

MARCION, PAPIAS, AND 'THE ELDERS'.

THE scholarly world will receive with exceptional interest Dr Harnack's latest contribution to the series of *Texte und Untersuchungen* (xlv, 1921). In this monograph on Marcion¹ the veteran Church historian returns to the field of his earliest studies; for to Dr Harnack, as the sub-title informs us, the study of Marcion is but an approach to that of 'the Founding of the Catholic Church'. Like other critics and historians Dr Harnack perceived from the outset the strategic position occupied by the great heretic. He adds materially to the careful work of Zahn by a new reconstruction of Marcion's text of Luke and the ten greater Epistles of Paul, and makes us much more largely his debtors by collecting the remains of the *Antitheses* in which Marcion defended his critical work. The reconstructions form the nucleus of a volume of some 650 pages octavo, and far surpass all material till now available. The chief service of the book will be its aid in enabling us to understand the work of the man upon whom the Church in the second century looked as in the sixteenth Rome looked upon Luther. If we limit ourselves for the present to the contrasted figures of Marcion and Papias it is not that we fail to appreciate Dr Harnack's guidance in other parts of the field, but that we think there is danger at this point lest the student be led astray. The present article, accordingly, is offered not so much in valuation of a work whose authorship alone is sufficient guarantee, as in the interest of caution against a certain too hasty inference of the distinguished Church historian, the adoption of which would seriously affect the issue in other important fields.

At Rome, about A. D. 140, Marcion rose up in defence of the Pauline principle of redemption by grace from the dominion of the law, resisting the tendency of the Church in his time towards neo-legalism. This Protestant revolt of the second century conducted by one born and bred a Christian in Pontus, a part of the great mission-field of Paul, led to a consolidation of the Church at large as against Gnostic and other forms of heresy, and thus gave rise to 'catholic' unity. To appreciate the immense sweep of the new movement, and the force of its reaction upon the expanding Church striving to perfect its still unformed institutions, is to gain new insight into fundamental problems of Church history, in particular the development of the canon of the New Testament. For Marcion not only laid the foundations of a New Testament canon by giving to his own churches a Sacred Scripture of 'Gospel' and 'Apostle' to replace the inherited Bible of the Jews, but he com-

¹ *Marcion: Das Evangelium vom fremden Gott*. Eine Monographie zur Geschichte der Grundlegung der Katholischen Kirche. Von Adolf von Harnack (*Texte und Untersuchungen* vol. xlv), Leipzig, Hinrichsche Buchhandlung, 1921.

pelled his orthodox opponents to corresponding activity, forcing them first of all to distinguish between such Christian writings as might or might not be publicly read in the churches, and finally driving them by his accusations of falsification, and his efforts at textual and higher criticism, crude as they were, to anxious and diligent enquiry into the derivation of their traditionally received teaching.

Thus began, in A. D. 144, the period of systematic authentication of the apostolic tradition. A Greek and Pauline type of faith came into sharpest conflict with the Jewish strain inherited by 'catholic' doctrine in the two fields of ethics and eschatology. Polycarp (A. D. 112-115) accuses the Gnostics of (1) 'perverting the precepts of the Lord [λόγια τοῦ κυρίου] to their own lusts', and (2) 'denying the (bodily) resurrection and the judgement'. Marcion retaliated for what he considered (not without reason) a reaction towards Judaism from the teachings of Paul, and accused the older Apostles and their followers of having falsified the gospel. He based the charge on Paul's opposition in the Epistles to Peter and the Judaizers, and elaborated it in detail in his attempted expurgation of the ten major Epistles and of the Gospel of Luke. Papias came to the rescue, undertaking to vindicate the Church's teaching by tracing it back to the personal followers of Jesus. His enquiries into the origin and meaning of the Gospel tradition, written and unwritten, are of vital importance to all subsequent ages, for without them the Church would be relatively helpless before the onslaught of sceptics.

Irenaeus, who had in his hands the work of Papias, reports it as his only writing, and as consisting of the favourite number of five 'books' (or, as moderns would call them, 'chapters') of *Exegesis* (or *Exegeses*) of the *Precepts of the Lord*. Papias maintained that these 'commandments delivered by the Lord to the faith' in contrast with the 'alien commandments' of the false teachers had been 'compiled' (*συνεγράψατο*), or 'collected' (*συνεράξατο*), by the Apostle Matthew. He used also as a quasi-apostolic written source, trustworthy so far as it went, the *Reminiscences of the Preaching of Peter*, which a tradition authoritatively vouched for attributed then as now to Mark the companion of Paul, who in earlier times had been an 'interpreter' of Peter. For the correct interpretation of these precepts Papias 'subjoined' traditions of 'the Elders' gathered by himself at first or second hand, reporting words of the personal disciples of the Lord.

Papias was also deeply concerned to defend the Chiliastic eschatology of the Church; for Chiliasm was at that time still the orthodox view. He insisted upon the 'trustworthiness' (τὸ ἀξιόπιστον) of the Apocalypse of John, in which the dwelling of the saints a thousand years with the Lord in Jerusalem is predicted, and as Eusebius (who disliked his work

for this reason) tells us, carried with him 'many of the Church fathers such as Irenaeus, who imbibed this doctrine'. Matthew and John were therefore Papias's two written apostolic authorities against the two types of heresy; and these two names appropriately conclude his list of Apostles for whose utterances he had enquired.¹ He could also appeal to the testimony of Peter directly through First Peter which he seems to have quoted as from the Apostle, and indirectly through Mark. We have no evidence that Papias made any use of Paul, nor of the Lukan writings, though he can hardly have been ignorant of the Third Gospel, to which Marcion appealed. He also 'used testimonies' from First John, and there is good reason to suppose that he had read the Fourth Gospel, which certainly circulated in some form in Asia by this time. But the only ground for supposing that he ascribed either of these writings to the Apostle whose name they now bear is the statement of a late and legendary Latin prologue to the Fourth Gospel which earlier defenders of the tradition of Johannine authorship hesitated to adduce in its behalf, but Dr Harnack now brings into a position of critical importance by resting upon it the whole weight of his theory of an encounter between Marcion and 'the Elders of Asia' in the period of Papias's enquiries. On both accounts the question of the Latin prologue assumes now a new importance.

1. It is mainly as a defender of the apostolic tradition of the meaning of 'the commandments delivered by the Lord to the faith' as against antinomian laxity that Papias comes into consideration in connexion with Marcion. In his preface (*προοίμιον*) he explained that he was in a position to vouch for their authenticity (*διαβεβαιούμενος ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν ἀλήθειαν*) because in his earlier years (*ποτέ*) he had had access (at least indirectly) to a tradition not only received in unbroken succession (*ζῶσα*) from the Apostles, and probably in the original language, but even still 'abiding' (*μένουσα*) in its original home until the scattering of the mother-church at Jerusalem in A. D. 135; for Papias's enquiries were made long before the date of his book, possibly at first in Palestine itself, in the famous group of 'Elders and disciples of the Apostles' at Jerusalem. He had 'carefully stored up in memory' what he then heard, adding to it what he could subsequently learn from travellers who 'came his way' after enjoying similar privileges. In particular he 'used to enquire what was being said by Aristion and the Elder John', the members of the celebrated group who still survived at the time when these supplementary enquiries were being made.

¹ Lightfoot (*Essays on Supernatural Religion* p. 193) accounts for the placing of these names by the theory that 'as Evangelists the names of John and Matthew would naturally be connected', holding that 'on any other hypothesis it is difficult to account for this juxtaposition'. On this see the sequel.

The date of this defence by Papias of the Apostolic tradition, on which, or on the oral sources of which, all subsequent defenders of the authenticity of the Gospels depend, is unfortunately difficult to determine with exactitude; but the surest indication is still that of Lightfoot, who pointed out its relation to Marcion, Basilides, and other challengers and perverters of the Church's tradition and interpretation of the gospel 'commandment'. For defence presupposes attack. The *Exegesese* must therefore be dated, if written to meet this challenge, some ten years or more after the scattering of the Church of 'the Elders and disciples of the Lord'. Harnack adopts, in fact, as the limits of date for its publication 145-160. Most scholars incline, however, to the earlier rather than the later limit, or even date it before the scattering of the Church in Jerusalem. Marcion's attack can be dated with considerable exactitude as taking place at Rome in 144, while Basilides's twenty-four books of *Exegetica*, based like Marcion's 'Gospel' on the Gospel of Luke, appeared at Alexandria about the same date, or perhaps slightly earlier.

It is a matter of prime importance for the history of the formation of the New Testament, and particularly of the Four-Gospel canon, to determine what relations, if any, subsisted between Marcion and the Churches of Asia, represented in his time by the outstanding figures of the venerable Polycarp of Smyrna and the much younger Papias of Hierapolis. To Harnack more than to others the question is vital because of his conviction that we owe both collections to the great metropolitan Church of the Pauline mission field, the Church of Ephesus. Moreover, since he identifies the body of 'the Elders' who constitute Papias's authority with those of the Churches of *Asia*, and in particular follows Eusebius in making 'the Elder John' an *Ephesian*, evidence from any source that Marcion actually visited Ephesus and came in contact with these 'Elders' would be to him most welcome. Of such hostile contact at *Rome*, where the aged Polycarp met the arch-heretic about A. D. 154, we have the concurrent evidence of many witnesses. But Harnack believes that he has found evidence of an earlier encounter. He maintains that the very structure of the sentence of Irenaeus, who first relates the encounter at Rome, indicates that its real scene was not Rome, but Ephesus, and that the statement ascribed to 'Papias' in the Latin Prologue of which we have spoken confirms this indication. Irenaeus's words are as follows:—

'Coming to Rome in the time of Anicetus he (Polycarp) caused many to turn from the aforesaid heretics (Valentinus and Marcion) to the Church of God, proclaiming that he had received this one and sole truth from the Apostles, namely that which has been handed down by the Church. [There are those also who have heard from him how John the

disciple of the Lord, going to bathe at Ephesus, and seeing Cerinthus within, rushed out of the bath-house without bathing, exclaiming, "Let us fly, lest even the bath-house collapse since Cerinthus, the enemy of the truth, is within".] And Polycarp himself replied to Marcion when he once met him and said "Dost thou recognize us (Marcionites)?" "Yes (said Polycarp), I recognize thee—as the first-born of Satan".¹

The interjected anecdote about John and Cerinthus is clearly an interruption, as we have indicated by the use of []. Harnack justly refuses to acknowledge it as part of the 'excellent Roman source' to which he refers the context. For not only does Irenaeus himself suggest its derivation from mere floating tradition by the introductory words: 'There are those also who have heard', but it is also related elsewhere as an encounter of Polycarp himself with Ebion, mythical founder of the sect of 'Ebionites', and in somewhat different form in Talmudic literature as an encounter of three rabbis of this same period with a *min* (Christian) in the public bath of Tiberias.² In reporting (from his source) the denunciatory outbreak of Polycarp (champion of 'the tradition handed down', *Ep. ad Phil.* vii) against Marcion, applying to the arch-heretic the term which he had borrowed from 1 John ii 22, iv 6, in an earlier warning (*Ep. ad Phil.* vii 1), Irenaeus is reminded of the anecdote about John and Cerinthus and interjects it, perhaps somewhat awkwardly. According to Harnack the mere fact that the story of Polycarp's encounter with the heretics and their leader is thus interrupted 'seems to exclude the idea' that in the case of Marcion it took place in Rome. The reasoning is difficult to follow. The 'excellent Roman source' may possibly end at the point where the two parallel anecdotes are introduced, but the second anecdote, which relates Polycarp's encounter with Marcion, is nothing more nor less than an adaptation from the well-known Epistle (*ad Phil.* vii 1), if indeed we do not extend the same verdict to the preceding context about restoring perverts by testifying to the truth received from the Apostles (*cf. ad Phil.* vii 2). Irenaeus himself indicates the really ultimate source by referring a few lines farther on to the 'very powerful Epistle of Polycarp written to the Philippians' as confirming his statements.³ But whatever the source, or the relation to it of the interjected anecdote about

¹ *Adv. Haereses* iii 3. 4.

² J. Sanh. 25 d. In the Talmudic story the rabbis encounter the *min* in the bath, who utters a spell causing the roof to fall in. The rabbis are thus made prisoners. But a more potent spell on their part releases them, while the *min* applying his enchantments to the sea is involved in the fate of Pharaoh, who sought to pursue Israel in this manner.

³ The violence of utterance and gesture recalls Irenaeus's own description of Polycarp's action under similar circumstances (*Ep. ad Florin.*, Eusebius *Historia* v 20). At least the impression made upon the lad was 'very powerful'.

John and Cerinthus, the mere fact that the encounter between John and Cerinthus takes place in another locality gives no warrant whatever for transferring the scene of what occurs between Marcion and Polycarp from 'Rome in the time of Anicetus', whether to 'Ephesus' or to Smyrna.

The theory of a preliminary encounter of Marcion with the Elders of Asia is therefore left solely dependent on the alleged evidence from Papias. It remains for us to enquire whether the proffered accession to our knowledge of this prime defender of Gospel tradition is in fact reliable and authentic, or whether it only deserves the designation applied by Harnack¹ to something for which his opponent Zahn asked similar acceptance some twenty years ago—the designation 'Pseudo-Papianisches'.

The alleged witness from Papias consists of the second paragraph (β) of a prologue, or argumentum, prefixed to the Gospel of John in three Latin manuscripts, of which two, Codex Toletanus (Tol.), and Codex Reginae Suetiae (Reg.), a Vatican manuscript of the ninth century, are edited by Wordsworth and White.² Unfortunately the text of Reg. is merely transcribed from Thomasius, but a more careful transcription, which collates that of Pitra, will be found in Zahn.³ The third form of the text, closely coinciding with Reg., was published by Corsen in 1896 from a Stuttgart codex (Stuttg.) in *Texte und Untersuchungen* xv 1-138.

Tol. has much the latest and most corrupt form of the text. This relatively late Spanish manuscript combines three of the four known forms of prologues to the Fourth Gospel, only the 'Augustinian' (an extract from Augustine's *De Consensu Evangeliorum* i 4) being absent. Under the title 'Incipit Praefatio sc̄i evangelii sc̄um Iohannem' it presents first the common, or 'Marcionite'. After this follows another headed 'Incipit Prologus Secundus'. The first two-thirds of this (Tol. 2a) is the same extract from Jerome's *De Viris Illustribus* ix used as a prologue in three other Latin codices (H © Benedictus). We may therefore call it the 'Hieronymian'. The last third of the Prologus Secundus of Tol. (Tol. 2b) is a supplement consisting of two paragraphs which in Reg. and Stuttg. form a separate prologue. This fourth prologue is attached by the scribe of Tol. without break to the Hieronymian by means of a simple 'Hoc igitur'. We may call it the 'Anti-Marcionite' or 'Vaticanus' prologue. In Tol. its text is unfortunately corrupted by the scribe's effort to supplement and improve from the two argumenta he had already copied out.

The material which thus appears as an actual Prologus in Reg. and

¹ *Zeitschrift für neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* iii (1902), pp. 159 ff.

² *Novum Testamentum Latine* i fasc. 4, p. 491.

³ *Kanongeschichte* i p. 898.

Stuttg. and as the scribe's supplement to the Hieronymian prologue in Tol. consists of two paragraphs, only one of which (par. *a*) contains anything attributed to Papias; but Harnack considers it reasonable to believe that par. *β* also, which relates an encounter between Marcion and the Apostle John (!), was also drawn from the same writer, though he of course finds it necessary to alter the text to a form which would not involve the glaring anachronism. We here reproduce Tol. 2b side by side with Stuttg.-Reg., marking its omissions by *, its insertions by (), and its variants by italics. The variants of Reg. from Stuttg. are enclosed in [].

Stuttg. (Reg.)

Evangelium Iohannis manifestatum (Reg. *add.* et datum) est ecclesiis ab Iohanne adhuc in corpore constituto, sicut Papias nomine Hieropolitanus discipulus Iohannis carus in exotericis id est in extremis quinque libris retulit. Descripsit vero evangelium dictante Iohanne.

Recte verum Marcion (Reg. Martion) haereticus cum ab eo esset (Reg. fuisset) improbatu eo quod contraria sentiebat, abiectus est a Iohanne. Is vero scripta vel epistolas ad eum pertulerat a fratribus qui in Ponto fuerunt.

Tol. 2b.

Hoc (igitur) evangelium (post apocalipsin scribtum) manifestatum et datum est ecclesiis (in Asia) a* Iohanne ad*uc in corpore constituto, sicut Papias nomine Hieropolitanus (episcopus) discipulus Iohannis (et) carus in exotericis (suis) id est in extremis quinque libris retulit, (qui hoc) evangelium Iohanne (sub)dictante conscripsit.

* Verum Archimon hereticus, quum ab eo fuisset reprobatu eo quod contraria senti*set, prelectus est a Iohanne; *hic* vero scriptum vel epistolas ad eum pertulerat a fratribus (missus) qui in Ponto erant (fideles in domino nostro).

In the above the left-hand column displays a practically perfect text. Reg. furnishes two slight corrections to Stuttg., the addition of 'et datum' (a simple omission by homoioteleuton after 'manifestatum'), and 'fuisset' in place of 'esset'. These are indisputably established by the testimony of Tol. The spelling *Martion* in Reg. is of course incorrect, and (if the codex actually divides as the transcript of Wordsworth and White from the edition of Thomasius represents¹) is to blame for a grammatical error which has led astray all modern interpreters, including Harnack. The attachment of the 'Recte' before 'verum', properly the first word of paragraph *β*, to the end of paragraph *α* violates the grammatical rule governing the position of 'verum', which like the corresponding English 'too' cannot when thus used begin a sentence. But we cannot ascribe the false division to the original text. This punctuation is apparently due to assimilation to the grossly corrupt text

¹ Zahn (*Kanongeschichte* i p. 898) transcribing Thomasius and Pitra places a full stop (.) after 'recte'. He also gives the spelling 'adhuc' above adopted.

of Tol., which omits the 'recte' altogether,¹ and makes complete nonsense of the clause. Whether the assimilation be ascribed to the English scholars, or to Zahn, Pitra, Thomasius, or to some still earlier hand, the case is unaffected. With proper punctuation, and the spelling Marcion for 'Martion', Codex Reginae Suetiae presents an unexceptionable text fully supported by the parallels.

No further words need be wasted on the commonplace additions and stupid corruptions of Toletanus. The original Latin text is now sufficiently established, and we may turn to questions of date and origin.

Among the features which up to the present have been generally accepted by students of the Vatican Prologue is its composite character. According to Westcott 'It seems to be made up of fragments imperfectly put together'. Lightfoot remarked that 'it seems to be made up of notices gathered from different sources', and pointed out that the statement ascribed to Papias was probably taken from some Greek author because of its phraseology ('adhuc in corpore constituto' = *ἔτι ἐν τῷ σώματι καθεστῶτος*). Harnack himself admits that the material has been 'translated from the Greek, and has passed through many hands'. Also that the writer who refers to the five books of Papias's *Ἐξηγήσεις* as 'Exoterica' can have had no more direct knowledge of the work itself than the would-be corrector who attaches the explanation 'id est extrema'. He who first made the reference stands behind both. Harnack also admits that the statement that the Gospel was dictated by John to Papias is 'incredible', and that it 'cannot have stood in Papias'. Nevertheless he maintains not only that something corresponding to the statement that the Gospel 'was revealed and given to the churches by John while yet in the body' must have really stood in Papias, a belief in which he has no small following, but even that paragraph β also with its anecdote regarding John's encounter with Marcion, which makes no claim to be derived from Papias, is in reality derived from the same source, though only in a form which Harnack endeavours to restore by conjecture. It still remains to be seen whether he will find any followers in this attempted restoration of 'Papianisches'.

2. We may begin with this paragraph β on the evidence of which Harnack would rest a hitherto unknown episode in the life of Marcion, of vital importance to our conception of the formation of the Four-Gospel canon, to say nothing of its bearing on the difficult question of Papias's own date. His argument is as follows :—

'That this information, perhaps the oldest that we possess regarding Marcion, really stood in Papias is as good as certain, because we can identify it (and in fact already in the altered form that Marcion was

¹ Probably by homoioteleuton after 'conscripsit'; cf. 'descripsit vero' in Stutig., Reg.

cast out by *John*) in a source of Filastrius. This writer states (*Haer.* 45) : “(Marcion) devictus atque fugatus a beato Iohanne evangelista et a presbyteris de civitate Efesi Romae hanc heresim seminabat”. Here, it would seem, one can observe the very growth of the corruption : “a presbyteris” was the original reading, and “a beato Iohanne” has been added. But the use of the term “a presbyteris” confirms the derivation of the whole report from Papias, for the “presbyteri in Asia” are the speciality of Papias. In my judgement nothing stands in the way of the credibility of the report. It will then follow that Marcion, already cherishing his heterodox teaching, left Pontus and turned to Asia seeking recognition. As to the “brethren” who sent him and gave him letters of commendation, one can only conjecture that he was commended by men of his own way of thinking.¹

The motto ‘Back to tradition’ has value when applied to the sifting over of ancient material too lightly discarded, as more careful miners have won gold from the tailings and dump-heaps of their predecessors. Overbeck, Westcott, Lightfoot, Zahn, Harnack himself, Corssen, and more recently Clemen and the present writer have all discussed and rejected this testimony, and even Harnack himself only ventures to advance it again by virtue of an emendation for which he offers only the support of Philastrius, a writer certainly later than the text, and if not directly dependent on it, dependent (as Harnack himself points out) on the form which Harnack claims to have been ‘altered’, ‘that Marcion was cast out by John’. The addition of ‘a presbyteris’ in Philastrius’s version is to Harnack in itself alone sufficient proof that this was ‘the original form of the text, and “a beato Iohanne” has been added’. As if ‘John and the Elders’, or ‘Elders of Ephesus’, or ‘in Asia’ were unfamiliar terms in Philastrius’s day, which no one would employ unless by direct dependence on Papias! In A.D. 480 they had long ceased to be ‘a speciality’ of any writer. Readers of Irenaeus, Tertullian, Eusebius, and Jerome could easily supply ‘John’ to co-operate with ‘the Elders’, or ‘the Elders’ to co-operate with ‘John’, wherever acts of the Church in Ephesus were concerned. But in the present case, as we shall see, a whole group of earlier authorities certify to the act as that of ‘John’. Is it really probable that the addition of the words ‘et a presbyteris’ in a single writer, admittedly later and dependent upon the ‘altered’ form, is due to his consultation of some unknown more authentic form of the text?

In reality this alleged preliminary encounter with the great heretic at Ephesus, and his condemnation there by ‘the Elders’, is not only difficult to reconcile with the positive statements of Tertullian regarding the reception accorded him at Rome and his own zeal and devotion to the orthodox faith for some time after his coming; not only is there not even

a pretence in the text itself of derivation from Papias, but we can even determine with a high degree of probability the very source, or sources, whence the statement is derived. For in the work of Tertullian, the author of all others to whom writers of this sort of material would most naturally resort, we actually find the substance of what is related in paragraph β of the Prologue; not, however, in the form of an absurd anachronism, but in that of a very apposite and distinctly Tertullianesque thrust at Marcion as the 'Antichrist' of whom 'John' had written 'in his Epistle'. For, properly rendered, paragraph β of the Vatican Prologue is nothing more nor less than the scribe's reproduction of that striking phrase of Tertullian, echoes of which linger even in the 'Hieronymian' prologue and are clearly traceable in the words italicized in the extract made below from Jerome's *Commentary on Matthew*. One has only to read the passages in Tertullian to see the true sense of the seemingly strange expression of the Prologue: 'Improbatus eo quod contraria sentiebat'. The statement of Jerome was that John in his *Epistle* ('in epistola sua') denounces as 'antichrists' those who (like Marcion) 'deny that Christ is come in the flesh' (1 John ii 18-26; iv 2 f). Tertullian, in his *De Carne Christi* iii, reproaching Marcion for his rejection of the truly apostolic authorities in favour of inferior sources, had declared: 'If thou hadst not *rejected the Scriptures which were contrary to thine own opinion, the Gospel of John* would have confounded thee.' In his refutation of the heretic (*Adv. Marc.* IV vi), speaking of Marcion's arbitrary excisions from the Gospel, he wrote: 'He has erased everything that was *contrary to his own opinion*, whilst everything that *agreed with his own opinion* he has retained.'¹ The latter charge follows almost immediately after Tertullian's reference to the 'letter' delivered by Marcion himself to the church authorities at Rome, at the time of his arrival from Pontus, or shortly after (*Adv. Marc.* IV vi). But shortly before (*Adv. Marc.* III viii), in speaking of his docetism, Tertullian had reverted to the passage of 1 John which had become a *locus classicus* for this purpose since its employment by Polycarp, and declared that 'The Apostle John designated as antichrists those who denied that Christ was come in the flesh', while in his *Praescriptio* xxxiii he expressly declares that *Marcion* is the heretic 'designated Antichrist' by John 'in his Epistle', for the reason that he 'denied that Christ was come in the flesh'; whereas Ebion was made the object of the same epithet, because he on his part denied 'that Jesus is the Son of God'. This is obviously a mere adaptation to Tertullian's purpose of the application made by the

¹ 'Contraria quaeque sententiae suae erasit . . . competentia autem sententiae suae reservavit.' Cf. *De Carne Christi* iii 'Si scripturas opinioni tuae resistentes non . . . reiecisses . . . confudisset te in hac specie Evangelium Iohannis.'

ecclesiastica historia quoted by Jerome, in which the denunciation of 1 John iv 2 f is made to apply to 'Cerinthus and Ebion'.¹ In short, to quote from my own previous discussion of this subject²: 'The clause (beginning paragraph β of the Prologue) would express Tertullian's essential meaning very tersely and epigrammatically: Marcion the heretic, who rejects John's Gospel merely because it does not agree with his own opinion, has himself been rejected by John (that is, in the Epistle).' Heedless of the implied anachronism the writer of the Prologue takes the rejection of Marcion not as a prophetic condemnation written in 1 John iv 2 f, but as a literal denunciation of the heretic to his face by the Apostle. Apart from this natural misunderstanding he reproduces quite as faithfully as the *ecclesiastica historia* or Jerome the real meaning of Tertullian.

A faithful rendering of the first clause of paragraph β of the Prologue would then be as follows:—

'Properly, too, has Marcion the heretic been cast out by John, seeing he (John) had been rejected by him (Marcion) just because he held a different opinion.'

Indeed the scribe's blunder would scarcely be suspected even to-day by any accurate translator using the authentic text had he not appended a further item, also derived from Tertullian, and from the chapter next but one to that the language of which he here borrows. It is where Tertullian speaks of the 'letter of his own' which Marcion had presented on his arrival in Rome from Pontus, in spite of which he had been cast out. Unfortunately Tertullian omitted to state in this connexion whether the delivery of the 'writings, or letters' (Harnack himself is somewhat doubtful whether Tertullian means a letter of commendation from the Church in Sinope, or a composition of Marcion's own) and Marcion's rejection together with his gift took place at Rome or elsewhere. It is only in *Praescriptio* xxx that it is plainly stated to be at Rome. The Prologue-writer betrays his misunderstanding by inserting in his statement the seemingly harmless words 'to him':—

'Moreover he had brought to him (*ad eum*) writings, or letters, from the brethren who were in Pontus.'

The encounter having thus been transferred from the account of the church authorities at Rome to that of the Apostle John it was the simplest of commonplaces for Philastrius to add the traditional group of 'the Elders' in 'the city of Ephesus'.

Nothing more, then, is required to account for the whole second paragraph of our Prologue, exactly as it stands in the most authentic

¹ Cf. also *Adv. Praxeam* xxviii.

² *Journal of Biblical Literature* XXXII iii (1913) p. 211.

text, than the two statements of Tertullian (1) as to the condemnation of Docetists like Marcion in 1 John iv 2 f; (2) as to Marcion's letter presented to the *Roman Church*. Moreover, what appears, in the construction placed on its statements by Harnack, a rather arbitrary reason for John's casting out of the heretic ('cum ab eo (*sc.* Ioanne) fuisset improbatus eo quod contraria sentiebat') turns out in the proper rendering to be the well-chosen language of Tertullian himself quite justly applied to the arbitrary rejections indulged in by Marcion. Thus vanishes the whole episode of Marcion's encounter with the Ephesian elders, which plays so large a part in Harnack's reconstruction of the history, but is so curiously without all trace or reference till this legendary prologue. Rome, and Rome alone, is the scene of the memorable encounter, so pregnant with momentous results for the history of the Church and the formation of its canon of the New Testament. We have no evidence whatever to controvert the positive and reiterated statements of Tertullian and other well-informed witnesses that Marcion, when he came from Sinope in Pontus to Rome, was as free from taint of heresy and as zealous for the orthodox faith as the Church declared when it received his letter (or letters) and his gift of 200,000 sesterces.

3. Whether the declaration that John's witness is true and authentic attached in an Appendix to the Fourth Gospel (John xxi 24) should be regarded as a testimony of the Church in Rome, or of the Church in Ephesus, is another question, which involves a return to paragraph *a*. The ground for attributing the alleged encounter of Marcion with the *Ephesian* elders to 'Papias' was the statement of paragraph *a* of the Prologue that the Gospel of John was 'revealed' and 'given to the churches' by John 'while yet in the body', accompanied by the declaration that this fact was recorded in the five 'exoteric' books of Papias, who 'wrote down the Gospel at the dictation of John'. The long-debated question of the authorship of the Fourth Gospel is here raised again. It is admitted that at least the closing statement of the paragraph is 'incredible'; that neither the writer who attempts to explain 'exoteric' by adding 'id est extremis', nor his predecessor who used this strangely corrupted title could have had any direct knowledge of the *Exegeses* of Papias to which he intends to refer; that, in short, the statement has 'passed through many hands' to reach us in this distorted form. Nevertheless it is still maintained (and not unreasonably) that somewhere behind this jargon lies a real utterance of Papias. Clemen and Harnack go so far as to maintain that this utterance, however distorted in transmission, was an actual testimony by Papias himself to the Johannine authorship of the Fourth Gospel, though with Lightfoot they acknowledge the impossibility of so plain a declaration

having escaped the careful scrutiny of Eusebius, who twice promises his readers to report any utterance of the kind, and who particularly searched the pages of Papias for references to 'John'. Lightfoot, who went beyond Clemen and Harnack in regarding the utterance as not only truly contained in the pages of Papias, but as also true to the fact, suggested a form which he believed was sufficiently inconspicuous to have escaped even the keen eye of Eusebius. He suggests that

'Papias, having reported some saying of St John on the authority of the Elders, went on somewhat as follows:—"And this accords with what we find in his own Gospel, which he gave to the churches when he was still in the body (ἐτι ἐν σώματι καθεστῶτος)."'

Since scholars such as Clemen and Harnack think this possible, or possible with some further obscuration, writers of less authority will gain nothing by expressing their incredulity. But the supposed case does not meet the issue. It is not the mere silence of Eusebius which must be explained, but that of his predecessors also. For Irenaeus, who also had the work of Papias in his hands, relying chiefly on it for the vindication of the authenticity of the Gospels, and especially that of the Fourth Gospel against those whom Epiphanius calls the Alogi, is only one of a whole group of contemporary defenders, some of whom, such as the writer of the Muratorianum, and Hippolytus, were almost certainly dependent upon Papias as their chief authority. It is incredible that so plain a testimony as that imagined by Lightfoot or his followers as the real utterance of Papias could have escaped the search not only of Eusebius but also of these keen and zealous controversialists during a century and a quarter of vehement debate.

Let us then first of all define clearly the object of search. There is no difficulty at all in the supposition that Papias, like his successor Apollinaris, was acquainted with the Fourth Gospel. We know from Eusebius that he 'used testimonies' from 1 John, not improbably the same denunciation of the false teachers as 'Antichrist', the use of which by Polycarp his earlier contemporary had set the echoes ringing (*ad Phil.* vii 1 = 1 John iv 2 f). It is also quite possible that he used as one of the sayings of the Lord 'In the things of my Father there are many mansions' (John xiv 2; cf. Irenaeus *Haer.* V xxxvi 2). Papias's *knowledge* of the Fourth Gospel is not in question. If he wrote in Asia after the attacks of Marcion, he can hardly have failed to have some knowledge of it. The question is: Did he explicitly ascribe it to the Apostle John? The difficulty in Papias's case is the same as in that of his contemporary Justin, who almost certainly knows the Fourth Gospel, but never appeals to it as the work of an Apostle, nor makes any such use of it as we should expect if he so believed. For his doctrine of the

thousand years in Jerusalem Justin does indeed emphatically appeal to the authority of 'John, an Apostle of the Lord, who testified this in a vision granted to him'. Not so in regard to his own Logos doctrine, however like that of the Fourth Gospel, nor even with reference to any of the great number of teachings of the Lord which he quotes. To Justin the Apostle John is the supreme authority as prophet and seer, but as evangelist he appears unknown. He uses the Fourth Gospel to about the same extent and in the same anonymous manner that he uses the *Acts of Pilate*. All that we know as to Papias, apart from the statement now in question, tends to precisely the same result, if indeed Justin is not directly borrowing his statement regarding the authorship of the Apocalypse from Papias who 'testified to its ἀξιόπιστον'. The difficulty with the statement of the Prologue is the improbability of Papias's having made an equally positive statement as to the apostolic authorship of the Gospel.

Again, we are not primarily concerned with the Prologue-writer's explanations of who Papias was, and how connected with John. The ultimate source of his mis-information about Papias as a 'dear disciple' (*discipulus carus*) of John is manifestly Irenaeus. The same mistake is not likely to have been made independently by two or more individuals. There may have been several intermediate links between Irenaeus and the Prologue. Some are indeed demanded to account for the later exaggerations and blunders. For we have seen how Papias is advanced from the position of a disciple of John to that of an especially dear one, and finally to that of amanuensis of the Gospel (*descripsit dictante Iohanne*). The development is parallel to that of the tradition of Peter's relation to the Second Gospel. At first Mark is merely a former 'interpreter' of the Apostle, recording 'what he remembered' of Peter's discourses after his death. Next he is said to have written while Peter was still living, but without the Apostle's intervention. Finally, to clothe the Gospel with complete apostolic authority, Jerome declares it to have been written by Mark 'Petro narrante et illo scribente'. From the description of Papias as John's disciple, author of the *Exegeses*, given in the fifth book of Irenaeus, it was easy to draw the inference that Papias was in like manner the amanuensis for John's Gospel, even without the aid of the statement in the second book that 'the Gospel (of John) and all the Elders who had converse with John in Asia bear witness that John delivered this same thing (that is, the story of the Lord's age) to them ("id ipsum tradidisse eis Ioannem")'. It is perhaps conceivable, but certainly not probable, that 'id ipsum' might be taken to refer to the Gospel just mentioned.

But the insertion of intermediate links between the Prologue and Papias (and we have seen that at least two are required to account for

the jumble 'in exotericis, id est in extremis quinque libris') does not affect the main result. Irenaeus remains responsible for the carrying back of Papias a generation earlier than he belongs to relatively to the Apostle, and this is the first point for consideration. The Prologue-writer stands at several removes from Papias, for even if we assume some other unknown writer, misled after the same manner as Irenaeus by the homonymy of 'the Elder' whose 'traditions' (*παραδόσεις*) he found quoted in the *Exegeses*, this would not bring our Prologue-writer any nearer. All he has to tell about Papias rests ultimately on the error which Eusebius in the case of Irenaeus so thoroughly, yet vainly, exposed.

There remains, however, the principal statement of the Prologue, the Johannine authorship of the Gospel. The statement is unlikely to have been derived from Irenaeus even through the distortion of intermediate forms. The tradition from which it is drawn ascribed it to Papias. Can we determine what modicum of truth (if any) lies behind this tradition?

The curious mode of expression, attributing the Gospel to John 'while yet in the body', as if he could be supposed to have taken this action after his death, has often been pointed out. It is doubtless the ground of Westcott's remark that 'the general tenor' of its account of the origin of the Gospel is that given in the Muratorian Canon; for apart from the reference to 'revelation' (*manifestatum*) and the possibly implied denial of an imputation of posthumous origin under the name of John there is certainly no resemblance between the two whether in language or in substance. The Muratorianum, it will be remembered, gives the following:—

'John, one of the disciples, when his fellow-disciples and the bishops he had ordained (*episcopis suis*) were urging him, said "Join with me in a three days' fast from to-day, and whatever shall be revealed to any one of us let us relate it to one another". The same night it was revealed to Andrew, one of the Apostles, that John should write all these things in his own name, all the rest authenticating (*recognoscentibus*).'

The ultimate source of this legend is generally recognized to be the statement of John xxi 24 f: 'This is the disciple that beareth witness of these things and wrote these things, and *we know* that his witness is true.' According to Zahn it came to our Prologue-writer through the medium of the Leucian *Acts of John* (c. 175?). In any case it was certainly not derived from Papias for reasons already stated in connexion with the Prologue, which in the case of this account of the origin of the Gospel would apply with still greater force. The date of the Muratorianum is variously placed from 180 to 200. To what extent it influenced the traditional account of the origin of the Gospel may easily

be seen from the subjoined extract from Jerome's *Commentary on Matthew*, in which he expressly quotes as his authority the 'ecclesiastica historia' so plainly revealed by Corsen.¹ It is this extract which constitutes the first two-thirds of the Prologus Secundus of Toletanus (Prologus Hieronymianus). As will be observed, its first statement is the well-known adaptation made by Tertullian of Polycarp's application to Marcion of 1 John iv 2 f, to which Jerome merely adds that Paul also applies the whip in many places. The rest repeats in substance just what the Muratorianum relates.

From Jerome's *Matthew* (Tol. Prol. 2 a).

'Is (Ioannes) cum esset in Asia et iam tunc haereticorum semina pulularent Cerinthi, Ebionis, et caeterorum qui negant Christum in carne venisse, quos et ipse in epistola sua *Antichristos vocat* et apostolus Paulus frequenter percutit, coactus est ab omnibus paene tunc Asiae episcopis et multarum ecclesiarum legationibus de divinitate salvatoris altius scribere, et ad ipsum, ut ita dicam, dei verbum non tam audaci quam felici temeritate prorumpere; *ut ecclesiastica narrat historia*, cum a fratribus cogereetur, ut scriberet, ita facturum se respondisse, si indicto ieiunio in commune omnes deum deprecarentur, quo expleto revelatione saturatus in illud prooemium caelo veniens eructavit: In principio erat verbum, &c.'

As already noted, the opening sentence after 'in Asia' down to 'percutit' represents simply Tertullian with Jerome's own brief addition. The remainder merely repeats the account of Muratorianum with the added representation of the Gospel as having been given in a burst of divine inspiration like that of Ezra in the legend of 2 Esdras xvi 39 ff. This addition would undoubtedly account for the strange expression 'manifestatum' in the Prologue, but unfortunately for any claims to an early date this idea not only forms no part of the story in the Muratorianum, but is also entirely alien to the expressions applied by Papias to the writing of a Gospel (*συνέταξε, ἔγραψε, σύνταξιν ποιῆσθαι*). The period and mode of thought to which this embellishment of the *ecclesiastica historia* belongs may best be realized by a comparison of the account of the origin of the Gospel given in the *Acta Ioannis* of Prochorus (c. A.D. 500):—

'And after two days I (Prochorus) went forth again to him (the Apostle John) and found him standing and praying. And he said to me: "Take the papyrus sheets and the ink and stand on my right hand." And I did so. And there came great lightning and thunder so that the hill was shaken, and I fell to the ground on my face and remained (as it were) a corpse. But John took hold of me and raised me up and

¹ *Op. cit.* p. 77. The *historia* itself, reconstructed from the ten authorities who employ it, is printed with the extracts attached on pp. 78-82.

said to me: "Sit here on the ground at my right hand." And I did so, and again he prayed, and after the prayer he said to me: "My child Prochorus, whatsoever thou hearest from my mouth write down on the papyri." And John opened his mouth, and standing and looking up into the heaven he said: "In the beginning was the Word": . . . So just as it follows in the remainder he uttered the whole standing, and I was writing seated.¹

If any room is to be found in Papias for a statement corresponding to that of our Prologue the 'revelation' (*manifestatum* cannot properly be rendered 'published') must be understood in some other sense. Let us see if a really appropriate sense can be found.

According to Harnack (*Marcion* p. 9*) the meaning of the statement is that 'Contrary to the belief inferred from John xxi 23, 24 that the Gospel had been published by others after the death of John, Papias says in a passage of his five books of *Exegetica* (or, in the fifth book of the same)² that John himself gave out his Gospel to the churches in Asia, after the Apocalypse'. We have already seen that the words 'in Asia' and 'after the Apocalypse' are no part of the true text, but mere expansions of the scribe of Toletanus. Omitting these the Prologue-writer according to Harnack will have intended to say: 'It has been inferred from John xxi 23 f that the Gospel was published posthumously.' But this is contrary to the testimony of Papias who refers to it as 'revealed and given out to the churches by John himself while yet in the body'.

Of the supposed inference from John xxi 23 f we have *in antiquity* no evidence whatever. The theory of posthumous publication is a favourite in modern times and may be quite correct. But the inference drawn in antiquity from the verse in question was that of the Muratorianum as given above. John is supposed to be living in Asia surrounded by a group of his fellow-apostles, including 'Andrew', and the bishops he has ordained (e. g. Polycarp and Papias). It is before the arrival of Paul in Ephesus, for Paul in writing by name to seven churches only is 'following the example of his predecessor' John, who addressed letters to the seven churches of Asia (in the Apocalypse). Whether the existence of a community of disciples of 'John' in Ephesus before the coming of Paul (Acts xix 1-7) had anything to do with this strange chronology we will not attempt to decide. In any event there is no trace whatever in this second-century document of the supposed inference from John xxi 23 f. The Muratorian fragmentist merely infers from the 'we know' that John's 'fellow-disciples and bishops' added their 'revision' or 'endorsement' (*recognoscentibus*) to his writing.

¹ *Acta Iohannis*, Th. Zahn, Erlangen, 1880, p. 155.

² Harnack regards this conjectured reading as a possible one.

The impossibility of the Muratorian account being derived from Papias is generally acknowledged for the reason stated. Any utterance of Papias on a point of such sensitiveness as this had reached at the close of the second century is most unlikely to have remained unnoticed for two hundred years of controversy.

Contrariwise there was another writing explicitly claiming Johannine authorship (as the Gospel and Epistles do not) about which there was controversy before we have any trace of dispute concerning the Fourth Gospel. In the period of Papias, Justin, and Melito of Sardis, nothing whatever is said about John as author of a *Gospel*; but his alleged support of the doctrine that 'the saints shall dwell with the Lord a thousand years in Jerusalem' in the 'vision that was granted to him', was the very central bulwark of the Chiliasts from Papias down to Irenaeus. And in spite of the reluctant admissions of Eusebius and his disparagement of the man and his doctrine, Papias was a chief supporter of this Chiliastic doctrine. Moreover, he defended it, as we are expressly told by Andreas of Caesarea, who had the work in his hands and quoted it 'word for word' (*ἐπι λέξεως*), in the assurance of the credibility (*τὸ ἀξιόπιστον*) of the statements of the so-called Apocalypse of John.

Could there, then, be two opinions as to the date of Revelation, so that it should become necessary for those who built upon its direct apostolic authority to insist that its publication was not posthumous, but by John himself 'while yet in the body'?

The surest of all dates in the chronology of early Christian writings, apart from the great Epistles of Paul, is (as Harnack has clearly perceived) that given us by Irenaeus for the Revelation. 'The apocalyptic vision was seen' (*ἐωράθη*), he tells us, 'towards the end of the reign of Domitian' (*Haer.* V xxx 3). But this date may not have been altogether easy to reconcile with the tradition which Papias reported 'in his second book' that 'John and James his brother were put to death by Jews'. The date for John's martyrdom cannot well be later than 62, when James *the Lord's* brother 'and certain others' were killed by the mob in the streets of Jerusalem, as Josephus relates. Papias would be compelled to choose between a date for the Revelation like that of the Muratorianum, where John is the 'predecessor' of Paul at Ephesus, or a date for the death of John like that of Irenaeus, coming down to 'the reign of Trajan'. Had he been a modern critic he would certainly have fallen back upon the composite character of the book, which gives convincing evidence of double date, the substance of the book being exclusively concerned with Palestine in the days of the great tribulation, the rebellion against Rome and the treading down of Jerusalem, *except the inner sanctuary* (xi 1 f), by the Gentiles; whereas the outer envelope, prologue, introduction, and epilogue

(i 1—iii 22, xxii 8—21), simply adapts this material (with the aid of some minor changes in the central parts) for circulation at a later date among 'the churches of Asia'.

But Papias was no higher critic. If he accepted a book as apostolic he took it as a whole. It was either 'trustworthy' or the reverse. And he read in Rev. i 9—11

'I John, your brother and partaker with you in the tribulation and kingdom and patience which are in Jesus, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. I was *in the Spirit* on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet saying, *What thou seest, write in a book, and send it to the seven churches*: unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamum, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.'

Having this before his eyes Papias unquestionably believed that the Apostle John not only received this command while 'in the Spirit', but (the book being actually current) that he carried it out 'while yet in the body'. But did he state his belief? Our Prologue declares it to be his testimony that John did indeed write out what had been 'revealed' to him in the Spirit (*manifestatum*) and send it 'to the churches' (of Asia). But this is applied not to the Revelation but to the Gospel. In the absence of direct testimony *a posteriori* the question, Did he state his belief? can only be answered *a priori*. Was there any special occasion for Papias to express his conviction that the Apocalypse, which alone of the 'Johannine' writings claims to be written by John, was 'worthy of belief'?

Our Prologue, like the modern world both learned and unlearned, takes little interest, if any, in the apostolic authorship of Revelation. As the extract from Tertullian shews, in its time, as now, debate centred on the authorship of the Gospel and the Epistles, which are anonymous, but were known to be derived from the same region and the same period as the Apocalypse, and by about A.D. 175 had begun to be attributed to the same author. It appears to be extraordinarily difficult, even for eminent critics of to-day, to realize that a generation before this, in the time of Polycarp, Ignatius, Papias, and Justin, yes, even as late as Melito, the state of feeling was completely different. Not a fragment exists from this period to indicate that any one, in the Church or out of it, took the slightest interest in the question of the authorship of the Gospel or Epistles now ascribed to John. On the other hand the question of the authorship of the Revelation was in hot dispute, and quite naturally, since from the time of Polycarp down, denial of the (bodily) resurrection and the judgement had been

one of the principal indictments against the 'false teachers'.¹ Chiliasm, the doctrine of the visible rule of the returning Christ for a thousand years in a glorified Jerusalem, was the faith contended for as that once for all delivered to the saints. Papias was its primary champion, and the Apocalypse of John its divinely inspired and apostolic authority. If Papias took pains to authenticate the sources for his 'Interpretation of the Lord's Oracles', there was ten times as much occasion for his stating his belief as to the authorship of the Revelation.

And if we put first this *a priori* probability for an attestation for the Revelation from Papias, it is not that witness *a posteriori* is altogether lacking, even apart from the declaration of our Prologue. That very little should survive the hostility of Dionysius and Eusebius is natural enough. Exclude Eusebius and those dependent on him and how much attestation should we have for any of the disputed books? But we have already seen that Andreas of Caesarea, whose witness is unimpeachable because he actually cites 'word for word' from Papias a passage not known elsewhere,² directly affirms the fact. The expression is guarded, as if Papias would state no more than he could personally vouch for, the currency in Asia of the Revelation as the work of John, and his own acceptance of its statements as 'worthy of belief'. But it shows distinctly where Papias would rest his authentication, the relevant passage being that already quoted embodying the very language ascribed to Papias in our Prologue.

Again, whence comes the confident assertion regarding the 'manifestation' as of

'John, one of the Apostles of Christ,' who 'prophesied in a revelation that was made to him, that those who believed in our Christ would dwell a thousand years in Jerusalem; and that thereafter the general, and in short the eternal resurrection and judgement of all men together would take place'?

This is the statement of Justin,³ the later contemporary of Papias, himself converted at Ephesus; and the substance of it will have been repeated by Melito of Sardis, whose interest in the authentication of the Old Testament Scriptures was sufficient to impel him to make the journey to Palestine, the home of the 'living and abiding' apostolic tradition even after the scattering of the mother church. For Melito also wrote a treatise on the Apocalypse of John, though we hear nothing

¹ Justin in his chapters in defence of Chiliastic belief (*Dial. lxxx-lxxxii*) repeats the expression. The false Christians 'blaspheme the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (cf. Matt. xxii 32) and say that there is no resurrection of the dead'.

² Frag. XI. Lightfoot (*Essays on Supernatural Religion* p. 201 n. 3) erroneously differs from Routh (*Rel. sacr.* i p. 41). The quotation ends 'their array came to nought'. The remainder is transcribed by Andreas from Rev. xii. 9.

³ *Dialogue* lxxxii.

of any utterance from him regarding the Gospel. Justin's use of Papias is made probable by his adoption of the very expression of Papias in speaking of the Gospel of Mark as the ἀπομνημονεύματα of Peter. He reproduces in the same chapter we have just quoted (*Dial.* lxxxi) the very passage from Isaiah (lxv 17 f) which Papias elaborated according to the explicit testimony of Irenaeus (*Haer.* V xxxiii 3, 4) and which in the *Epideixis* (lxi) he tells us was thus applied by 'the Elders'. Finally there is Irenaeus himself, who not only takes his Chiliastic ideas from Papias, as Eusebius easily perceived, but discusses at length the variant readings 616 and 666 in Rev. xiii 18 with circumstantial reference to 'the men who saw John face to face', whom he only knows through the writings of Papias. Whence, we ask, did all these derive their positive assurances regarding the origin and authenticity of the 'vision' for the reliability of which they contend, if not from Papias? Or shall we be told again that Eusebius cites from Papias no 'testimonies' from this 'disputed' book, and that therefore Papias did not use it?

It is quite true that Eusebius does not refer to 'testimonies' in Papias taken from Revelation, although (as a work of supererogation, since he had not undertaken to cite 'testimonies' from the homologoumena) he does inform us that he 'used testimonies' from 1 Peter and 1 John, thus implying perhaps that none appeared from the antilegomena. But it is not altogether true that we have a right to expect notice from Eusebius of whatever he found quoted from Revelation in Papias, because Revelation is not counted by him among the antilegomena concerning which he made this promise. By supererogation, as in the case of First Peter and First John, he mentions the fact that Theophilus of Antioch in works now lost 'used testimonies from the Apocalypse of John'. But this hardly establishes the rule. The truth is that Eusebius's treatment of this book is completely *sui generis*. He yielded to those who maintained its canonicity so far as to record direct statements of its Johannine authorship, such as that of Justin; for Eusebius admitted that *if* apostolic it must be classed among the homologoumena; but personally he inclined to the opinion of Dionysius of Alexandria, who rejected it as the work of another, unknown 'John'. In this case it must be classed, said Eusebius, among 'spurious' books (*νόθα*). His real interest, therefore, was only in positive witness for or against its apostolic authorship. If his dislike of the book did not lead him into positive unfairness in the statement of the evidence Eusebius must have regarded the testimony referred to by Andreas as no more than Papias's acknowledgement of his own acceptance of the book, which of course had no bearing on the main question.

But the reader is not really left in the dark by Eusebius on the point

now at issue. He makes no concealment of Papias's *use* of Revelation. Indeed he could not. On the contrary he tells us explicitly that along with 'certain strange parables of the Saviour' (cf. the fragment in Irenaeus *Haer.* V xxxiii 3, 4) Papias related

'certain other rather fabulous things, among which he asserts that there will be a certain period of a thousand years after the resurrection from the dead, when the kingdom of Christ is to exist in bodily form upon this earth. I believe that he adopted these views from the narratives handed down from the Apostles, not understanding that the things related by them (τὰ πρὸς αὐτῶν) were spoken in symbolic language parabolically (μυστικῶς). For he evidently was a man of very small intelligence, as is manifest from his own words. However, he is responsible for the adoption of this doctrine by very many of the Church fathers after him who espoused a like opinion, having regard for the antiquity of the man; for example Irenaeus, and all the rest who exhibit these ideas'.

Whether by oversight, or because of his dislike of the materialistic eschatology of the Chiliasts, Eusebius here passes lightly over the self-evident fact that the doctrine here imputed to Papias as its prime investigator is taken almost verbatim from Rev. xx 4 ff. The fact is self-evident. The oversight, if such it be, is due to Eusebius's concern about the 'strange parable of the Saviour' related 'as from the Apostles' which may be read in the context of the above-cited passage of Irenaeus, to whom Eusebius explicitly refers. The 'parable' is indeed unauthentic, being in reality a Jewish interpretation based on the Hebrew text of Gen. xxvii 28 found also in *Ethiopic Enoch* x 19 and *Apocalypse of Baruch* xxix 5. The Elders combine with this apocalyptic promise of the miraculous fertility of the Holy Land in the Messianic age the song of the grape harvest of Isa. lxxv 8, in which they sing of the ripe clusters 'Destroy it not for a blessing is in it'. Like the interpretation of the parable of the Sower, and that of the Banquet with its triclinium, at which the guest who shows humility is bidden to 'Come up higher', also derived from 'the Elders',¹ these allegorizing applications of passages from the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, mingled with teachings of the Lord, to the expected glories of a transfigured Jerusalem ('the City') and Palestine-to-be were properly taken by Eusebius with a generous dose of salt. They are as unlike the true teaching of Jesus as they are characteristic of Jewish *midrash* of the beginning of the second century. They throw much needed light on the question who these 'Elders' were, and whence Papias derived his Chiliastic ideas; but as related to the actual teaching of Jesus they only prove how low even the 'living and abiding voice' of the most authentic oral tradition had fallen at the time when Papias received

¹ Irenaeus *Haer.* V xxxvi 1, 2.

them. The 'reports (*διηγήσεις*) of parables of the Saviour' handed down from the Apostles (cf. the *τῶν τοῦ κυρίου λόγων διηγήσεις* referred to a few lines below as derived from Aristion) are to Eusebius the most serious concern, and most of what he has to say relates to these. Indeed, it is not without interest to observe how this Isaian chapter on the New Jerusalem, the glorified land of Palestine and the Holy Mountain where even the wild beasts cease from ravening, passes down through Justin's Chiliastic chapter, in which he quotes Rev. xx 4 ff as an utterance of the Apostle John (*Dial.* lxxxii), to Irenaeus (*Haer.* V xxxiii 3 f; xxxvi 1 f and *Epideixis* lxi) and still later writers.

But while Eusebius pays no special attention to Papias's assertion 'that there will be a certain period of a thousand years after the resurrection from the dead, when the kingdom of Christ is to exist in bodily form upon this earth', it would be absurd to suppose he expected his readers not to observe its connexion with Rev. xx 4 ff. This was the *locus classicus* of the whole controversy, passing down, as Eusebius himself makes plain, from Papias to Justin, and from Justin to Irenaeus. While we may perhaps justly accuse him of slighting the testimony to a book whose doctrine he disliked, accepting it only on condition that it be interpreted *μυστικῶς*, he does not stand in the way of our acceptance of the statement of Andreas.¹ He rather confirms it, while indicating that Papias went no farther than to declare that the statement of Rev. i 9-11 was 'worthy of belief'.

As an utterance of Papias concerning the *Revelation* the testimony of our Prologue that it was 'revealed and given to the churches (in Asia) by John while yet in the body' is therefore worthy of all acceptance. It is even possible that we still have a trace of the true placing of this testimony in another argumentum as remote as possible from those of the Latin succession. Among the subscriptions to *Revelation* given on the last page of Tischendorf's Editio Major will be found the following from the London Polyglot:—

'*Aeth.* Hic finita est visio Iohannis Abucalamsis. Amen. Quod est dictum: Quam vidit in vita sua, visio: et scripta fuit a beato Iohanne evangelista dei eius.'

The Ethiopic text is based upon the Arabic, which accounts for the monstrosity *Abucalamsis* = Ἀποκάλυψις. We may render: 'Here is

¹ Lightfoot (*Essays on Supern. Rel.* p. 214 n. 4) agrees that the suspicion thrown on the testimony of Andreas because of Eusebius's failure to 'directly mention' Papias's use of Revelation is unjust. He supposes 'that Eusebius omitted any express mention of this use because he had meant his words to be understood of the Apocalypse, when, speaking of the Chiliastic doctrine of Papias higher up, he said that this father "had mistaken the Apostolic statements"'. This explanation overlooks the distinction between the written work and the *τῶν τοῦ κυρίου λόγων διηγήσεις*.

ended the vision of John, the Apocalypse. Amen. That is to say, that vision which he saw *in his lifetime*; and it was written by the blessed John the evangelist of 'his God (= ὁ θεολόγος).' Is not this another attempt in still more distorted form to record the testimony of Papias that John 'while yet in the body' wrote and gave out to the churches the vision which he had seen?

4. The identification of a new fragment of Papias, however small, is an event of prime importance to New Testament criticism, especially if the discovery bears upon the origin of the Johannine writings. In the present instance if our conclusion is correct it has a twofold importance: first negatively, in dispelling a false impression which, with Clemen's *Entstehung des Johannes-Evangeliums*, 1912, had obtained strong reinforcement, and through the present work of Harnack seemed likely to attain general acceptance; second positively, in making clearer our conception of what the name of the Apostle John really stood for in the minds of protagonists of the Church, especially the churches of Asia, in the first half of the second century.

Probably there is no great danger that the world of scholarship will be misled into accepting Harnack's idea of a preliminary rejection of Marcion by the 'Elders of Asia', before his coming to Rome, now that the true origin of paragraph β of the Vatican Prologue stands revealed. But there is real danger of a misapplication of paragraph α . Harnack's insistence that a real utterance of Papias underlies the statement of this paragraph is justified. But the utterance relates to the origin of the Revelation, not of the Gospel of John. This was found not only *a priori* probable, but to some extent borne out by corroborative witness from other sources. The argument from silence against any such utterance of Papias regarding the Gospel was found to be much stronger than had been allowed for even by Lightfoot, who in view of it frankly acknowledged that 'no weight can be attached to the evidence of the Prologue'. Were this evidence really admitted (in however emended a form), it is not too much to say that it would 'outweigh in importance all the rest of the external evidence for the Fourth Gospel put together'.¹ The reason is simple. It is no longer the *date* of the Gospel with which criticism concerns itself. It is the authorship; the date and place of origin have become matter approximately of common consent. And the alleged statement of Papias, if actually made, would stand absolutely alone in the first four-fifths of the second century, ante-dating by a full generation the ascription of the Gospel to John by Theophilus of Antioch. To quote the exact language before

¹ From the article 'Latin Prologues of John', by the present writer in *The Journal of Biblical Literature* xxxii 3 (1913), pp. 197 and 207 f.

Epistle. On the other hand, while later tradition quite credibly declares that he had seen and heard 'John', the report is communicated only by one who stands convicted in a parallel case of confusing the Apostle with another John, probably one of 'the Elders the disciples of the Apostles'. Ignatius, if he makes any use at all of the Fourth Gospel, never mentions the name of John. Justin, converted at Ephesus, and keenly alive to the need of apostolic authentication for the Gospel tradition against the accusations of his opponent Marcion, has no thought of appealing to a 'Gospel' of John. To him, as to Papias, John is witness for the Revelation. In the *Dialogue* and *Apolo- gies* Matthew and Peter (through Mark) are the 'Apostles' who with their 'companions' stand sponsor for the Gospel tradition. The whole onslaught of Marcion and all the rest of those who 'perverted the oracles of the Lord to their own lusts' in this great period of controversy from Polycarp to Melito did not elicit a single mention of John *as an evangelist*. That appeal began at Rome in the last quarter of the century under the circumstances that we have seen.

Criticism has fixed the date and place of origin of the Fourth Gospel. It should not continue to confuse this result with questions of the date and place of origin of the debates about its apostolic authority. Papias had nothing to do with these.

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