the Gentile catechists knew that a *metamorphosis* would suggest wrong ideas to a Greek mind. It would recall the fables of Zeus changing into a bull or a swan, or would suggest to the Latins Ovid's fifteen books of

Metamorphoses. In S. Luke accordingly we find the word removed and a new rendering substituted, "the form of his countenance became different" (Luke ix. 29).

And now let us consider some changes of another character.

First arise some which may be placed to the account of defective memory. Thus S. Mark puts the cursing of the barren fig-tree on the morning of the second day in Holy Week, and says that the disciples first noticed and called attention to its withering twenty-four hours later. This is evidently the primitive record. S. Luke omits the whole section, but the first Gospel makes the withering follow suddenly, and its very suddenness becomes the ground for remark (Mark xi. 12 ff.; Matt. xxi. 19 ff.).

Again, in the healing of Bartimæus, S. Mark writes, "And they come to Jericho, and as he and his disciples and a great crowd were journeying forth from Jericho...." The first Gospel in its usual way condenses this without altering the sense: "And as they were journeying forth from Jericho a great crowd followed him." But S. Luke writes, "And it came to pass as he was drawing nigh to Jericho." Here the scene of the miracle is changed. Some persons indeed have suggested that as there was an old town in ruins at Jericho, and a new town recently built, Christ may have been leaving the one and entering the other; but

we have only to test such an explanation by applying it to-day to Nice or Rome, to feel that there is more ingenuity in it than probability (Mark x. 46; Matt. xx. 29; Luke xviii. 35).

Sometimes the first Gospel's condensations alter the meaning. Thus S. Mark in his glowing account of the Baptist's murder tells us that Herod imprisoned John "on account of Herodias," not, it would seem, to gratify her hate, but to protect John from the assassins whom she was likely to employ, for "Herodias set herself against him and desired to kill him, but could not, for Herod...kept him safe, paid him visits, was much disturbed in conscience by what he said and yet listened to him with pleasure" (Mark vi. 17 ff.). S. Luke omits the narrative, but the first Gospel reduces it to this, that "Herod wished to kill John, but feared the multitude, because they held him as a prophet." All allusion to the action of Herodias in the matter is passed by; yet this Gospel testifies to the truth of the original record when it says that Herod "was pained" when the stratagem of Herodias succeeded (Matt. xiv. 3 ff.).

So in the Petrine section which is not preserved in S. Mark, S. Luke writes that the centurion sent to Jesus some elders of the Jews, saying that he did so because he held himself unworthy to come in person. Again, seeing Jesus approaching, he sent a second embassy of friends, entreating Him not to take an

unnecessary trouble. Finally, Jesus granted his request without either visiting or seeing him. But the first Gospel omits all this unquestionably authentic matter and makes the centurion come and present his petition in person (Luke vii. 1 ff.; Matt. viii. 5 ff.).

Deterioration takes place much less in conversations than in narratives. And this was to be expected. Reverence for our Lord's sayings would naturally tend to preserve them intact. Still it has not always done so. Thus in the parable of the new cloth and the old garment, S. Mark represents Christianity as new cloth, not yet made up into a garment, but, as it was in our Lord's time, still in the piece. No one, he continues, would use it to patch up the worn and threadbare robe of Judaism, or a worse rent to that robe would ensue, the strength of the uncarded material actually tearing the old. The first Gospel exactly reproduces the thought, but with its favourite compression reduces the number of words employed from twenty-four to twenty. But the Gentile catechists altered this. Perhaps they were over-anxious to produce something which no one ever does, forgetting that in a parable the spiritual thought is uppermost and the literal words cannot always be pressed. Perhaps they wished to adapt the saying to the altered conditions of their own day, in which Christianity had been already made up into a garment. At any rate they tell us that no man cuts a piece out of a new coat in order to patch

up an old one; otherwise the new coat is destroyed and the old one is scarcely improved, for it receives an unsightly patch, the pattern of the cloths being different (Mark ii. 21; Matt. ix. 16; Luke v. 36).

Take finally the prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem (Mark xiii. 14; Matt. xxiv. 15; Luke xxi. 20). S. Mark gives the obscure words, "When ye see the abomination of desolation standing where it ought not—let the reader mark!—then &c." The first Gospel informs us that the enigmatical words are quoted from Daniel, and assuming a licence which is perhaps commoner in Old Testament prophecy than the English reader generally is aware, slightly interprets the prediction after the event, "When ye see the abomination of desolation *spoken of by Daniel the prophet*, standing *on holy ground* (*ἐν τόπῳ ἁγίῳ*)—let the reader mark!—then" &c. But S. Luke carries this licence much further, rewriting the passage, "But when ye see Jerusalem surrounded with armies." All mystery, all reference to the Old Testament is removed. In chapter xix. 43 f. his description is even more precise.

The above examples are sufficient for our present purpose. The reader will find instances multiplied in future chapters. But enough has been written to show that the oral gospel was already deteriorating, and that we have good reason to be thankful that it was committed to writing as soon as it was.

Still more thankful must the Christians of that age

have been, or at least such part of them as did not cling too tenaciously to the old ways, and fear that possession of the written word would make men careless about learning and treasuring up its truths. For the memory is treacherous, and it was intolerable that when you wished to have your recollections refreshed, you must go to school again with the catechist. Yet there was no other way. Busy men, like Theophilus, had been catechised (κατηχήθης, Luke i. 4) in their youth, but later occupations had driven out many of the lessons, and, unless a man could secure the same catechist whom he had attended as a boy, the frequent discrepancies in the ever-changing tradition would jar on the precision of youthful memory, and produce a general sense of disappointment and uncertainty.

But even after the Gospels were written and had come into circulation, the work of catechising by no means stopped. Christian children needed education, and, while learning by heart was still regarded as the proper method, the records of our Lord's life and teaching were best worth learning. Some of the presbyters, who were now taking the place of the catechists, would wisely make use in their teaching of the written records. Still more would cling to their own recollections, in which the process of deterioration was rapidly going on. And so it comes to pass that the earliest Fathers of the Church sometimes quote as Scripture words that are different from anything found

in our Gospels. Perhaps sometimes they are quoting the Gospel according to the Hebrews (see chapter VIII.).

One ill result followed upon the writing of the Gospels. A number of our Lord's sayings, which there is every reason to believe genuine, were lost because they were not enshrined in any of the Gospels. One such, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," is preserved in Acts xx. 35. Another, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do," has been falsely inserted into Luke xxiii. 34. A few more, like "Show yourselves approved money-changers," have been handed down in the Fathers or in the fragments of the Gospel according to the Hebrews. The rest are forgotten.

To illustrate what has been said about the number of traditional sayings which were in existence at the beginning of the second century, and the feelings which religious men entertained towards them, I translate here a very interesting passage from the preface of Papias's "Exposition of the Utterances of the Lord," a work in five books, which was known to Eusebius, and which consisted, as I gather from the words below, of a translation of S. Matthew's lost Aramaic Gospel interspersed with much traditional matter which Papias had collected from pupils of the Apostles, the whole being accompanied by a running commentary. Papias then thus addresses his reader:

"I shall not hesitate in your behalf to combine with my translations (*ἑρμηνείαις*) [of S. Matthew] such

things as I learned by heart from time to time and treasured up in memory, having obtained them from the Fathers of the Church. The truth of these things I warrant, for I did not like the majority of men take pleasure in those who make long speeches but in those who teach [catechetically] the truth. Nor did I take pleasure in those who hold in their memory the commandments of men, but in those who hold the commandments which were given to the Christian faith by our Lord. And if at times I was visited by one of the pupils of the Fathers, I would examine him upon the discourses of the Fathers, as to what Andrew, Peter, Philip, Thomas, James, John, Matthew or any other of our Lord's disciples once had said, or what Aristion or the presbyter John, our Lord's disciples, still said. For I used to think that what I obtained out of books did not help me so much as what I obtained from the living and abiding voice." Eusebius, *H. E.* III. 39.

It is plain that Papias is speaking of his younger days, which fell within the first century. While the opportunity lasted and men came fresh from contact with the Apostles, he had eagerly collected their lessons. He valued catechising, or learning by heart, more highly than preaching or written commentaries, many of which were of questionable orthodoxy. (See Bishop Lightfoot on the passage.) But this feeling had its dangers. The living voice was becoming un-

trustworthy. It was a mistake to cling too fondly to the old order. The work of Papias was neglected and perished, perhaps because of the apocryphal nature of many of his anecdotes.

If it be asked why I assign a meaning to ἑρμηνεία which is not justified by its derivation or by its use in Plato or other classical authors, my answer is that all the words which are derived from *Hermês* originally meant explanation and not translation. Hermês was the messenger of the Gods, who were supposed to speak Greek like mortals. His function therefore was to carry the message of Zeus and make it plain to human intelligence, not to translate it.

But when trade extended and brought the Greeks into contact with foreign nations, the necessity of translation made itself felt and the words of this group were taken to express translation. For a time they would, like our word 'interpret', have a double meaning. But in bilingual countries and in all places where translation was a matter of daily occurrence, the specific meaning was sure to gradually supersede the more general meaning.

In short the ἑρμηνεύς was the *dragoman*, whose duty is first to point out the road and show places of interest in a new country; secondly, to explain folk-lore, novelties and difficulties or peculiarities; thirdly to act as interpreter between his employer and the natives.

In the New Testament the first meaning occurs once, "He pointed out to them (*διηρμήνευσεν*) in all the Scriptures the passages concerning Himself" (Luke xxiv. 27). Compare Ignatius *ad Philipp.* VI. and Origen *c. Celsum* III. 58. The second meaning, which is the prevalent one in classical authors, does not occur in the New Testament at all, but the third meaning —that of translating—occurs no less than eighteen times in the forms *ἑρμηνεύω*, *διερμηνεύω*, *μεθερμηνεύω*, *ἑρμηνευτής* and *ἑρμηνεία*.

In the very few fragments of Papias which are preserved, words from this group occur three times. Of these *ἡρμήνευσεν* unquestionably means "translated", *ἑρμηνευτής* with almost equal certainty means "translator", being applied to S. Mark who was "S. Peter's translator". Ἑρμηνεία I regard as meaning "translation", in which sense S. Paul uses it twice, rather than "a commentary", as is usually supposed. It is true that *ἑρμηνεία* means a commentary in later Greek, as in the titles to S. Chrysostom's commentaries. But as Papias has used the older word *ἐξήγησις* to describe his commentary, there is reason to think that he uses *ἑρμηνεία* in what at that epoch appears to have been its natural meaning.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SECOND CYCLE OF ORAL GOSPEL. S. MATTHEW'S "UTTERANCES OF THE LORD".

THE most difficult problem to solve in the criticism of the Gospels is S. Matthew's relation to them.

We have the apparently independent testimony of three witnesses in the second century—Papias, Irenæus and Pantænus—that S. Matthew wrote in "Hebrew". Nor is there any ancient authority to the contrary. The Fathers of the Church are agreed that it was so, and only since the Reformation has the fact been seriously, and, as I think, most unjustifiably called in question.

Nevertheless the Fathers, as far back as we can trace their opinions, unreservedly accept our first Gospel, which is in Greek, as S. Matthew's work. While they uphold the Aramaic or "Hebrew" (as they call it) original, they equally uphold the Greek representative as though it were an exact translation made either by S. Matthew himself or by some authorised

interpreter. And it is in my opinion impossible to ignore this consensus of belief.

And yet upon close examination nothing appears more certain than that our first Gospel is not immediately a translation. In the first cycle, which it gives almost complete, not only is S. Peter's narrative adopted, but the most numerous and minute agreements prove that S. Mark's version has been used. In the second cycle also the same Greek text is followed which we find in S. Luke. And even those parts, which are peculiar to the first Gospel, do not (like S. Luke's two preliminary chapters) read like a direct translation from the Aramaic. They are a translation, as indeed the whole Gospel is, but a translation which has been rounded and smoothed by passing through a long line of Greek catechists.

Our first Gospel therefore is a composite work. S. Peter must be called the author of a considerable part of it. S. Matthew cannot even have written down this part—I mean the first cycle—unless we are to suppose that he, an Apostle and eyewitness, set aside his own recollections and went to school for his facts with the later Hellenic catechists. Even if he had done this, he would be the editor, rather than the author of that considerable portion, which indeed forms the historical framework of the whole.

Let us endeavour to trace, as far as may be, S. Matthew's position and work.

S. Matthew I maintain was the author of the second cycle of oral gospel. We may assume that he imitated S. Peter in composing it, a section at a time, and teaching it to a class of pupils, some of whom became catechists and handed it down. I think that his teaching was at first *esoteric*, or intended only for an inner circle of advanced scholars, and he probably began to teach some years before S. Peter left Jerusalem. His original lessons were in Aramaic.

Clement of Alexandria tells us that S. Matthew was a vegetarian, like S. James the Lord's Brother. This fact may have increased his hold on the esteem of the Church at Jerusalem. But his apostolical office must have brought him to the front after S. Peter's withdrawal. And thus he may not only have continued to give his own new lessons, but he may well have exercised a general superintendence over the catechists and perhaps assisted them in the important work of piecing the two cycles together to form one compact course of instruction for practical use. For the second cycle appears never to have been written down separately or to have formed a perfect work by itself.

When the task was but half completed, there came the demand for catechists to teach in those Gentile churches, which S. Paul was founding. For S. Mark had turned back from the work and others must be had to take his place. Such teachers might no doubt have been obtained at Antioch, but it is evident that

S. Paul drew his main supply of evangelists and catechists from the energetic proselytising church at Jerusalem, or his converts would not so soon have been tinged with Judaism.

These missionary catechists took with them the course of instruction then current. That is to say, they took the first cycle, in a form by no means so much curtailed as it afterwards became in the East. And intermingled with it they took such parts of the second cycle as had been completed. Thus the later portions of the second cycle, except a few fragments carried from time to time by occasional visitors, never reached the West and accordingly are not found in S. Luke's Gospel. For communication between the East and the West was not encouraged in later time, S. Paul preferring to educate local catechists for his own use rather than run the risk of occasionally introducing a "false brother". It seems more satisfactory to account for S. Luke's omissions in this way, than to suppose that the sections which he does not give, were less suitable for Gentile readers, although this latter reason too may to some extent have operated.

After this for some years S. Matthew continued his work at Jerusalem. Having once been employed as a tax-gatherer, he must have possessed at least a colloquial knowledge of Greek. Jerusalem was a bilingual church. At one time the Greek-speaking Jews had formed a majority in it (Acts vi.). At all times they

must have been numerous. And they were not men who suffered themselves to be forgotten or ignored. Either S. Matthew himself, or more likely some catechist chosen (like S. Mark) for the purpose, translated into Greek the sections of the second cycle, as soon as they were compiled, for use amongst the Hellenist Jews. And thus in the same church two sets of teachers—the Aramaic and the Greek—were labouring side by side under S. Matthew's direction.

Time passed on. The second cycle was completed, as far as it ever was completed, and S. Matthew leaving Jerusalem went to labour in the East. Here the Aramaic Gospel was written, while (as Irenæus says) SS. Peter and Paul were still living. It was probably the first written Gospel. It was that Gospel which Papias translated and commented on; with which Irenæus was acquainted; and which Pantænus found in "India", written in the square Hebrew character, and left there (he says) by S. Bartholomew.

This is what Papias says: "Matthew accordingly caused the Utterances to be compiled in the Hebrew dialect and individuals translated them to the best of their ability." If he himself (as I have supposed) was one of those who had translated them, the curiously apologetic way in which he speaks of the efforts of translators is accounted for. The translators were numerous and active at the time, but long before he wrote this account of them, their activity had ceased.

Can we trace the later history of this Gospel? Not unless we identify it, as I think there is good reason to do, with that "Gospel according to the Hebrews" which is so frequently mentioned by some of the earliest Fathers. If we may do this, it continued to have a small circulation for about three centuries amongst the orthodox Christians of the East, until it was finally superseded by the Syriac translations of our first Gospel which had always pressed it hard. Perhaps it became loaded with a certain amount of apocryphal matter. In a mutilated form it was adopted by the heretical sect of the Ebionites, who declared it to be the only true Gospel, much as the Marcionites treated S. Luke. The Greek versions of it obtained little currency and were soon forgotten. Even S. Jerome's labours in translating it into Greek and Latin did not bring it into much notice. It slowly disappeared and we have no trace of it left except a few quotations chiefly in SS. Epiphanius and Jerome.

Was the Apostle S. Matthew the author of this book? Not exactly, if it is identical with the "Gospel according to the Hebrews." For in the first place that Gospel contained 2,200 lines as against 2,500 in the first Gospel. It was therefore longer than S. Mark's Gospel and not so very much shorter than the other two. This circumstance makes us think that it must have contained the Petrine cycle as well as S. Matthew's peculiar work. That it really did so, is attested by the

fragments which are preserved, some of which belong to that cycle. Such a thing is moreover probable in itself. For the second cycle, if taken alone, could hardly form a complete Gospel; it has no historical framework and it stops short of the Passion, some account of which would surely be essential to a true Gospel. The phrase "Utterances of the Lord" by which Papias designates the book, though it plainly indicates that discourses formed the distinctive feature, yet, as Bishop Lightfoot has shown (Essays reprinted from the *Contemporary Review*), does not preclude a considerable intermixture of historical matter.

Now even if the work in question had contained the second cycle only, a catechist with a strong youthful memory practised by daily use, would have had less difficulty in writing it, than the original author, who must have forgotten much of what he had drawn up and would be compelled to perform his task a second time. It was easier for S. Mark to write our second Gospel, than for S. Peter to have done so; and S. Matthew would naturally turn to his trusted band of catechists, if he wanted to commit to writing his own recollections. Still more must this have been the case, if he wished to record the whole body of teaching as it was then current amongst Hebrew Christians. Looking at the matter from the human side, we must hold the employment of a catechist to write to be the natural, if not the necessary, course.

And that some catechist really was employed, is indicated by the exact wording of the testimony of Papias. "S. Matthew" he writes "procured the composition of the Lord's Utterances." The middle voice *συνεγράψατο*, so different from the plain *ἔγραψε* which the same Papias uses of S. Mark, indicates to me something more than the employment of an amanuensis. It shows that the Apostle authorised and superintended the execution of the work, rather than actually performed it.

Still if it was written under S. Matthew's guidance and if its distinctive feature was that second cycle, of which S. Matthew was the author, it would naturally and properly be called "the Gospel according to S. Matthew".

Such appears to have been the outcome of the labours of the Hebrew catechists at Jerusalem. Let us next consider the activities of their brethren, the Greek catechists of that Church.

The Gospel of which they were the custodians had the same origin and was once identical with the other. But time must have produced divergences. Additions were considerable and alterations not unimportant.

Were the Greek catechists at Jerusalem more faithful than their Hebrew brethren had been in preserving the integrity of the records committed to their keeping? If we compare the surviving fragments of the Gospel according to the Hebrews with the

parallel passages, where there are such, in the first Gospel and in S. Luke, we shall at first sight be disposed to think so, for we find strange changes in the text of the fragments. But it would be most unreasonable to conclude that similar variations extended over the whole of the lost Gospel. Nay, it is clear that many of the fragments owe their preservation to their unusual novelty. The general resemblance between the two works in other passages both in respect of language and contents must have been close, or S. Jerome would not, after he had read and transcribed the Gospel according to the Hebrews have called it the original S. Matthew's Gospel, of which our first Gospel was a translation by an unknown author. (*De viris illustribus* III.) To argue that the two books must have been widely different or S. Jerome would not have undertaken a new translation, for which there could be no need, is to misunderstand his temper and ambitions. The man, who translated the whole of the Old Testament direct from the Hebrew in the hope of superseding the common Latin version which had been made from the LXX.—a hope which brought him not a little vexation during his life and in the case of the most important part, the Psalms, was not justified even after his death—had no mean conception of the importance of exact translation or diffidence about his own capacity to produce it. It would almost seem as if at one time he had expected

that his version of the "Hebrew original" would supersede the Greek S. Matthew. Else why should he have translated it into Greek as well as into Latin—a thing which he did not attempt for any book of the Old Testament? But if he had this expectation for a time, he soon abandoned it. In his commentary on S. Matthew he follows the ordinary text, contenting himself with an occasional reference to "the Hebrew original".

For my part I feel confident that if the Gospel according to the Hebrews could ever be recovered, we should find in it not only an extraordinary resemblance to our first Gospel but in many places there would be an older and original text, from which it would be easy to see how the variations in the first Gospel and S. Luke were derived.

For the Greek catechists wrote nothing until close upon, or more probably after, the destruction of Jerusalem (chapter XIV.). By that terrible event they were scattered and their work for a time paralysed. It may be that one of them went for consolation and advice to his former chief, the Apostle S. Matthew, in the distant East, and was authorised and encouraged to write a Greek Gospel, as S. Matthew had authorised a Hebrew catechist to write a Hebrew Gospel. Or, as the Fathers know nothing of such authorisation, a Greek catechist more probably wrote the Gospel under direct promptings from the Holy Spirit.

It would be easier for him to do this, than to translate the existing Aramaic Gospel into Greek. And it would be wiser, because religious people highly value accuracy in sacred things, and the Greek-speaking Jews would much prefer the lessons to which they were habituated, rather than a new translation.

Even without S. Matthew's sanction both these twin Gospels—the Aramaic and the Greek—might properly be called the "Gospel *according to* S. Matthew", if not the "Gospel *of* S. Matthew", for they contained the Gospel as it had been shaped under his hand and in large part had been composed by him. With his sanction, which the Aramaic Gospel at any rate seems to have had, they would go forth in his name and would soon be regarded as his work.

And they were regarded as identical works in the Church at large. Tatian's *Diatessarôn* proves by its very title that he only acknowledged four Gospels. Irenæus argues that there were four Gospels and four only. Yet he affirms that S. Matthew wrote in Hebrew. Did he himself use the Aramaic edition or any of its Greek translations? I cannot think so. But probably few of the earliest Fathers were acquainted with both, and none before S. Jerome took much pains to compare them. They circulated as a first and second edition of the same work (see Mr E. B. Nicholson's "Gospel according to the Hebrews"), the second edition being about one eighth longer. Like the longer and shorter

recension of the Ignatian epistles, they existed side by side. In the West the second edition soon drove out the first and all its versions, though Papias was the author of one. Before S. Jerome's day they had all been forgotten. S. Jerome's efforts to excite interest in it were quite unavailing. S. Augustine was either unacquainted with it or did not approve of it. Origen had pronounced it to be of doubtful authority. This view ultimately prevailed, partly perhaps on account of the difficult verse "My Mother the Holy Ghost took me by one of my hairs and carried me up the great mountain Tabor", which I cannot but regard as an apocryphal interpolation.

Even in the East the case was not different. Syriac versions of our first Gospel existed side by side with the original Aramaic. The Ebionites used the older work, cutting off the two introductory chapters and substituting a short editorial preface of their own. But it was impossible for the orthodox Christians of the East to use a different S. Matthew from that which was sanctioned in the West, and so the Gospel according to the Hebrews perished.

If any one is reluctant to admit that the Gospel which was more closely connected with S. Matthew has perished, while that which was more remotely his, has been preserved, I would have him ask himself how many of S. Paul's epistles have perished ? We must believe not only in the inspiration of Holy Scripture,

but also in the Providential ordering of God, in preserving to His Church what He has seen to be good for it.

It is time now to say something about the character of the second cycle of which I conceive S. Matthew to have been the author.

I have enumerated its sections below, that the reader, who is interested in such study, may investigate them for himself and on comparing them with the first cycle may decide whether I am right in claiming for them a unity of their own and clearly marked characteristics.

But in framing his sections S. Matthew was not entirely original. He had no wish to be so. He occasionally borrowed some portions of the first cycle as a skeleton or framework into which he inserted our Lord's Utterances. Thus would I account for the expansion of certain narratives, as for example that of the Baptist's ministry, or that of the Baptism of Christ by S. John, or that of the Temptation. The added verses seem to me to be decidedly Matthæan, yet the bulk of the narrative is Petrine. In the charge to the Twelve (Matt. x.), and in the treatment of the question of divorce, S. Peter's memoirs are again drawn upon. The woes against the Pharisees (Matt. xxiii.) begin with two Petrine verses, and the Petrine speech on the second Advent is reproduced at full length with much new matter. Of course these blendings may be the work

of the catechists rather than of the Apostle. And it is supposable that S. Mark himself borrowed the speech on the second Advent—the only speech which he gives—from S. Matthew rather than S. Matthew from S. Mark: but if S. Mark began to borrow, I fail to see why he did not take more. And when I consider how anxiously the subject of Christ's Return was debated in the first days, I see no difficulty in supposing that S. Peter compiled the speech respecting it.

The second cycle consisted almost wholly of speeches, sermons and parables. There are two miracles, the healing of the deaf and dumb demoniac (Matt. ix. 32–34) and the healing of the blind, deaf and dumb demoniac (Matt. xii. 22–37). But these are perhaps two different accounts of the same act, as S. Luke treats them (xi. 14–26). They seem to be introduced for the sake of the discourse to which they gave rise.

The chief glory of the second cycle is the Sermon on the Mount, which has always been regarded as the essence of Christ's teaching. But the parable of the Unmerciful Servant and the description of the Son of Man in glory proclaiming "I was an hungred and ye gave me no meat", have done more than any other passages to humanise the age in which we live.

The discrepancies between the first Gospel and S. Luke, which are both numerous and striking, should warn us against supposing that we have *verbatim* reports of any of these discourses. Even if S. Matthew's

original text had been verbally exact, the two editions of it which have reached us are not so. But there is no reason to think that S. Matthew was able after a lapse of from ten to fifteen years to recollect precisely what was said. If it had been necessary for the Church that he should have done so, the Providence of God would have preserved his original manuscript in its integrity. But not only is that not done, but we have no primitive text of his work. The first Gospel's edition is on the whole more exact than S. Luke's, but both have been much altered by transmission through a long line of catechists. We never feel that confidence which S. Mark inspires and which the Gospel according to the Hebrews, if it had been preserved, perhaps might have inspired. The discourses of the second cycle seem to us greatly superior in literary power, theological interest and spiritual value to anything which is contained in the first, but they have not the same historical attestation. Much may be done by further study to discover the original form, but many difficulties seem likely to remain insurmountable.

If there is much discrepancy between the first Gospel and S. Luke about the exact wording of the sections, there is still greater difference about their arrangement. The first Gospel masses them together into magnificent wholes like the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. v.—vii.), the Charge to the Twelve (Matt. x.), the seven parables (Matt. xiii.) or the eschatological dis-

courses (Matt. xxiv.—xxv.); S. Luke also groups sections together, though in a much less convincing way (Luke xi. and xii.), but he oftener breaks up a section, putting a few verses here and a few there.

I cannot think the first Gospel's arrangement to be the true one. The Sermon on the Mount is too long and too full of matter to have been delivered at one sitting. The section which contains the Lord's Prayer (Matt. vi. 5–15) is plainly out of place, for it disturbs the order. The seven parables, two of which are Petrine, are not likely to have been spoken at once, or one would have drawn attention from the other. And the Charge to the Twelve is a manifest conflation, composed of a charge to the Twelve (Luke ix. 1–5) blended with the charge to the Seventy (Luke x. 2–10), an address to the Twelve (Luke xii. 2–9), an extract from the Petrine speech on the Second Advent (Mark xiii. 9–13, Luke xxi. 12–17) and some other fragments.

But S. Luke's order appears to me to be still further removed from the true one. Such portions of the Sermon on the Mount as he gives at all, are spread over six chapters, a single verse sometimes standing by itself. The Charge to the Twelve he not only gives in three considerable sections (in which I think him right) but in five detached fragments. And so with other discourses. But it is surely essential to oral teaching, that it should consist of lessons and not of isolated verses. Many of the sections, especially in S. Luke, appear to have

become disintegrated, the historical introduction being lost. The truth may well be that many of these fragments belong to the later sections of the second cycle and were brought into the West by occasional visitors, who remembered one or two detached sayings, but neither the context nor the chronology. Such sayings were worked by the catechists into their ordinary lessons. But the arrangement of many of the perfect sections appears to be due to the catechists, one arrangement being followed in Jerusalem, and quite another among the Gentiles.

If I am right in supposing that most of the sections which are not found in S. Luke's Gospel are of later date, it becomes important to the student of the developement of Scripture to notice what the general character of the later sections is. One large class of them may be described as theological. Thus there is that important part of the Sermon on the Mount in which Christ contrasts the morality of the Old Testament with the higher morality which He demanded of His disciples (Matt. v. 21–48). Then there is the promise of the Keys to S. Peter, the power given to the Twelve of binding and loosing, and the distinction between the obedience due to the Scribes by virtue of their office and the detestation of their conduct. But the parable of the Unmerciful Servant, of the Two Sons who were ordered to work in the Vineyard, of the dissatisfied Labourers, of the Ten Virgins, and the description of the Son of Man sitting

in the last Judgement, prove to us that much of the simpler and most attractive teaching belongs to the later developement.

Lastly, if the first cycle became loaded, as time went on, with a considerable number of accretions (see chapter XI.), which we can detect by their absence from S. Mark and often from S. Luke, we have reason to suppose that the second cycle also has been affected in this way; not perhaps to so great an extent as the first cycle, because it was neither so many years in circulation before it was committed to writing, nor was it so widely known. Still these non-Matthæan additions may be numerous. And we have not the means of detecting them with any certainty, because we have no pristine edition of the second cycle. Further critical examination may do something to settle such controversies: but arguments from internal evidence must always be regarded with great distrust, and in any case it would be most unjustifiable to cast suspicion upon every saying which was not doubly attested: for even in the first cycle S. Luke's omissions are numerous and hard to account for, much more so must they be here, if I am right in supposing that the second cycle was only half finished when it was taken to the West.

It may be well at this stage to offer an explanation of the phrase "Utterances of the Lord" which I have used to describe the second cycle. It was first suggested to me by my colleague, the Rev. Dr Campion, as a

rendering of the expression in Papias λόγια κυριακά. Properly speaking λόγια is an adjective, the neuter plural of λόγιος which is derived from λόγος. If λόγος means a speech, λόγιος means a man who is capable of, or is in the habit of, making speeches. Thus it is said to have been applied by Aeschines to Demosthenes after the death of the latter. When one decried his ancient rival, hoping to gratify him, he replied λόγιος ἀνήρ, ὦ παῖ, λόγιος καὶ φιλόπολις. "The man was eloquent, my good sir, eloquent and patriotic." In the New Testament it is used of Apollos who was an "eloquent" man (Acts xviii. 24). The neuter plural will mean "eloquent words", "oratorical passages". When S. Peter writes "If any man speak, let him speak as the λόγια of God" (1 Pet. iv. 11) he means, let him speak with the fervour and force which marked the ancient prophets. The common rendering "oracles" (*oracula*) is correct, *oraculum* being connected with *orare* and *orator*; but in English "oracles" has too definite and restricted a meaning. "Discourses" would represent the sense better, but this also is too distinctive a word.

LIST OF THE SECTIONS OF THE SECOND CYCLE.

FIRST GOSPEL.	S. LUKE.
JOHN THE BAPTIST'S MINISTRY. Petrine framework. iii. 1–12.	Adds five verses (10–14) and writes out the quotation at full length. iii. 7–17.
CHRIST BAPTIZED BY JOHN. Petrine framework. iii. 13–17.	Gives only the Petrine narrative slightly altered. iii. 21–22.
THE TEMPTATION. Petrine framework. iv. 1–11.	Adds verse 6, reverses the order of 5–8 and 9–12. Makes the fast absolute. iv. 1–13.
THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT. A conflation of several discourses. v.–vii. N.B. Matt. xii. 33–37 is perhaps a repetition, with some additions, of Matt. vii. 15–20. The two are blended together in Luke vi. 43–45.	Adds four woes (vi. 24–26), omits several sections and verses, adopts often quite a different order, and distributes the Sermon over six chapters, viz. vi. 20–23, 25, 27–38, 41–46, xi. 1–4, 9–13, 34–36, 47–49, xii. 22–36, 57–59, xiii. 13–14, 23–27, xiv. 34–35, xvi. 13, 17.
THE TWO ASPIRANTS. viii. 19–22.	Adds a third aspirant. ix. 57–62.
DEAF AND DUMB DEMONIAC HEALED. ix. 32–34.	Treats these two narratives as one and adds verses 21–22 from the Petrine Gospel. xi. 14–26.
BLIND, DEAF AND DUMB DEMONIAC HEALED, WITH DISCOURSE ON SATAN CASTING OUT SATAN. xii. 22–37.	

FIRST GOSPEL.	S. LUKE.
THE HARVEST PLENTEOUS, THE LABOURERS FEW. ix. 36–38.	Gives the same words, but in quite a different context. x. 2.
CHARGE TO THE TWELVE APOSTLES. Petrine framework. x. 1–42. A conflation of several discourses.	Splits this up into (1) The charge to the Twelve, ix. 3–5; (2) The charge to the Seventy, x. 1–12; (3) Another charge to the Twelve, xii. 2–9; (4) The fragments, vi. 10, xii. 51–53, xiv. 26–27, xvii. 33, x. 16. Omits Matt. x. 1–6, 16–23.
JOHN SENDS TWO DISCIPLES; A DISCOURSE FOLLOWS. xi. 1–19.	Inserts two verses 29–30; condenses Matt. xi. 12–14 into Luke xvi. 16 with a different context. vii. 18–35.
WOE TO CHORAZIN AND BETHSAIDA. xi. 20–24.	Gives different order and quite different context. x. 12–15.
Omits.	THE DROPSICAL MAN HEALED; A DISCOURSE ON THE SABBATH FOLLOWS. Possibly a repetition of the Petrine account of the man with the withered hand (Luke vi. 6–11). xiv. 1–6.
Omits.	THE WOMAN WITH A SPIRIT OF INFIRMITY HEALED; A DISCOURSE ON THE SABBATH FOLLOWS. xiii. 11–17.
HIDDEN FROM THE WISE AND PRUDENT. xi. 25–30.	Gives almost the same words in a quite different context. Strangely omits "Come unto me all ye, &c." x. 21–22.

FIRST GOSPEL.	S. LUKE.
A SIGN FROM HEAVEN DEMANDED. xii. 38–42. This passage is repeated xvi. 1.	Changes order. xi. 29–32.
(The enigmatical saying is diversely explained in the two Gospels by two independent editorial notes.)	
THE UNCLEAN SPIRIT RETURNING WITH SEVEN OTHERS. xii. 43–45.	Gives almost the same words in a quite different context. Adds "Blessed is the womb that bare thee, &c." xi. 24–28.
BLESSED ARE THE EYES WHICH SEE THE THINGS THAT YE SEE. xiii. 16–17.	Gives almost the same words in a quite different context. x. 23–24.
PARABLE OF THE TARES AND ITS INTERPRETATION. xiii. 24–30, 36–43.	Omits.
PARABLE OF THE LEAVEN. xiii. 33.	Gives almost the same words in a quite different context. xiii. 20–21.
PARABLE OF THE HIDDEN TREASURE. xiii. 44.	Omits.
PARABLE OF THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE. xiii. 45–46.	Omits.
PARABLE OF THE DRAW-NET AND ITS INTERPRETATION. xiii. 47–50.	Omits.
THE PHARISEES BLIND GUIDES. xiv. 12–14.	Gives the parable only in a quite different context. vi. 39.

FIRST GOSPEL.	S. LUKE.
S. Peter's confession; the promise of the Keys follows. Petrine framework. xvi. 13–20.	Gives the Petrine narrative only, omitting the Keys. ix. 18–20.
Parable of the Lost Sheep. xviii. 12–14.	Gives the third cycle edition which is fuller. xv. 3–7.
Whatsoever ye bind on earth shall be bound in heaven. xviii. 18–20.	Omits.
If thy brother sin against thee.....tell the Church. xviii. 15–17.	Blends these paragraphs into one, much curtailed and altered. xvii. 3–4.
How oft shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? xviii. 21.	
Parable of the unmerciful servant. xviii. 23–25.	Omits.
Is Divorce lawful? Petrine framework with addition of the Paragraph of the Eunuchs. N.B. Both here and Matt. v. 32, the first Gospel permits divorce to a man in case of his wife's unfaithfulness. xix. 3–12.	Omits all except one Petrine verse which prohibits divorce, as the Petrine memoirs do, absolutely. xvi. 18.
Omits.	The servant plowing or shepherding required to prepare his master's dinner before eating his own. xvii. 7–10.

FIRST GOSPEL.	S. LUKE.
PARABLE OF THE LABOURERS IN THE VINEYARD COMPLAINING OF THEIR PAY. xx. 1–16.	Omits.
Omits.	TEARS SHED OVER JERUSALEM AND PROPHECY OF ITS FALL. xix. 41–44.
PARABLE OF THE TWO SONS BIDDEN TO WORK IN THE VINEYARD. xxi. 28–32.	Omits.
PARABLE OF THE KING MAKING A MARRIAGE FEAST FOR HIS SON. Omits the various excuses given for not coming. xxii. 1–14.	PARABLE OF THE MAN WHO GAVE A GREAT FEAST. Omits the episode of the man without the wedding garment. xiv. 15–24.
(These parables have so much in common that they seem to be the same.)	
Omits.	THE TOWER AND THE WAR BEGUN BUT NOT FINISHED. xiv. 28–33.
THE WOES AGAINST THE PHARISEES. Petrine framework (Mark xii. 38–40). xxiii.	Gives portions only, in different order and quite a different context, once with the preface DEPART, FOR HEROD WISHETH TO KILL THEE. xi. 37–52, xiii. 31–35, xiv. 10–11.
THE COMING OF THE SON OF MAN. Petrine framework (Mark xiii.) with additions. xxiv.	Gives three different speeches, two of them in quite a different context and with additions, e.g. THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU; THE SERVANT BEATEN WITH MANY OR FEW STRIPES; AS IT WAS

FIRST GOSPEL.	S. LUKE.
	In the days of Lot. Rewrites the prophecy of the fall of Jerusalem. xvii. 20–37, xii. 33–48, xxi. 5–36.
Parable of the Ten Virgins. xxv. 1–13.	Omits.
Parable of the Talents. xxv. 14–30.	Parable of the Pounds. xix. 11–28.
The Son of Man in Glory separates the sheep from the goats. xxv. 31–46.	Omits.

CHAPTER IX.

THE THIRD CYCLE OF ORAL GOSPEL. ANONYMOUS. CURRENT IN GENTILE CHURCHES ONLY.

THE demand for Christ's teaching rather than His acts gave rise to a third cycle of oral narratives, which was not current in Jerusalem or the East, and was never taught in Aramaic. Who the compiler was, it is vain to attempt to discover. Had it been one of the Twelve, I cannot see why the work was not received in Jerusalem. But if it was a private member of the church at Antioch, the jealousy of the Eastern Church might easily rob it of the new treasure. Pauline teaching is so prominent in this cycle, that I cannot but attribute it to a Pauline teacher. If so, he cannot, like SS. Peter or Matthew, have simply related what he remembered, but by diligent inquiry amongst the Galileans, must have reaped the harvest which was abundant there. For though Galilee as a whole was abandoned by the Apostles, its day of grace being past,

many individual Galileans must have remembered and treasured up the lessons which had been taught them. That the cycle is the work of one compiler is clearly shown by uniformity of thought and style. For even in collecting the teaching of Christ, much depended on the collector. In Revelation, more than in wealth or intellect, it is true that "to him that hath shall be given". And a cycle so full of spiritual truth as this could not have been compiled by one who had not himself drunk deep of the fountain of life.

It is practically certain that the sections of this cycle were taught orally, and that S. Luke, who alone records them, learned them from the catechists. Not only are they singularly well adapted for oral teaching, but they have a certain rotundity of style, the result of constant repetition, as different as possible from the marked Orientalisms of S. Luke's two first chapters.

This cycle contains only one miracle, the cleansing of the ten lepers, which is chiefly told to enforce the duty of rendering thanks to God by the contrast between the conduct of the Samaritan and that of the nine Jews.

A novel feature is introduced in this cycle when stories are substituted for parables. Thus the story of the Good Samaritan teaches directly the duty of kindness to all who are in distress, irrespective of nationality or their relation to ourselves. The story of the Rich Fool points out the danger of a selfish life. The story

of the Rich Man and Lazarus enforces by the most solemn considerations the folly of an Epicurean self-indulgence and closing our eyes to the misery around us. But the crowning glory of this cycle is the Parable of the Prodigal Son, for a parable it certainly is; and yet it is not as a parable that we value it. Every preacher, every commentator, instinctively turns rather to the attractiveness of the story.

We shall better understand the parable of the Unjust Steward, if we remember the absolute power wielded by an Oriental steward in consequence of the luxurious indolence of his lord. Witness Joseph in Potiphar's house, when Potiphar "knew not aught that he had save the bread which he did eat". The readjustment of payments was but a righteous relaxation of his own excessive exactions, which themselves had been caused by his wasteful administration. But whatever difficulty may be felt about the parable, the lesson is plain enough, that money may be wisely used to purchase friends, some of whom having gone before shall be ready to welcome us into the eternal habitations.

The power of Christ's love to avail in desperate cases is nowhere so well set forth as in the narratives of Zacchæus the publican, of the penitent thief on the cross, or of the woman who had been a sinner and whose penitential tears are contrasted with Simon's coldness.

Prayer is much dwelt on in S. Luke's Gospel, in which our Lord's habit of prayer is especially and frequently mentioned. The true nature of prayer is taught in the story of the Pharisee and Publican, and the duty of daily, definite and urgent petitions in that of the importunate friend who applies for bread at midnight, and of the widow who persecuted the unjust judge.

The cosmopolitan spirit of the third cycle may be seen in its treatment of the Samaritans.

The Petrine Memoirs make no mention of this hated and alien race. The Matthæan Utterances contain only the injunction "Into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not." If we had these cycles only, we might have thought, what is impossible, that Christ shared in the prejudices of His countrymen. But the third cycle not only rebukes SS. James and John for proposing to call down fire to consume a Samaritan village which had not welcomed them, but gives the account of the ten lepers, in which the thankful one was a Samaritan, and the story of the Good Samaritan, whose behaviour to the wounded Jew was such, that he has frequently been regarded as a type of Christ. If we add S. John's account of the woman of Samaria at Jacob's well and the evangelisation of the village in which she dwelt, we shall have a complete record of our Lord's work amongst them.

The verbal accuracy of the narratives in this cycle

we have no means of testing, but when we consider their origin, it is reasonable to suppose that they are even less exact than those of the second cycle. But if the words are not always a precise rendering of what Christ said, but betray the idiosyncrasies of the author's style and a certain polishing under the hands of many catechists, the teaching is unquestionably Christ's.

If we care to go below the surface of things and stand face to face with reality, eternity and the absolute; if we care to have our conscience probed and the deepest motives of our hearts laid bare; in short, if we wish to live in that atmosphere of truth, in which S. Paul's thoughts habitually moved, we shall nowhere be so much helped to do this, as in the fascinating narratives, parables and stories of the third cycle. The historical attestation may be less, but the spiritual value is of the highest. And as for literary power, what is there in the Petrine or even in the Matthæan cycle to match the account of the two men journeying to Emmaus, itself by no means the first in these attractive narratives?

Subjoined is a list of the sections of the third cycle in the order in which they stand in S. Luke's Gospel. It will be noticed that they nearly all fall in that great section of the Gospel in which S. Luke leaves for a time the Petrine memoirs (Luke ix. 51—xviii. 14). That section is certainly not arranged in the true

chronological order (see chapter XVI.) and it is impossible now to ascertain the relative chronology of the narratives of the third cycle. Something may be done by considering the internal evidence, but that is too precarious a thing for certainty.

The woman who had been a sinner anoints Jesus' feet in the house of Simon; a discourse follows on forgiveness.	vii. 36–50.
James and John wish to call down fire to consume a village of Samaritans.	ix. 51–56.
The story of the good Samaritan.	x. 25–37.
Martha and Mary contrasted.	x. 38–42.
The story of the importunate friend.	xi. 5–8.
The story of the rich fool.	xii. 16–21.
The Galilæans murdered and the tower in Siloam falling.	xiii. 1–5.
The parable of the barren fig tree.	xiii. 6–9.
The parable of the lost sheep.	xv. 1–7.
The outline of this parable is Matthæan (Matt. xviii. 12).	
The parable of the lost piece of silver.	xv. 8–10.
The parable of the prodigal son.	xv. 11–32.
The parable of the unjust steward.	xvi. 1–12.
The story of the rich man and Lazarus.	xvi. 19–31.
The ten lepers and the thankful Samaritan.	xvii. 11–19.
The parable of the widow and the unjust judge.	xviii. 1–8.
The story of the pharisee and the publican.	xviii. 9–14.
The narrative of Zacchæus.	xix. 1–20.
The narrative of the penitent thief.	xxiii. 39–43.
The narrative of two men journeying to Emmaus.	xxiv. 13–53.

I do not think that the third cycle stopped here. It probably contained also several sections about the day of Pentecost and the foundation of the Christian Church. It is clear to me that in the Acts of the

Apostles S. Luke is frequently making use of oral sections, and the West would naturally be eager to know something about the history of the first days. It is certain also that the record in those chapters is different from what it would have been, if the account had been first composed when the fulness of Christian teaching had been developed.

CHAPTER X.

THE DATES OF THE COMPILATION OF THE THREE CYCLES.

I HAVE hitherto assumed that the first cycle was compiled by S. Peter, and within twelve years of the Ascension. I shall now give some reasons in support of this assumption. The reader cannot expect demonstration in such a matter. It will be enough if different lines of evidence converge that way and there be no serious evidence to the contrary.

If, as I hold (see chapter XIV.), our first three Gospels were written within the decade 71–80 A.D., the very early date of the first cycle becomes a necessity, or we shall not have time to account for the great divergencies which confessedly exist in our three editions of it. Those divergencies, we have maintained, were formed by the inaccuracies of catechists. They are such that no one catechist, or two, or three, could by any amount of carelessness or reckless

change have produced them. A considerable number of men are essential to account for the state of things, and thus many years are required.

Now Papias states that S. Peter was the author and S. Mark the translator of the first cycle, or, if you please, of S. Mark's Gospel. Papias was the pupil of the presbyter John and took every opportunity for obtaining information from the pupils of the Apostles. We could scarcely have a better authority than he. But in a matter of such importance, it is well to examine how his testimony agrees with that of others.

S. Luke tells us that the catechetical teaching began immediately after the day of Pentecost, for the disciples, he writes, "were persevering in their attendance upon the teaching of the Apostles" (Acts ii. 42).

S. Luke however was writing many years after the event, and supposably may be reading into the past the usage of his own day. Contemporaneous writers are always the best evidence. Let us see what S. Paul says on the subject.

We have shown (chapter II.) that S. Paul probably alludes to the catechists in 1 Thess. v. 12. "Remember those who *toil* among you and preside over you and admonish you", and again in 2 Thess. ii. 15, "Hold fast the *traditions* which ye were *taught* either by word of mouth or by a letter of mine". The authenticity however of these epistles has been—though, as I think, on no good grounds—impugned, and the reference is not

quite certain. But when we come to the Epistle to the Galatians five years later, we find in a universally acknowledged letter an unquestionable allusion, "Let him that is catechised in the word give a share in all good things to him that catechiseth" (Gal. vi. 6). The date of the Epistle to the Galatians is about 58 A.D., and thus S. Paul, quite incidentally and therefore the more surely, shows that within thirty years of the Ascension the order of catechists was firmly established in some remote provincial churches. Much earlier therefore must their first introduction have been in the metropolitan church of Jerusalem.

But what did they teach?

Plainly they taught what their pupils were anxious to learn. S. Paul calls it "the word", which in his mouth can only mean distinctly Christian teaching of some kind or other. A work like our Church Catechism, or the Westminster Confession, might satisfy his language. But few persons will give the precedence to such compositions over gospel narrative. And we may with considerable confidence affirm that they taught "the facts concerning the Lord Jesus".

But, it may be replied, the particular oral Gospel which they taught was of a simpler kind than our Petrine memoirs. The miraculous element was wanting or reduced to a *minimum*. The person of our Lord was that of an ordinary teacher. His doctrine was the law of universal brotherhood. The new and marvellous

accounts became more popular and thrust out the old.

My answer is that the very reverse of this is the true order. The simpler teaching exists in abundance in the second and third cycles, but it does not constitute the first. Trust in God, love to man, the practice of duty, humility and prayer stood first, I believe, in the true chronological order of our Lord's teaching, but almost last in the recollection of His Apostles, who were more anxious to teach the historical facts of the crucifixion and the resurrection, the present glory and the future reign of their ascended Lord, than to repeat the old eternal truths which men would only accept when they were satisfied of the authority of the Teacher. If modern research has established anything, it has established the priority of the first cycle. And the earliest part of the first cycle would undoubtedly be that, which most demands a belief in the supernatural.

Again, if the first cycle is the earliest record of Christ's life, who is so likely to have been its author, as S. Peter who took the lead in everything in the earliest days? Papias assigns it to S. Peter.

And if S. Peter compiled the Memoirs, at what date did he do so? At a time, I reply, when his name was honoured over the Christian world, and above all when an open door lay before him in the city of Jerusalem. This ceased to be the case, when S. James took his place, about twelve years after the Ascension. The

incomplete state of his work points to a sudden break. The meagreness of its teaching attests its relative antiquity. And, if S. Mark did not retain his position as chief of the catechists long after S. Peter's departure, we understand the undoubted fact that the first cycle rapidly deteriorated in the East and became, as it did (see chapter XI.), loaded with non-Petrine matter. We see also why S. Mark having no other engagement was free to accompany SS. Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey and afterwards. Lastly S. Matthew's awakened energy and the birth of the second cycle is accounted for,—if it had not begun already,—since the removal of one of God's workmen usually stirs up the zeal of another.

Some persons, however, who vindicate the priority of the first cycle with the greatest confidence, are reluctant to admit my contention that our second Gospel is the work of S. Mark and contains his version of the first cycle, only slightly impaired by the ravages of time on his recollections. They will not accept the second Gospel, but only the "triple tradition", that is to say the portion of the Gospels which is printed in red type in Mr Rushbrooke's *Synopticon*, because it is common to the three Gospels.

First let me draw attention to the fact that of the 148 subdivisions into which for convenience of comparison Mr Rushbrooke has broken up the second Gospel, red type occurs in 122. Therefore 122 out of

148 contain some portion of "triple tradition". Of the rest 23 contain "double tradition" and only three are composed of single tradition. You get rid of very few statements, and those of little importance for your purpose, in rejecting everything but the "triple tradition".

Next let me point out that the red type or "triple tradition", if taken alone, does not make a single section coherent. It gives a chaos of sentences, words, or even letters, which cannot ever have stood alone. The detached bones must once have formed a perfect skeleton, clothed with flesh and skin. Such necessary complement S. Mark's Gospel supplies, and, as I have shown in chapter IV., the other two Gospels may be derived from S. Mark, if we make allowance for the action of the catechists.

While therefore I admit that the red type has certain claims upon our acceptance, which the other types have not, I protest earnestly against any unnecessary suspicion being cast upon the spaced type and capitals ("double tradition") or even upon the black type ("single tradition"). According to my view, the red type simply indicates those portions of the Greek version of the Petrine memoirs, which for some reason withstood the disintegrating action of time and the work of the catechists. But of those parts which from some inherent weakness or accident did not remain unaltered, the great proportion are not only original but

even necessary to account for the later variations; a few only are mere editorial notes.

Take for illustration a parallel case. Dr Scrivener's Greek Testament gives the so-called *textus receptus* in two types. Plain type indicates those words or parts of words which have not been rejected by any modern critical editor; bold type indicates those which have been altered. It would be absurd to publish an edition of the Greek Testament in which all the bold type portions were omitted and nothing put in their place. The worst edition would be preferable to a mutilated text.

If the early date of the first cycle be conceded, there need be no great discussion over the dates of the second and third. They must have been formed contemporaneously, the second cycle beginning probably a little the sooner. Another twelve years may well have seen the completion of them both. We only require sufficient time to account for their diffusion, and for the grave deterioration which marks the second cycle.

The importance of the subject discussed in this chapter will be obvious to all. The early date of the Petrine Memoirs concerns closely their historical trustworthiness. If S. Peter really compiled them, and within twelve years of the Ascension, and if the second Gospel is a fairly adequate edition of them, few events are better attested. For S. Peter narrates nothing which

had not come under his own observation. He does not go back to the early years of our Lord's life, of which he had no personal knowledge. He does not describe such things as the details of the Temptation, of which he was not a witness. He begins with the ministry of the Baptist, whose disciple he had been. The events which he narrates fall within a period of three years and a half according to the common reckoning. His latest lessons, therefore, whichever they were, concern facts which were only separated by fifteen years and a half at furthest from the time at which he described them, and the bulk of his work, and especially the more important part of it, concerns facts which were much nearer. He wrought also amidst a multitude of eye-witnesses. If his narratives had not commanded general approval, they could not have held their ground. So firm is the historical foundation upon which the Christian faith is built.

CHAPTER XI.

FRAGMENTS OF ORAL GOSPEL OUTSIDE THE THREE CYCLES. ANONYMOUS. CURRENT LOCALLY ONLY.

THERE is one section of oral gospel—the finding of the coin in the fish's mouth (Matt. xvii. 24–27)– for which I cannot find a place in any of the three cycles. Its absence from SS. Mark and Luke declares it to be non-Petrine. Its subject matter does not suit the second cycle, and its presence in the first Gospel only, as well as its subject matter, differentiate it from the third. I consider it to be the contribution of one of those anonymous compilers, who must always have been numerous in Palestine.

To the same head must be referred the draught of fishes and the mission of the Seventy in S. Luke (v. 4 ff., x. 1 ff.), though the charge given to the latter is largely borrowed from the Matthæan charge to the Twelve. Such admixture of narratives was common in the later times.

To this head also I would assign the paragraphs "Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat &c." (Luke xxii. 31–34), and "Let the poor man (ὁ μὴ ἔχων) sell his overcoat and buy a sword" (Luke xxii. 35–38).

There are moreover, especially in the first Gospel, many fragments, which in local churches were added by the catechists to the older cycles or even were suffered to supplant them. The account of S. Peter's walking on the sea (Matt. xiv. 28–31) appears to me to be one of these. Others are the mention of more than twelve legions of angels (Matt. xxvi. 53), Judas Iscariot's death (Matt. xxvii. 3–10), Pilate's wife's dream (Matt. xxvii. 19), Pilate's washing his hands (Matt. xxvii. 24–25), the tombs opening and the bodies of the dead appearing (Matt. xxvii. 52–53), the sealing of the sepulchre and the sequel of doing so (Matt. xxvii. 62–66, xxviii. 11–15), the meeting in Galilee and the final commission (Matt. xxviii. 16–20). Many of these may have been contributed by S. Matthew himself.

S. Luke also has several of these fragments or even whole sections in his last chapters. Thus his account of S. Peter's denials (Luke xxii. 54–62) is plainly obtained from an eye-witness, and is quite distinct from that in the Petrine memoirs which is given in S. Mark and followed by the first Gospel. The whole account of our Lord's trial before the Sanhedrin, Pilate, and Herod (Luke xxii. 66—xxiii. 25), is from a similar

source. So is the saying "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me &c." (Luke xxiii. 27–31). His account of the Resurrection (Luke xxiv. 1–12) is equally original, and his conclusion (Luke xxiv. 36–53) is quite distinct from anything in the cycles.

To this class also belong the two preliminary chapters of the first Gospel, which for convenience of comparison I have considered in the next chapter. They may, in their oral form, have been added to the tradition by S. Matthew himself or under his direction.

There is nothing in the nature of things to prevent these fragments from possessing the highest historical value. Abundance of eye-witnesses must have existed in Jerusalem, who were ready and anxious to tell what they knew about the events of Holy Week. And it would be wanton incredulity to reject what they say. But still the obscurity of the origin of these fragments and the late date at which they were probably added to the tradition lead us to put them upon a lower historical level than the Petrine memoirs.

We have moreover the means of proving that one of them lies under some suspicion. S. Luke (Acts i. 18–19) has preserved for us a fragment giving an account of Judas Iscariot's death, which differs materially from the fragment in the first Gospel. "He purchased for himself an estate (*χωρίον*) with the wages of his crime." (Acts i. 18.) "The chief priests bought the potter's field with his money after his death, to be a

cemetery for aliens." (Matt. xxvii. 7.) In the one case the field was bought as a pleasure ground for his gratification, in the other its purchase by others after his death was the final outcome of conscientious scruples. "He fell flat upon his face, burst asunder in the midst and all his bowels gushed forth." (Acts i. 18.) "He went out and hanged himself." (Matt. xxvii. 5.) A mysterious and horrible death is described in the one narrative, a vulgar suicide in the other. The field was called The bloody farm, says S. Luke, because it was stained with his blood. It was so called, says the first Gospel, because it was bought with blood-money. The attempts to reconcile these accounts from the earliest times till our own must be pronounced unsatisfactory. One or both of them plainly consist of late recollections, coloured by the horror which attached to his crime, rather than contemporaneous history.

According to the mediæval and reformation view of Scripture these fragments are equally inspired, equally infallible, and equally binding on the conscience of Christians with the best attested of the Petrine Memoirs. And those who cling to this view, which is not the ancient view, must either decline to examine, or will find a frequent conflict between their reason and their faith, which if allowed to work itself out, will either end in unbelief or in such tortuous shifts of explanation as go far to justify the taunt that clergy do not care for truth. Surely the historical method

has its value. If it makes us willing to admit that in some secondary matters we cannot decide between conflicting accounts, it also shows on how firm a foundation the main facts of our faith rest.

In the first Gospel, besides the ordinary quotations of Scripture in the sections, we find eleven passages in which special attention is drawn to the fulfilment of prophecy. Sometimes these are inserted as sections by themselves (Matt. iv. 12–16), more frequently they are attached to the end or inserted in the middle of other sections. Their entire absence from S. Luke proves that they are either no part of the Matthæan Utterances or were added after the second cycle was taken to the West (see chapter VIII.). For though it might be thought that S. Luke omitted them purposely as unsuited to Gentile readers, that would misrepresent the feeling of the Gentile churches towards the Old Testament. It is certain from the frequency with which the fulfilment of Scripture is alluded to in the Acts of the Apostles and in S. Paul's epistles, that the Gentile Christians were almost as much interested in the study of prophecy as the Jews. These passages therefore originated in Jerusalem, and at a comparatively late date; the presence of at least two of them in the Gospel according to the Hebrews proves that they were in oral circulation. Owing to their Eastern origin, they usually follow the Hebrew rather than the Septuagint.

The following is a list of them:

(1) Matt. i. 23. "Behold the virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and men shall call his name Emmanuel." (Isaiah vii. 14.)

(2) Matt. ii. 15. "Out of Egypt did I call my son." (Hosea xi. 1.)

(3) Matt. ii. 18. "A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation and great mourning; Rachel bewailing her children, and she would not be comforted because they were not." (Jeremiah xxxi. 15.)

(4) Matt. ii. 23. "He shall be called a Nazarene." (Isaiah xi. 1).

(5) Matt. iv. 15–16. "...land of Zabulon and land of Nephthalim, land towards the sea, land beyond Jordan and Gentile Galilee; the people which lives in darkness saw a great light, and to those who live in a country the very shadow of death, hath light sprung up." (Isaiah ix. 1–2.)

(6) Matt. xii. 18–21. "Behold, my servant whom I chose, my beloved in whom my soul delighted; I will put my spirit upon him and he shall give sentence to the nations. He shall not strive nor cry, nor shall any one hear his voice in the broadways. A bruised reed he shall not break, and smoking flax he shall not quench, until he bring his sentence to victory. And in his name shall nations trust." (Isaiah xlii. 1–4.)

(7) Matt. xii. 40. [For as] "Jonah was in the belly of the sea-monster three days and three nights" [so

shall the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights]. (Jonah i. 17.)

(8) Matt. xiii. 14–15. "With your hearing ye shall hear and not understand, and looking ye shall look and not see; for the heart of this people hath been hardened and with their ears they have heard heavily and their eyes have they closed, lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn; and I will heal them." (Isaiah vi. 9–10.)

(9) Matt. xiii. 35. "I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter things concealed from the foundation." (Psalm lxxxiii. 2.)

(10) Matt. xxi. 5. "Tell the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy King cometh to thee, meek and seated upon an ass and upon a colt the foal of a beast of burden." (Zechariah ix. 9, with some words borrowed from Isaiah lxii. 11.)

(11) Matt. xxvii. 9–10. "And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him who was priced, whom the sons of Israel priced, and gave them for the potter's field, as Jehovah appointed me." (Zechariah xi. 13.)

That these passages are not the original contributions of S. Matthew or of the author himself is made probable by the fact that the eleventh is falsely assigned to Jeremiah and the ninth to "a prophet" with the various reading "Isaiah". The sixth and the tenth borrow words from other passages. The eleventh alters "I cast

them to the potter" into "they gave them for the potter's field". These facts indicate that the passages were slowly collected by private searchers and imperfectly remembered, as they became the common property of preachers.

As fulfilments of Scripture candour compels us to admit that some of them would be more convincing in the first century of Christianity and amongst uneducated Jewish Christians, than they are now. Thus "Out of Egypt did I call my son" can only refer to the return of the Infant Christ from Egypt if the words are separated from their context, which is "When Israel was a child I loved him and called my son out of Egypt." "I will open my mouth in a parable" can only be made Messianic on the principle that every expression in Scripture has a secondary Messianic sense. The context is: "Hear my law, O my people: incline your ear unto the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable: I will declare hard sentences of old, which we have heard and known, and such as our fathers have told." "He shall be called a Nazarene" is a mere play upon the accidental resemblance of the word Nazareth to the Hebrew *nētzer* "the branch".

Surely it is an advantage for Christian evidences to distinguish between the solid historical foundation of the three cycles, and the theological opinions of these Jewish collectors. We no longer make the strength of the chain depend on the weakest link. The men who

searched out these Scriptures and saw in them Messianic predictions, served the age in which they lived. Nay more, they testified to the unity and continuity of Revelation. Under the Holy Spirit's guidance they showed that "whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning" (Rom. xv. 4), for we Christians are the heirs of the ages and Christ fulfils all Scripture, so that "how many soever be the promises of God, in Him is the Yea" (2 Cor. i. 20).

A father speaks to his child in very different language at different stages of its growth. In infancy caresses and blandishments are the highest teaching that can be understood. In childhood promises of immediate temporal pleasure and threats of punishment are necessary. In youth follow larger hopes and nobler aspirations. But when the child has become a man and looks back upon the whole course of training he knows that a higher purpose and a deeper meaning pervaded all that his father said and did.

Nor is it otherwise in the religious education of the world. Progressive instruction from the less to the greater marks every stage. God speaks from time to time as men are able to hear. He has ever been declaring, as Christ did to the twelve, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now" (John xv. 12). The promise made to Abraham "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Gen. xxii. 18) was a very simple

one. To the patriarch it can have meant little more than that his descendants should in some way prove a blessing to the world. But to S. Paul's inspired mind the seed of Abraham was first the Christian church (Gal. iii. 29) and in its highest fulfilment was Christ himself (Gal. iii. 16). So the promise made to David spoke only of a temporal ruler. Time, disappointment and further teaching converted it into the Messianic hope. Inspiration made the prophets feel that God meant more than He had been understood at the moment to say. The religious teachers in the period of silence between the closing of the Old Testament canon and the birth of Christ had searched, by no means fruitlessly, into the divine purposes. But the Apostles had in Christ the solution of all difficulties. Inspiration led them to apply the facts of His life to illuminate the dark prophetic page. They did not deny the historic truth of the Old Testament, as Philo had done, but they were sure that the literal meaning did not exhaust its teaching. They searched for and they found Christ everywhere.

And if in some details they pushed this principle too far, as we hold they did, that was because Inspiration, though it quickens the perceptions to see truth, does not confer infallibility, and providential guidance does not always extend to *minutiæ*. Other things in Scripture besides the Levitical ritual were transitory and destined to "wax old" (Heb. viii. 13), for the writers

held the "treasure in earthen vessels, that the exceeding greatness of the power might be of God (2 Cor. iv. 7). It is well for us to observe how their age dealt with the theological problems presented to it. But we cannot expect our age to give an unqualified assent to all their solutions. If even S. Paul's interpretations of the Old Testament are not always convincing, but sometimes betray the bias of his Rabbinical education (1 Cor. ix. 9), and if he himself claims only to know in part and to prophesy in part (1 Cor. xiii. 9), and sometimes to write without any command from the Lord (1 Cor. vii. 12), much less are we bound to ascribe finality to all the interpretations of unknown thinkers in the church of Jerusalem.

But we shall return to this subject in chapter XIII. Meanwhile it is important to observe that though S. Luke's account of the mystery of the Incarnation is entirely distinct from that in the first Gospel and has no reference either direct or implied to Isaiah's prophecy, yet both evangelists attest the same fact. The Incarnation, like the Crucifixion and the Resurrection, presents one of the very few cases in the Gospels, in which we really have the testimony of two men. Nay more, its presence in the first Gospel declares it to have been accepted in the East, its presence in S. Luke proves its acceptance in the West. The fact itself indeed transcends human experience, and must always remain a matter of faith. Still to admit it is easier than

to deny it, for without it the very existence of the Gospels and of Christianity is inexplicable. S. Peter's Memoirs imply, quite as much as S. John's Gospel records, that "the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us".

CHAPTER XII.

NON-ORAL GOSPEL. ANONYMOUS. THE RESULT OF LOCAL INQUIRY.

S. Luke's Gospel begins with a short preface followed by some narratives which occupy the rest of his two first chapters and certain sections of later chapters, concerning which we can pretty confidently affirm that they were never in the hands of the catechists, at least in their present Greek dress. They may be divided into sections thus: (1) The Baptist's birth promised (Luke i. 5–25). (2) The annunciation (i. 26–38). (3) Mary's visit to Elizabeth: the *Magnificat* (i. 39–56). (4) The Baptist's birth: the *Benedictus* (i. 57–80). (5) The birth of Christ and the visit of the shepherds (ii. 1–20). (6) The circumcision of Christ (ii. 21). (7) The presentation of Christ in the Temple: Simeon's address: the *Nunc dimittis*: the visit of Anna (ii. 22–40). (8) The journey of the boy Jesus to Jerusalem: the conversation with the doctors (ii.

41–52). (9) The genealogy (iii. 23–38). (10) The sermon preached at Nazareth (iv. 16–30). The raising of the widow's son at Nain (vii. 11–17).

It is convenient to class with these the corresponding sections of the first Gospel, though properly they should have been ranged under the preceding chapter, because they certainly were taught orally, as is shown by the suitable length of the sections, by the division of the genealogy into three parts arranged into decatessarads to assist the pupil's memory, and above all by the fact that they were present in the Gospel according to the Hebrews as well as in our first Gospel.

The first Gospel has no preface, but like the books of Chronicles begins with a genealogy i. (1–17). Then follow (2) The birth of Christ (i. 18–25). (3) The visit of the *Magi* (ii. 1–12). (4) The flight into Egypt (ii. 13–23).

The known inaccuracies in the first Gospel's genealogy, in which Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin are confused, and three consecutive kings, Ahaziah, Joash and Amaziah, are omitted, to say nothing of the improbability that so many kings were all related as father and son, which is more than the Hebrew "his son" warrants, might have warned men against looking for verbal infallibility here. S. Luke's genealogy, (except the Old Testament period from Abraham to David and the two names of Zorobabel and Salathiel which cover the time of the captivity), is entirely different. Both genealogies

give the descent of Joseph, and neither of them is scientific.

For the rest, we may notice that the above-mentioned sections of the first Gospel are entirely independent of those in S. Luke, and we cannot with any certainty piece the two sets of narrative together in chronological order. The author of the first Gospel seems not to be aware that Nazareth was Joseph's home before Christ's birth. In fact S. Luke's account of the Holy Family is much the more complete.

For convenience I have spoken in this book of "the East" to represent the Petrine churches and "the West" to represent the Pauline. But it must be remembered that Antioch, though situated in Syria and founded by Petrine evangelists, came at an early date under the influence of S. Paul and probably used on the whole the Western oral Gospel. The church at Rome on the other hand appears to have been founded by Petrine or perhaps I should rather say Jacobean missionaries who would bring with them teachers of their own. In these and similar cases, as time went on, considerable admixture in the tradition must have resulted. But even in Pauline churches we must not suppose the teaching to have been identical. It is improbable that in such centres as Corinth, Ephesus, Philippi, precisely the same Gospel was taught. S. Luke's Gospel preserves the teaching which was current at Philippi, if we are right in assuming from the change

of pronouns in the Acts of the Apostles that S. Luke spent the years 52—58 A. D. at Philippi. For

> Quo semel est imbuta recens servabit odorem
> Testa diu,

and S. Luke must have learned and taught the Gospel in that church.

CHAPTER XIII.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

When an editor undertakes to work up a number of detached sections into one treatise, he must use some connecting links. These may be of the meagrest kind, like S. Mark's "and" or "and immediately", or they may be long and important. In any case they are additions to the record and do not possess its authority.

Some of these additions to the Gospels are easy to discover. S. Mark's preface "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ" is one. S. Luke's four prefatorial verses are another. But sometimes we cannot be quite sure whether a change is due to the editor or to the catechists whom he is following.

Thus the first Gospel deliberately writes "the kingdom of the heavens" instead of "the kingdom of God." It does so thirty-one times, putting the phrase constantly into the mouth of our Lord himself. Was this change made by the catechists of Jerusalem

in their fear of using God's name too familiarly, or was it made by the editor for the same reason? As the expression "the kingdom of God" does occur four times in this Gospel, I incline to think the change an editorial one, which the editor four times omitted to make. I cannot admit that the expression "the kingdom of the heavens" is, as Professor Stanton thinks, the original phrase. S. Mark's testimony to the contrary would have satisfied me, but S. Mark is supported by SS. Luke, John and Paul.

On the other hand when S. Luke writes "lake of Gennesaret" for "sea of Galilee", or "Master" (ἐπιστάτης) instead of Rabbi (Mark) or "Sir" (κύριε, Matt.) or when he puts "Judæa" to signify not Judæa proper but the whole of Palestine, I have no doubt that he is following the Gentile catechists.

Editorial notes are few and unimportant in S. Mark (see chapter XVII.), more frequent in the first Gospel, but most frequent in S. Luke.

S. Luke has a habit of prefixing to a narrative a few words of introduction to explain to his reader the historical situation, or he affixes a few words to describe the sequel. I am unable to assign the importance to these notes, which Professor Godet sees in them, or to think them the result of patient original research. Take the following examples chosen at random from one chapter: "And it came to pass as the crowd pressed upon him and was hearing the message of God" (Luke

v. 1); "And it came to pass when he was in one of their cities" (v. 12); "And it came to pass on one of those days" (v. 17); "And after these things" (v. 27). Such additions are too vague to command assent. The following is more interesting—I have inclosed in brackets the words which belong to the Petrine memoirs—"And it came to pass in those days that he went forth [into the highland] to pray and was spending the night in the chapel (προσευχῇ) of God, and when day broke [he called to him] his disciples" (vi. 12–13).

S. Luke in an editorial note gives us a list of rulers over various countries and the year of the Roman emperor's reign, to fix the date of the Baptist's ministry (Luke iii. 1–2). In a more famous instance he places our Lord's birth within the proconsulship of Quirinius (ii. 2). In these and similar cases we have but the result of his own historical researches. If he could be shown to be wrong, he would be a less accurate historian than is commonly supposed, but the records which he proceeds to write down would not be affected. Quirinius *may* have been proconsul of Syria twice, which would set S. Luke right. There is some reason to suppose that he was, but at present no proof. If future research should show S. Luke to be wrong, it is well for us to know the difference between the historical value of an editorial note and that of the section to which it is prefixed.

Take a clearer case. The three hours' darkness at

the Crucifixion is mentioned in the Petrine memoirs (Mark xv. 33; Matt. xxvii. 45) without any explanation of its degree or its cause. But S. Luke in an editorial note ascribes it to a failing or eclipse of the sun (*τοῦ ἡλίου ἐκλείποντος* Luke xxiii. 45, according to the true reading), a thing which would not last longer than eight minutes and could not occur at the Paschal full moon.

S. Luke prefaces that remarkable division of his Gospel ix. 51—xviii. 14 with the following editorial note: "And it came to pass when the days of his assumption were being fulfilled, that he stedfastly set his face to journey to Jerusalem." Several sections which follow are also connected with this journey. Commentators therefore have assumed that S. Luke from his ninth chapter onwards is narrating the events of the last few weeks of our Lord's ministry. We shall see in chapter XVI. that there is reason to doubt this.

The question of divorce is treated at full length in the Petrine memoirs (Mark x. 1–12) in which the remarriage of divorced people, whether man or woman, is absolutely forbidden and the whole argument vindicates this as the original precept, for the laxity of the law of Moses is contrasted with the strictness required by Christ. S. Luke gives the precept without the context in a single verse (xvi. 18), confining it to the case of men, and forbidding them absolutely either to marry a divorced woman or to put away their wives and marry another. But the first Gospel restores the

Mosaic rule as interpreted by the stricter school of Shammai by inserting the words "save for adultery" (Matt. xix. 9) and "except in case of adultery" (Matt. v. 32). On what authority this change was made I cannot say, but I would venture to suggest that the church of Jerusalem, exercising the power to bind and loose (i.e. to forbid or permit, in other words, to legislate) which our Lord conferred, may have authorised the insertion of the qualifying words, on the ground that the hardness of men's hearts continued, and that Jewish Christians were not capable of any higher law. The Western Church, under the guidance of S. Paul, preserved the strictness of Christ's rule. I know of no other ground on which the divorce laws of modern times can be defended, than the hardness of men's hearts. The world is only partially Christianised, and it is the duty of teachers to set before men the higher standard, which Christ erected amongst us.

In the last chapter we mentioned the first Gospel's references to the fulfilment of prophecy, and pointed out that in one case the author had altered the wording of the prophecy to make it suit the history (Matt. xxvii. 10). We shall now see that in another place he alters the wording of the Petrine memoirs, to make them better suit the prophecy.

S. Mark writes that "the foal of an ass upon which never yet man sat" was procured by our Lord's directions for the triumphal entry into Jerusalem. (Mark

xi. 1–11.) S. Luke exactly repeats the words. (Luke xix. 29–38.) S. John briefly says that our Lord "found a young ass and sat thereon" (John xii. 12–19). We have therefore the double testimony of SS. Peter and John that only one animal was used. But the first Gospel, quoting Zechariah, in which two animals, an ass and its colt, appear to be mentioned, "Behold thy king cometh to thee, meek and seated upon an ass *and* upon a colt, the foal of a beast of burden" (Zech. ix. 9), makes the disciples bring a she-ass and its foal, says that the disciples caparisoned both animals with their overcoats and that Jesus sat alternately on each animal (Matt. xxi. 1 ff.). Thus the dignity of the procession is spoiled. The English reader, in whose version Zechariah's "and" is correctly rendered "even" would hardly discover the reason for this change. It is worth noting in this connexion that on two other occasions—that of the Gadarene demoniac and of blind Bartimæus—the first Gospel again doubles the number, giving "two" where the Petrine memoirs gave "one" (Matt. viii. 28, xx. 30).

Another passage has evidently been altered out of deference to a Psalm, though no express reference to the Psalm is ever made. The case is worthy of detailed examination, because it will illustrate many of the previous statements.

Twice, according to the Petrine memoirs, was wine offered to our Lord during the crucifixion. The first

draught, tendered to him immediately before the nails were driven in, is usually and I think correctly, supposed to have contained an opiate. The second draught was presented immediately before He yielded up His spirit. It was unmixed. One of the spectators took it from a jar of wine, provided perhaps for the refreshment of the soldiers during their watch (if Roman discipline permitted such indulgence). The height of the cross prevented the man from reaching our Lord's lips. He therefore filled a sponge with the wine, set the sponge on a reed of hyssop, and so effected his purpose. Our Lord refused the first draught, probably because it would becloud the brain. He accepted the second as the offering of compassion, although He had recently declared "Verily, I say unto you, I shall not drink any more of the product of the vine until that day when I shall drink it new in my Father's kingdom" (Mark xiv. 25). But both these gifts of wine were made in pity to alleviate suffering.

Now in Psalm lxix. 21 there is a verse "They gave me gall to eat and when I was thirsty they gave me vinegar to drink." The word translated "gall" is in the Hebrew *rôsh* (רֹאשׁ), which signifies some plant or class of plants or berries, such as hemlock, nightshade, colocynth or poppies, which look bright and tempting but are really nauseous or noxious. This meaning of the word *rôsh* became obsolete, and in Aramaic "they gave me *bitters* (*mᵉrârê*) to eat" took

its place. Thus the Targum on the passage in question has: ויהבו בסעודתי מרירת רישי הורמני ולצהותי אשקיין יתי הלא. And the Peshîṭtâ: יהבו במאכולתי מרא ולצהיי חלא אשקיוני. The LXX. also give χολή, intending thereby no doubt not an animal, but a vegetable bitter. In all cases the evident meaning of the Psalmist is made to be "They mocked my hunger with food which I could not eat; they mocked my thirst with a draught which I could not drink."

Let us take the case of the vinegar first.

Vinegar is much too sharp and sour to drink (Proverbs x. 26), but small quantities of it are grateful as a condiment. The reapers in Ruth ii. 14 dipped their bread in vinegar. And when plentifully diluted with water, it forms a refreshing beverage. Hence it was forbidden to the Nazirites (Numb. vi. 3).

But in Aramaic the word *ḥallâ* "vinegar" was used, at first (I suppose) jestingly, but afterwards seriously, to designate the thin sour wine used by the peasants. In the Peshîṭtâ it occurs in Matt. xxvii. 34, and elsewhere to represent *οἶνος*. Its Greek equivalent also (*ὄξος*) came to be similarly employed in Palestine, as it perhaps was in Greek comedy (Aristoph. *Ach.* 35).

S. Mark therefore writes in this sense "A certain man having filled a sponge with *vinegar* placed it upon a reed and gave him to drink" (xv. 35). Here there is no direct reference to the Psalm, though the peculiar wording of the Greek would suggest it.

S John more closely connects the action with the Psalm, for he says that the "vinegar" was offered in response to a cry from our Lord "I am thirsty," which, he adds, was spoken "that the Scripture might be fulfilled". S. John also tells us that the reed was made of hyssop, and that Jesus accepted the wine. He confirms S. Peter's statement that this occurred immediately before Christ gave up the ghost (xix. 28 ff.).

The first Gospel has nothing new to add. It simply follows the Petrine records, though somewhat inaccurately. S. Mark had said that the man who offered the vinegar called to his companions "Let be, let us see whether Elijah is coming to take him down" (xv. 36 f.), but the first Gospel says that the spectators, seeing what the man was about to do, called upon him to desist, saying "Let be, let us see whether Elijah is coming to save him" (Matt. xxvii. 48 f.).

S. Luke only speaks of one of the two draughts of wine and apparently not this one.

Now let us turn to the case of the opiate which is not mentioned by S. John.

S. Peter's memoirs appear to have run "They gave him wine mingled with myrrh" (*murrâ*, or, if the Jerusalem text really gives the ordinary Palestinian form, *mîrâ*). By this he seems to have meant, not "drugged with myrrh," for myrrh is not an opiate or anodyne, but as S. Mark correctly renders *ἐσμυρνισ-*

μένον οἶνον "myrrhed wine," that is to say wine in the preparation of which a small quantity of myrrh had been used to fortify it and improve the flavour, as was usual with the ancients.

If this be the true account, there is nothing said about an opiate. We only infer the presence of such an ingredient in the cup from the probability of the case, from the humane custom which is said to have prevailed amongst the Jews at a crucifixion, and from the fact that our Lord tasted the draught before refusing it, and that the persons who had furnished it, thereupon pressed it again and again upon Him (*ἐδίδουν, imperfect tense*) in their desire to mitigate His bodily pain. At any rate the offering was made in compassion if not in love. The disregard of expense would suggest the latter feeling.

In the first Gospel "mingled with myrrh" becomes "mingled with gall."

I cannot think that by "gall" an opiate is intended. For though it be granted that "gall" (*χολή*) simply stands for *rôsh* and that *rôsh* means "poppies" as Gesenius thought: still an opiate would have been expressed by "extract of poppies" (מֵי רֹאשׁ) and not by the simple name of the plant.

Plainly "gall" stands for "bitters" (*mᵉrârê*). And the draught, from being a pleasant and beneficial one, is altered into a nauseous one. The Saviour, according to the first Gospel, did not drink because He could not

drink. They offered what seemed a tempting draught but on tasting it He found it undrinkable. All is thought to be done in the most brutal mockery and the spirit of the Psalm is fulfilled as well as the letter.

But how came the change to be made? *Murrâ* or *mîrâ* "myrrh" has been altered into the very similar word *mᵉrârê* or *marrîrâ* "bitters." For myrrh was popularly supposed to be a bitter, being referred to the same root *mārar* "to be bitter" whereas Semitic scholars now assign it to another *mārar* to "drop" or "distil".

Those who are acquainted with the Jewish literature of those ages, will not think such a change, as this, unlikely to have been made in the anxiety of the early Christians to multiply fulfilments of Scripture, but by the catechists the word was probably altered with no such intent, but for the simple purpose of correcting a supposed false reading in the tradition.

In S. Luke the two draughts of wine are confused together and both the order of events and the circumstances are distorted. All mention of myrrh or gall is omitted. And "vinegar" is apparently understood literally, for we read that the soldiers offered it in mockery (xxiii. 36).

For the references to the Targum and the Syriac versions in the above passage I am indebted to one of the Fellows of my College, the Rev. R. H. Kennett,

who also suggested the connexion between *murrâ* and *mᵉrârê* in which I now discover that he has been partly anticipated by the late Professor Nicoll.

Serious difficulty has been felt about the statement that our Lord should be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth (Matt. xii. 40), whereas the common reckoning gives but one day and two nights. On comparing the parallel passage in S. Luke (xi. 29–32) we see that two very different interpretations are given us, evidently in two "editorial notes", of the "sign of the prophet Jonah" of which the verse in question is an explanation. Plainly our Lord left the mysterious saying unexplained; that He did so is shown by Matt. xvi. 4, where the same saying is repeated without comment. Thus the words in question are not His and are not primitive.

According to our theory these editorial notes are the weakest links in the historical chain. They contain the opinions or explanations of writers who were not eye-witnesses, and who were writing, perhaps in distant lands, about events which had happened long before. But it is well to remember that these editorial notes include everything, which the writers contributed to their work. It is therefore surprising that they should be so few. The writers were willing to keep themselves continually in the back-ground. They give us no hint of their names and no clue to their identity. They were content to remain unknown.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE DATES OF THE WRITING OF THE GOSPELS.

We read in 1 Tim. v. 18 "The Scripture saith 'Thou shalt not muzzle an ox when it treadeth out corn' and 'The workman is worthy of his wages'". Now the latter quotation appears at first sight to come from S. Luke x. 7, and some commentators have actually concluded that S. Luke's Gospel was therefore not only written, but circulated and accepted as Scripture, in the year 65 A.D.

An historical critic would be slow to admit that. Indeed many critics have argued that S. Luke's Gospel with its precise language about the destruction of Jerusalem (chapter VII.) cannot have been written till after the siege in 70 A.D. and that as S. Paul died under Nero, who committed suicide in June 68 A.D., S. Paul cannot have been the author of the first epistle to Timothy.

We would plead for a middle course. The proverb in question belongs, according to our theory, to the

second cycle of oral gospel, and S. Paul has preserved it in the Western form with which he was familiar. The first Gospel gives the Eastern form, "The workman is worthy of his *food*" (Matt. x. 10) which better suits the context and is so much the less likely to be original.

Now it is plain from the numerous quotations in the Pastoral Epistles, that a considerable Christian literature of psalms, hymns, creeds &c. was forming. Why may not some sections of oral gospel have been committed to writing also? S. Luke in his preface testifies that this had been done before he wrote, and if so, it is from them and not from S. Luke's Gospel that the quotation was taken, unless indeed it comes from the Gospel according to the Hebrews. In support of this supposition it is to be noticed that when S. Paul in these Epistles alludes to the Old Testament, he finds the usual term "Scripture" insufficient to distinguish them, but invents the new phrase "the holy writings" (*τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα* 2 Tim. iii. 16). In the unique expression "Every inspired Scripture" (2 Tim. iii. 17) I have no doubt that Christian writings are included.

The fact is that so long as Apostles and eyewitnesses were living, and the teaching of the catechists, though becoming divergent and wanting in precision, was sufficiently near to the original accounts not to excite distrust in an age when intercommunication between distant churches was slow, there was no demand for written gospels. But when SS. Peter and Paul were

dead, and the first generation of catechists was fast disappearing, while the hope of the Second Advent was receding, I cannot say that a demand for writings arose, but some of the leading catechists, moved we believe by the Holy Spirit, and following the example of S. Matthew and of others who had written a few sections, awoke to a sense of their duty to future generations and undertook to write the whole of what they taught.

The destruction of Jerusalem may well have given the necessary impulse to a long projected movement. However ill at times that church had discharged its duty, it had always been rightly regarded as the head quarters of Christianity. Two of the three cycles of oral gospel had originated in it, and when distant churches had needed catechists, they had always been able to obtain them there. But now it was annihilated, and Christendom had no metropolis.

Soon therefore after the year 70 A.D. we may suppose S. Mark, who was now an old man, to have written his Gospel. But it was not widely published or generally known. If it had been, copies would have been multiplied, and the last page would not have been lost. It can hardly have come into circulation till after S. Mark's death. Still the rumour that he had written may have spread, and would suggest to others to follow his example.

S. Luke says that many undertook to write, perhaps

before this, perhaps after (Luke i. 1). He does not speak slightingly of their efforts, far from it; but neither does he speak as though he had read them, though I am fully persuaded that he had before him some written Aramaic documents which he used in writing his two first chapters. He certainly had not seen S. Mark's work or the first Gospel, but his two prefatory chapters are plainly translations from Aramaic originals. We have seen already (chapter VII.) that the precision of his language about the destruction of Jerusalem, as contrasted with the enigmatical prophecies in the Petrine memoirs, indicates that he wrote with a full knowledge of the history of the siege. But though he introduces much more editorial matter than do the other two Gospels, he does not, either in the Gospel or the Acts of the Apostles, introduce any of the ideas of the next generation. I see good reason to think that he wrote before the year 80 A.D.

The first Gospel is evidently written while the horrors of the destruction of Jerusalem were still fresh if not actually going on, and while the casting away of the Israelites, the abolition of the ancient ritual and the breaking of the covenant demanded explanation. We can scarcely realise the shock which the faith of religious men, Jews and Gentiles alike, had received at that terrible "coming of the Son of Man".

The unknown author therefore accentuates the guilt of the rulers of his nation. He masses together the

warnings and the denunciations of Christ. He insists, as no other writer does, on the moral inferiority of the teaching of the Pentateuch to that of Christ, leading the reader to infer its transitory nature. He details the prophecies of pending judgement, and the deafness of the ears upon which they fell. He narrates the reckless levity which cried "His blood be on us and on our children". In short, his Gospel, though he does but record what he had received from others, arraigns the Jewish rulers before the bar of God's just judgement, and pronounces them guilty. This Gospel was probably written a few years earlier than S. Luke's.

And if the three Gospels were written between 70 and 80 A.D., none of the authors being privy to the work of the others, S. John's Gospel will fall into the next decade or soon after. I do not stay to prove that the Apostle S. John was the author. That question has been fully discussed in Dr Westcott's introduction to S. John's Gospel in the Speaker's Commentary. If S. John were only fifteen years old when he was called to follow Christ, he would be approaching the extremity of age in 90 A.D. If he wrote the Gospel, as so fearless and excellent a critic as Ewald unhesitatingly affirmed that he did, he cannot have written it much later than this date. And if that be conceded, the earlier date of the other three Gospels will scarcely be denied. In fact the Johannine authorship of the fourth Gospel involves the date of all the four Gospels.

CHAPTER XV.

THE FIRST GOSPEL.

We have already considered the very difficult question of the authorship of the first Gospel and have given reasons for our belief that a Greek catechist of S. Matthew's school, rather than S. Matthew himself, must be considered to have written it in its present form.

S. Matthew, according to the undivided testimony of antiquity, first wrote, or caused to be written, a Gospel in Aramaic. Then, perhaps ten years later, the Greek Gospel was written by a Greek catechist who reproduced S. Matthew's teaching, the most striking part of which is the second cycle of oral gospel, perhaps doing so under S. Matthew's guidance.

That S. Matthew himself is not the author appears to us to be fully substantiated by an examination of the Gospel itself. For first it is not a translation. Most of its contents, I admit, were once in Aramaic and still retain

an Oriental colouring. But they had been extensively used in a Greek dress before they were written down in Greek. This is plain enough in the case of the second cycle which obviously reproduces the same version which S. Luke follows; but still plainer from the way in which the Petrine memoirs are treated. S. Mark's version is used, but S. Mark's simple Semitic coordinated sentences have been broken up. A considerable variety of conjunctions has displaced the monotonous "and". The same sentences, the same words, are there, but Greek catechists have to a considerable extent introduced Greek periods.

Again, if S. Matthew wrote the first Gospel, he was an Apostle and an eye-witness. We should expect therefore that, like S. John, he would sometimes differ from S. Peter, sometimes add new sections, or new words to the old sections. Compare S. John's account of the feeding of the five thousand with S. Mark's, and you will see what I mean. But what do we find here? The Petrine memoirs are simply adopted, and almost in their entirety. Four sections are omitted which S. Luke also omits, but only two others, viz. the healing of the demoniac in the Synagogue at Capernaum (Mark i. 23 ff.) and the narrative of the widow casting two mites into the treasury (Mark xii. 41 ff.). But how does he treat the sections which he retains? He reduces their bulk, sometimes to less than half, by striking out nearly every word which

is not essential. It is scarcely possible for one man to have altered the sections, as he has done; it must have been a long process, continued by many catechists. In fact he has learned the memoirs in a late form, as we can hardly imagine an Apostle to have done.

And such additions as he makes, read more like the work of a collector than of an original spectator. For example, he gives us no new descriptions of persons, places or things. He does not, like S. John, throw any fresh light upon the characters of the Apostles and disciples. Nor does he correct the chronology. Even his account of S. Matthew's call—beyond the difficult change of name from Levi to Matthew—is less original than S. Mark's.

In fact, if a reasonable degree of weight is to be assigned to internal evidence, we have here the work of an unknown member of the Church at Jerusalem, which Church probably produced another anonymous work of the first order—the Epistle to the Hebrews.

That S. Matthew was not the author is shown by an examination of the characteristics of the Gospel, which indicate the work of catechists.

Thus S. Mark's Gospel occasionally preserves a certain audacity of expression, which timid catechists would be likely to alter for the sake of their pupils, who might draw wrong inferences from it. S. Mark writes for example that Christ "*was not able* to work any miracle at Nazareth except that He laid His hand

upon a few sick persons and healed them; and He marvelled because of their unbelief" (vi. 5 ff.). The first Gospel gives "He *did not work* many miracles there, because of their unbelief" (xiii. 58). S. Mark says that our Lord's friends (*οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ*) came to lay hold of Him on suspicion of insanity (iii. 21). The other Gospels omit this. S. Mark writes "Is not this the Carpenter?" (vi. 3); the first Gospel, "Is not this the carpenter's son?" (xiii. 55). S. Mark says that SS. James and John came and made a selfish and ambitious request which our Lord refused (x. 35); the first Gospel says that the mother of Zebedee's sons came with her sons and that she made the request (xx. 20). SS. Mark and Luke say that a certain young man said to Jesus "*Good master*, what must I do to inherit the life of the world to come? And Jesus answered, *Why callest thou me good?* there is none good save one, that is God" (Mark x. 17 ff.; Luke xviii. 18 ff.); but the first Gospel, according to the reading which is now universally acknowledged by the critics to be true, gives "Master, what *good thing* must I do, to inherit the life of the world to come?" And Jesus answered, "*Why askest thou me about the good thing?* One is good, that is God" (Matt. xix. 16 ff.). This is more than a lapse of memory. It is a deliberate change, made evidently for a theological purpose, lest any doubt should be engendered amongst pupils of tender age about the perfect sinlessness of Christ. Far be it from me to pass

judgement on such action: I merely point out the grounds on which I pronounce S. Mark's to be the original account. We have already seen that the first Gospel differs from the others on the question of divorce (chapter XIII). Other theological changes, if I may so call them, are these: S. Mark represents our Lord saying to the Syrophenician woman "For this saying go thy way; the demon is gone out of thy daughter" (vii. 29). The first Gospel interprets this speech, "O woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was healed from that hour" (xv. 28). S. Peter's confession according to S. Mark was, "Thou art the Christ" (viii. 29), according to S. Luke "The Christ of God" (ix. 20); but the first Gospel has "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (xvi. 16), and some commentators have actually maintained that the essence of the confession lies in the words which are an editorial note of the first Gospel. According to S. Mark, our Lord, when asked by the disciples why they could not cast out the demon from the epileptic boy at the foot of the mount of Transfiguration, replied "This kind goeth not out save by prayer" (ix. 29); the first Gospel writes, "Because of your smallness of faith; for verily I say unto you, if ye have faith like a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say to this mountain, Depart from hence to yonder place, and it shall depart, and nothing shall be impossible to you" (xvii. 20), a saying which S. Luke gives in a different context

(xvii. 6). The catechists have, apparently, first forgotten the original forcible answer in S. Mark and then supplied its place by borrowing from another passage; as is very commonly done in the Gospels.

For this tendency to forget a sentence and substitute another for it is inseparable from catechetical teaching. Even S. Mark seems to have traces of it. For when the demoniac in the Synagogue at Capernaum cries out, "What have we to do with thee, Jesus the Nazarene?" (Mark i. 23), Dr Weiss is probably right in suggesting that the saying is borrowed from the better remembered case of the Gadarene demoniac (v. 7). The Old Testament writers have numerous literary "commonplaces" of the same kind. And when the first Gospel, abandoning SS. Mark and Luke, makes the Baptist use our Lord's words, "Bethink yourselves, for the kingdom of the heavens hath drawn nigh" (iii. 2), the same thing has been done, and there is therefore no ground for the complaint that our Lord showed a lack of originality in adopting the Baptist's cry.

But the most clear case of defective memory occurs in the charge to the Twelve. S. Mark writes that "He charged them that they should take nothing for their journey, *save a staff only*, not bread, not a wallet, not copper coins for their belt, but (should go) *shod with sandals*, and not put on two tunics" (vi. 8 f.). The first Gospel has "Procure not gold nor silver nor copper for your belts, not a wallet for the road, nor two tunics,

nor shoes nor a staff" (Matt. x. 9 f.). S. Luke gives "Take nothing for your journey, *neither a staff*, nor a wallet, nor bread, nor money, nor two tunics to wear (ix. 3), and in the charge to the Seventy he adds "*not shoes*" (x. 4). A critic can have no doubt that S. Mark's is the original narrative here. But if S. Matthew wrote the Gospel, he was one of those who went, and can hardly have forgotten whether he went barefoot or not. Some commentators, I know, have tried to draw a distinction between shoes and sandals; but the generic term shoes (*ὑποδήματα*) must include sandals, and in any case the discrepancy about the staff remains.

Hitherto I have dealt with the first cycle only. In the second cycle we are on less sure ground, because we have no primitive edition of it. Yet, remembering the first Gospel's tendency to make theological additions, is there not some reason to suspect what is suggested to me by a comparison of the parallel passage in S. Luke, that the words which I have enclosed in brackets in the preface to the Sermon on the Mount are editorial additions?—"Blessed are the poor [in spirit] ...blessed are they that hunger and thirst [after righteousness]...blessed are the pure [in heart]...blessed are they which are persecuted [for righteousness' sake] ... blessed are ye, when men...say all manner of evil against you [falsely, for my sake]" (Matt. v. 1 ff.).

We have already examined those passages of the first Gospel which are outside the cycles including the

quotations from the Old Testament (chapter XI.), the introductory chapters (chapter XII.) and the editorial notes (chapter XIII.). In none of them are we able to trace the work of an Apostle and eyewitness. In fact throughout this Gospel we feel that we are treading on less sure historical ground than in S. Mark.

And yet this is the most valued Gospel of the three and deservedly so. S. Luke's alone could dispute the palm. Teaching is worth more than records of fact however carefully given. Spiritual truth is higher than history. The glory of the later gifts of the Spirit is greater than that of the former. And the instinct of the Church in all ages—Catholic as well as Protestant, Anglican, Lutheran, reformed and nonconformist —has turned with devout thankfulness to this work of an unknown author, whose inaccuracies perplex us, but whose wealth of the highest teaching attests his true inspiration and his fidelity to our common Lord.

CHAPTER XVI.

S. LUKE'S GOSPEL.

S. LUKE'S Gospel is the most complex of the three, and contains specimens of every one of the six varieties which we have noticed in the composition of the Gospels. For not only does he make use of the three cycles, but of some oral gospel outside the cycles, with abundance of non-oral gospel and of editorial notes. If he had continued his work on the scale on which he begins, it would have been very lengthy, but now it is only a few verses longer than the first Gospel, for his omissions are numerous, striking, and sometimes inexplicable. Yet we must not think of them as his omissions; rather they formed no part of the oral gospel, as it was taught by Western catechists.

The principal omissions from the Petrine memoirs are: (those marked with a star are omitted in the first Gospel also).

The description of the Baptist's food and dress.
The ministry of angels after the Temptation.
The call of SS. Peter, Andrew, James and John.
The murmuring "Is not this the Carpenter?".
The narrative of the Baptist's murder.
*The parable of the seed growing secretly.
The narrative of Christ's walking on the water.
The dispute about eating with unwashen hands.
The healing of the Syrophenician woman's daughter.
*The healing of the deaf man who had an impediment in his speech.
The feeding of the four thousand.
*The healing of the blind man whose cure was gradual.
The dispute about divorce. (He gives the verdict xvi. 18.)
The ambitious request of SS. James and John.
The cursing of the barren fig-tree.
In the Second Advent discourse he omits much and rewrites much.
The anointing by Mary. (He gives another anointing vii. 36 ff.)
*The incident of the man with the linen cloth.
All allusion to destroying the Temple in three days, with the taunt "Thou that destroyest &c."
In the Trial and Passion he frequently abandons the Petrine memoirs in favour of others outside the cycles.

The cry "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?".

The promise to go before into Galilee and its fulfilment.

Some of these sections would have little interest for Gentile Christians. Very surprising is the omission of the call of SS. Peter, Andrew, James and John, because the section in which S. Peter described the call is preserved almost complete, but with a strange addition. According to S. Luke, Jesus sees two empty boats, enters one which was Simon's, bids him thrust out a little from the shore, and so taught the people from the boat. Then follows the draught of fishes. At the conclusion we are told that the other boat belonged to SS. James and John, S. Simon's partners, and that the three—no mention is made of S. Andrew—forsook all and followed Christ (Luke v. 1 ff.). Now no draught of fishes is mentioned here by any other writer, but a draught of fishes is recorded by S. John in his last chapter (xxi. 1 ff.). Are these two identical? The chronology does not settle the question, for S. John's chronology is not the same as that of the three. The narratives are different, but even that is not decisive, for many of S. Luke's narratives have been altered. I think it not improbable that they are the same.

On the other hand I have no hesitation in saying that the feeding of the five thousand is distinct from the feeding of the four thousand. Both are recorded in

the Petrine memoirs; both are preserved in S. Mark and the first Gospel. A Petrine note afterwards (Mark viii. 19 f.; Matt. xvi. 9 f.) refers to them both. S. Luke's omission of the latter is due to the habit, which seems to have prevailed in the West, of omitting such narratives as conveyed no new teaching. For example, the cursing of the barren fig-tree may have been omitted (as Dr Abbott suggests) because the third cycle contained a parable about a barren fig-tree (xiii. 6 ff.). The most inexplicable omission is that of the healing of the Syrophenician woman's daughter. If there is one narrative in the three Gospels which we should have expected to find in S. Luke, it is this. S. Luke, himself a Gentile, writing for Gentiles, passes over the only recorded case in which our Lord healed a Gentile. Can the catechists have objected to Christ's even by implication calling the Gentiles dogs?

S. Luke's principal omissions in the Matthæan utterances are:

The Matthæan additions to John's baptism of Christ.

Large portions, including the theological sections, of the Sermon on the Mount.

Some portions of the Charge to the Twelve.

The parable of the tares.

The parable of the hidden treasure.

The parable of the pearl of great price.

The parable of the draw net.

The promise of the keys to S. Peter.

The promise that what the Apostles bound on earth should be bound in heaven.

The parable of the unmerciful servant.

The parable of the two sons commanded to work in the vineyard.

The parable of the labourers in the vineyard.

The parable of the ten virgins.

The description of the Son of Man in glory separating the sheep from the goats.

Most of these sections, as we have seen, were probably added to the second cycle at a later date than that at which it was conveyed to the West.

We have described in chapter XI. the additions which S. Luke obtains from the oral gospel outside the cycles, and in chapter XII. the additions from non-oral gospel. We observe respecting the latter that they are far more Aramaic in form than even S. Mark's Gospel. The reason of this we take to be the simple fact that they never were in the hands of Greek catechists, who inevitably and unconsciously Hellenised what they taught. Dr Abbott suggests that S. Luke, though certainly capable of writing Greek which approaches even a classical standard—witness his preface and the latter part of the Acts of the Apostles in which he is narrating his own recollections—may deliberately have retained the Aramaic colouring of his original as a literary embellishment.

We have commented on S. Luke's editorial notes in chapter XIII.

It remains to justify our assertion that S. Luke's Gospel has less of the true chronological order than any other. This we may do by examining the arrangement of his Gospel.

After two chapters of preliminary matter S. Luke in his third chapter begins the Petrine memoirs. Till ix. 50 he follows their guidance, merely interspersing here and there parts of the second cycle and other matter. Only twice does he slightly vary S. Mark's order. From ix. 51 to xviii. 14 he leaves S. Peter's memoirs, except for a verse or two occasionally. Into this remarkable division—nearly one third of his whole work—he has put most of the third cycle, and some of the second. If we are to accept S. Luke's chronology, we must suppose that the whole of this section belongs to the final journey to Jerusalem. But an examination of its contents does not justify that view. It would have been the latest stage of our Lord's teaching at which "without a parable spake he not unto the people." Nay, for the most part He had ceased to address the multitudes, and had confined His teaching to the education of the Twelve. But here we have all those beautiful stories, which are the very plainest and simplest teaching, and must, I think, belong to the first period. After xviii. 15 S. Luke returns to the Petrine memoirs, and follows their guidance, as far as chronology

goes, to the end. Now we have seen that the chronology of the Petrine memoirs is not correct (chapter VI.), neither therefore is S. Luke's order correct.

One more question may conveniently be put here. Did our Lord repeat Himself in His teaching? There is no reason to doubt that He did. In the Charge to the Seventy He may well have said many things which He had said in the Charge to the Twelve. But when commentators push this principle, and maintain that whenever we have slightly different editions of a discourse, they are really two distinct discourses, I cannot agree with them. That the Sermon on the Mount in the first Gospel is the same as the Sermon on the plain in S. Luke, is to me indisputable. For it is not a question of what our Lord said and did, but of what was recollected and how the recollections finally reached the writers. Slightly different setting and chronology count for nothing. If, by the principle of repetition, we could get rid of all discrepancies or of most of them, there would be reason for considering it. But though some men have gone so far in this direction as to hold that S. Peter denied Christ nine times, they have not got rid of the difficulty about the cock crowing once or twice. Did the centurion come in person to Christ, as the first Gospel asserts, or did he not come, as S. Luke insists? Were the Twelve commanded to wear shoes and carry a staff, as S. Mark says, or were they forbidden to do so, as S. Luke and the first Gospel affirm?

Is it true that "Jehoram begat Uzziah" (Matt. i. 8)? Till these and many other difficulties have been cleared away, the student of the Gospels need not be too ready to multiply discourses in order to avoid diversity. The parable of the Talents (Matt. xxv. 14 ff.) is very different from the Parable of the Pounds (Luke xix. 11 ff.), yet I think it almost certain that they are different editions of the same parable.

S. Luke was a physician (Coloss. iv. 14). It is interesting to observe how he vindicates his order. S. Peter had written of the woman with the issue of blood that "she had frequently been medically treated by many physicians and had spent all her living upon them, and had been nothing benefited but rather made worse" (Mark v. 26). The first Gospel omits the whole of this serious indictment. S. Luke rewrites the verse "She had not the constitutional strength to be cured by any one" (viii. 43). Surely it is a shallow criticism which would see here nothing but professional pride. S. Peter's charge may have been only too sadly true, yet Christian kindness and forbearance demand that we should be something more than just in our judgements about others. S. Luke's Gospel is distinguished for that charity which hopeth all things and believeth all things.

CHAPTER XVII.

S. MARK'S GOSPEL.

We have already said nearly all that need be said about this Gospel, which contains nothing but the Petrine memoirs and the briefest editorial notes.

We have seen that one Petrine section—the healing of the centurion's servant or son—is absent. The following four have not been preserved elsewhere:

The parable of the seed growing secretly (iv. 26 ff.).

The healing of the deaf man who had an impediment in his speech (vii. 32 ff.).

The healing of the blind man whose cure was gradual (viii. 22 ff.).

The narrative of the man with the linen cloth (xiv. 51 f.).

Of editorial notes S. Mark has (1) A brief preface "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ." (2) An allusion to the fulfilment of Scripture "[As it standeth

written in Isaiah the prophet] 'Behold I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way'. [The voice of one crying in the wilderness &c.]." (i. 2.)

This verse demands detailed examination. S. Peter contributed the first clause 'As it standeth written in Isaiah the prophet' and the latter quotation "The voice of one crying in the wilderness &c." S. Mark himself has inserted between them the prophecy from Malachi. Whence did he obtain it? Not himself directly from Malachi, or he would not have attributed it to Isaiah. Plainly he is quoting second hand. Did he get it from the second cycle? It occurs there in a different context (Matt. xi. 10; Luke viii. 12) in the mouth of our Lord, who Himself brings it forward as applicable to the Baptist. I am loath to admit that S. Mark was acquainted with the Matthæan Utterances. If he had been, surely he would have made use of them. It is better to suppose that a text like this was common property. The fulfilment of Scripture was the engrossing study of the age. Every Christian preacher made allusions to it. And it is no slight proof of the early type of S. Mark's Gospel that in no other passage does he draw attention (as the first Gospel so frequently does) to this subject. For Mark xv. 28 is spurious, and when S. Mark quotes Scripture elsewhere, it is as an essential part of the Petrine memoirs.

Another editorial note possesses the highest interest as a true and important theological inference. S. Mark

is narrating the section in which our Lord pronounces the true nature of defilement, as being moral, in opposition to the superficial teaching of the scribes, who made it rest in eating food with unclean hands. Christ gives the startling paradox "There is nothing outside a man which can defile him by entering into him; but the things which proceed forth from the man are those which defile him"; and in somewhat broken syntax S. Mark adds a note of his own "(this spake he) making all foods clean" (vii. 19). Now there is no reference in the passage to the distinction between clean and unclean foods. Our Lord's controversy was against the scribes who unless they could wash would not eat. But S. Mark rightly judges that the principle may be pushed further than its original scope, and made to cover some of the Levitical rules as well as the Pharisees' vow. The distinction between clean and unclean food holds a prominent place in Leviticus, and many Gentile Christians accepting Leviticus as Holy Scripture must occasionally have been troubled with conscientious scruples on the question.

It is perhaps by an editorial note that S. Mark tells us that David ate the shewbread "*in the high-priesthood of Abiathar*" (ii. 26). Abiathar and Ahimelech are confused even in the Old Testament, and there is some uncertainty about them. If these words were part of S. Peter's original narrative, they were struck out by the catechists at an early date to avoid the difficulty.

The same uncertainty hangs about the enumeration of the Ten Commandments in Mark x. 19. The Laws of the second Table appear to be given, except that the fifth is put last. Instead of "Do not covet" for the tenth, S. Mark gives "Do not defraud" which is synonymous with the eighth "Do not steal." The other two Gospels omit the precept.

CHAPTER XVIII.

S. JOHN'S GOSPEL.

S. JOHN'S Gospel differs from the other three in that it is not founded on oral teaching, but consists of personal recollections of an eye-witness written by himself. It therefore is in many respects of higher authority than anything even in the Petrine memoirs. S. Peter indeed compiled his narrative at a time much nearer to the events, and in that had an advantage, but S. Peter's recollections have not reached us from his own hand, or complete, or correctly arranged.

Chapters i.–xx. form the body of S. John's work and are complete in themselves with their own conclusion. The first epistle of S. John is a preface or postscript to them, explaining the persons for whom they were intended and the standpoint of the writer. Chapter xxi. 1–23 is an appendix added some time after the completion of the book for a special reason. Verse 24

is a kind of *testamur* attached to the whole by some persons unknown. Verse 25 is of uncertain authorship. The received text contains a section, vii. 53—viii. 11, which is not authentic. It is the account of the woman taken in adultery, which was one of those fragments of oral gospel outside the cycles which did not find their way into any written gospel except the Gospel according to the Hebrews. It was added at a very early date to the Western edition of S. John's text. The account is doubtless true, but is not S. John's work.

S. John's Gospel consists more than ever of teaching rather than action. The seven miracles, which are narrated in the main body of the work, viz.:

The water turned into wine (ii. 1 ff.),
The healing of the nobleman's son at Capernaum (iv. 46 ff.),
The healing of the lame man at the pool of Bethzatha (v. 1 ff.),
The feeding of the five thousand (vi. 1 ff.),
The walking on the sea (vi. 16 ff.),
The healing of the man born blind (ix. 1 ff.),
The raising of Lazarus (xi. 1 ff.),

teem with teaching in themselves, and are often connected with discourses. That these discourses really contain Christ's teaching, is clearly proved by their character. S. John, the Galilean fisherman, could not have produced them of himself. But that they are not

verbatim reports, is shown by the strongly marked style which pervades them, and which is the Apostle's own.

The Petrine memoirs are touched in the following points:

The ministry of the Baptist (i. 6 ff.).
The cleansing of the Temple (ii. 13 ff.).
The feeding of the five thousand (vi. 1 ff.).
The walking on the sea (vi. 16 ff.).
The triumphal entry into Jerusalem (xii. 12 ff.).
The anointing at Bethany (xii. 1 ff.).
The betrayal of Judas with its prediction (xiii. 21 ff., xviii. 1 ff.).
The last passion, death and burial (xviii. 12 ff.).
The Resurrection and subsequent appearances of the Lord (xx. 1 ff.).

The second and third cycles are not touched at all, but the miraculous draught of fishes (xxi. 1 ff.) is possibly the same as that fragment of oral gospel outside the cycles preserved by S. Luke, who inserts it strangely into the middle of a Petrine section (v. 4 ff.). (See chapter XVI.) If they are the same, the date is different. Instead of putting it at the commencement of our Lord's ministry, as S. Luke has done, perhaps because he does not narrate any visit to Galilee after the Resurrection, S. John correctly places it last of all.

The differences between SS. John and Peter demand

close examination, because the value of the Petrine memoirs is affected by the result.

First of all the chronology, as we have seen (chapter III.), is entirely different. S. John spreads our Lord's ministry over three years at least, and places a large part of it in Jerusalem, to which city he brings Him several times. The Petrine memoirs know nothing of Jerusalem visits until the final journey. S. John places the cleansing of the Temple at the beginning of the ministry, the Petrine memoirs place it at the close. S. John puts the anointing at Bethany six days before the Passover (xii. 1); the Petrine memoirs put it two days before (Mark xiv. 1 ff.; Matt. xxvi. 1 ff.), the sections having been misplaced. In all these points, I maintain, S. John is to be followed. Nor must we think that he is contradicting S. Peter, but only S. Mark's arrangement of S. Peter (chapter III.).

The case of discrepancy in narrative is different. S. John's account of the feeding of the five thousand is quite distinct from S. Peter's; the conversations are different; but there is no contradiction; we have simply two reports of the same event, and S. John's is the longer and more vivid of the two. But in the walking on the sea there are difficulties. S. Mark makes the disciples start for Bethsaida (Mark vi. 45); S. John makes them go to Capernaum. If there were two Bethsaidas on the shore of the lake within ten miles of each other, as is commonly but most improbably

supposed, the difficulty is less. Otherwise S. John's geography seems the better. S. Peter says that Jesus entered the boat and the wind ceased (Mark vi. 51; Matt. xiv. 32); S. John says that the disciples "wished to receive Him into the boat and immediately the boat was at the land whither they went" (vi. 21), which appears to mean that He did not enter the boat.

But in the anointing at Bethany S. John's recollections are manifestly confused. He has blended two events into one. Twice do we read that our Lord was anointed. Once, according to the third cycle, when He was sitting at dinner in the house of a Pharisee named Simon, a woman of the city "who had been a sinner" came behind Him, washed His feet with her tears, wiped them with the hair of her head, kissed them and anointed them with oil. A conversation followed on the nature of forgiveness, and the proof of it as shown by love (Luke vii. 36 ff.). Secondly in the Petrine memoirs, while our Lord was sitting at dinner in the house of Simon the leper, a woman took an alabaster box of spikenard, very costly, brake the box and poured it on His head. Not a word is said of contrition, nor were His feet anointed, which would be unusual. A conversation followed in which our Lord defended the gift against the charge of extravagant waste (Mark xiv. 3 ff.; Matt. xxvi. 6 ff.).

S. John narrates the latter case only, and tells us that Mary, the sister of Lazarus, was the woman who

did the deed, which proves it one of love and not of contrition, for Hengstenberg's romance will hardly be received. But S. John makes her pour the ointment not on the head, but on the feet, and she is said to have wiped off, not her tears, but the ointment, with the hair of her head (xii. 1 ff.). Plainly the two events are confused. For the idea of commentators that she poured the oil on His head and, finding some left, emptied that on His feet, is not satisfactory. S. Luke's account probably has some admixture also: for it is not probable that in both cases the name of the giver of the feast was Simon. However common that name was, the coincidence is almost impossible.

S. John's account of the scene at which Christ predicted Judas's treachery (xii. 21 ff.) clears up for us the whole mystery in which S. Peter left the matter. (Mark xiv. 18 ff.; Matt. xxvi. 21 ff.; Luke xxii. 21.)

S. John's account of the last days and the passion (xiii.–xix.) is different in spirit from S. Peter's. S. Peter had described Christ as the lamb led to the slaughter; (Mark xiv.–xv; Matt. xxvi.–xxvii; Luke xxii.–xxiii;) S. John regards Him as a conqueror, triumphing in everything and particularly reigning from the cross. Much of the history also is cleared up under S. John's guidance. The character of Pilate, and the motives which influenced him, are made much more evident. But throughout this Gospel we get vivid dramatic

scenes, in which persons, places and events are sketched with unparalleled skill.

Of the spiritual power and sublimity of S. John's Gospel, I need not speak here. There are some chapters which have been dearer to the heart of Christendom than anything else in the whole of Revelation.

CHAPTER XIX.

ON THE INSPIRATION OF THE GOSPELS.

Man conscious of his weakness looks round for guidance. Roman Catholics offer him an infallible Church, Protestants an infallible Bible. We believe that infallibility belongs to God, and that the universal yearning for it is a sign that 'we are made for Him, and in Him only can rest'.

God has revealed Himself first through His Spirit to the fathers, next in His Son, lastly by the abiding gift of the Spirit to the Church. The holy Scriptures are one, and the most precious, result of this gift. But lest we should put our trust in them, and not in God, they were written by fallible men like ourselves. They are not composed in the best classical Greek; it is possible to find fault with their style and their grammar. They are not preserved in the hand-writing of their authors, but the text is sometimes uncertain, sometimes contains primitive error. And, if there is truth in the investi-

gations of this book, the writers are not always unanimous, but at times differ from or contradict one another. It is easy for unbelief to scoff, and for false exegesis to defend them on a wrong issue. Faith will take them as God's gift and use them. God has given them, as they are, and not as we might have expected them to be. They are not verbally infallible, but they are divinely inspired. They testify of Christ, and lead us by the Spirit through Christ to God. When they are weakest, they are often most strong. If S. Paul could call the gospel God's weakness and God's folly (1 Cor. i. 25), we with all reverence would apply the same terms to the Gospels and yet testify that they are stronger than man and wiser than man, and that the Holy Spirit may in Christ make them to us the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Some of us may need to alter our theory of inspiration. It was altered once, when men began to appeal to the Greek and the Hebrew against the Latin Vulgate. It was altered again, when they appealed to lexicons and grammars and the usage of contemporary writers against authoritative interpretation. It was altered again, when the science of textual criticism shattered the exclusive claims of the received text. And every alteration, though a shock to the faith of some, and a trial to that of all, led to closer study, clearer insight, and a more reverential acceptance of the sacred volume.

The Church most wisely has never defined Inspiration. As easily could we define life itself. We are conscious of it. Spirit speaks to spirit, and they that are spiritual feel its presence. But one of the wisest of modern teachers once advised us not to fetter ourselves with any theory of inspiration, when making historical investigations into the Scriptures. Surely the facts must mould the theory, not the theory mould the facts.

Deny the Incarnation, and the existence of the New Testament and of the Church is an insoluble enigma. Admit that, and the works of Christ cease to present difficulty. His Resurrection is the natural consummation of His life. The Scriptures are the witnesses to the past, the helps and guides to future progress. The Holy Spirit in our hearts is the crowning gift here, the pledge of an abiding union hereafter.

But, if the post-reformation idea of an infallible Bible is not supported by the results of this inquiry, the ancient and Catholic doctrine that the Church is the keeper and witness of Holy Writ, and the Scriptural and Catholic doctrine that authority is gained by delegation, and power to act comes from office, receive vindication. For of the four Gospels the last is the personal witness to Christ of one of those Apostles to whom our Lord said "As the Father hath commissioned me, so do I also send you" (John xx. 21), the other three are the work of catechists who by virtue of their

office were moved by the Holy Spirit to write, and inspired, aided and guided in doing so.

And if we can no longer say that the Gospels are the independent witness of four men, for their component parts appear on analysis generally to depend on the testimony of one man—S. Peter, S. John, S. Matthew, or some unknown worker—yet on the other hand they are the witness of the faith of churches. For S. Mark, the authorised translator of S. Peter's Memoirs, writes as S. Peter's vicar, and gives us the simplest witness to Christ of the primitive and undivided Church. The first Gospel gives us the witness to Christ of the churches of the East, S. Luke gives us the witness to Christ of the churches of the West.

Christ might have left us His own teaching in His own handwriting. Most men would think that more satisfactory, than leaving His friends to give so much as they recollected. But by passing through so many human hands, the Gospel has been moulded to suit the variety of human minds. Thus ever is the truth of God presented mediately to the human heart. Parents, teachers, preachers do more to convert mankind than the private study of Scripture, from which we all ultimately derive our power. It has pleased God "through the folly of the proclamation to save them that believe" (1 Cor. i. 21).

A robuster faith in the Gospels is needed, which instead of always seeking to deny the existence of

difficulties or to explain them away, shall freely confess them, and learn the lessons which they teach. That this book should in some degree contribute to the better understanding of the Gospels, and so should increase the reverential study of them, to the confirmation of faith in their real inspiration and the quickening of the power to obey their precepts, is the humble prayer of the author. And to God, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, be all the glory.

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CAMBRIDGE: PRINTED BY C. J. CLAY, M.A. AND SONS, AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS.

Date Due

AP 16 '51

AP 29 '54

MAR 2 8 '57

JUN 15 1972

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