these can make the true interpreter. He will need philological exactness to be loyal to his authorities; he will need historical imagination to picture the scene in living reality; he will need, above all, a spiritual sensitiveness, able to feel the real importance of that with which he deals. "For the searching into Holy Scripture and true knowledge there is a need of life, of spiritual beauty, and an unsullied soul, and virtue modelled upon Christ, that the mind, guided by it along its path, may be able to touch and lay hold of that at which it aims; . . . for without a pure mind, and an imitation of the life of the saints, none could really grasp the teaching of the saints." [1]

W. Lock.

ON THE MORAL CHARACTER OF PSEUDONYMOUS BOOKS.

I.

In the great mass of the world's literature, the productions that have borne names other than those of their real authors are many, and possess a peculiar interest. The task of discovering their secret stimulates curiosity; and the necessary research has often exercised the highest powers of learning and criticism, and given occasion to keen controversy. The literary history of pseudonymous books is in many cases very curious, and the circumstances of their origin have often thrown fresh light on obscure portions of history. Even to the literature of inspiration the interest derived from such questions is not wanting. For among the canonical writings of the Old and New Testament there are some which, by the mistakes of copyists, editors, or others, have been ascribed to those who were not their

[1] Athanasius, *De Incarnatione*, cap. lvii.

true authors; for example, some of the Psalms, and, in the opinion of many, portions of Isaiah and Zechariah, and the Epistle to the Hebrews; and among apocryphal books there are some which contain a deliberate pretence to be the work of some more ancient and venerated man than their true author. Wrong ascriptions of the former kind will readily be allowed by all as quite compatible with inspiration; for they involve no false assertion by the author, but merely a mistake by some one else. But the case is different when a writing professes to be the work of a person who is not its real author; and until recently that was generally regarded as involving a fraud, whether pious or otherwise, and therefore incompatible with the character of a message from God. Of late however a different view of such literary fictions has come to be held by many critics; for they have been persuaded that some books make a false claim to authorship, which yet on other grounds must be regarded as divinely inspired, as they have been by the majority of Christians. This position has been generally supported by the idea, that the recognised custom of ancient literature allowed fictions of that kind to be constructed in perfect good faith, no deceit being intended or originally produced, though mistaken opinions were afterwards adopted; so that fictions which would now be judged as fraudulent and immoral were anciently viewed as perfectly legitimate. Canon Farrar gives brief and emphatic expression to this view, when he writes, "Those who have the slightest acquaintance with ancient literature know, that the adoption of a pseudonym involved no dishonest intention, and was indeed one of the most familiar of literary expedients."[1] So also Simcox in regard to the pastoral epistles: "To a writer of the period, it would appear as legitimate an artifice to compose a letter as to compose a speech in the name of a great man whose senti-

[1] *Solomon, his Life and Times*, p. 183.

ments it was desired to reproduce and record; the question which seems so important to us, whether the words, and even the sentiments, are the great man's own or only his historian's, seems then hardly to have occurred either to writer or readers." [1] Similar statements are made by Dr. Samuel Davidson in his *Introduction to the New Testament*, and by Delitzsch and Plumptre in their introductions to Ecclesiastes; but they have not given evidence, or even indicated by references where evidence is to be found, of what is so confidently asserted. That it is not universally admitted by competent scholars may be seen from the words of Neander in reference to such a view of the Epistle of James: "The assertion made by Kern, . . . that, according to the principles of the early Christian age, such a literary imposture would be irreproachable, I cannot acknowledge to be well-founded, if expressed without limitation. There was indeed a certain standing-point from which such a *fraus pia*, as we must always call it (when a palpable falsehood was made use of to put certain statements in circulation), would be allowed; but that this was a generally approved practice appears to me an arbitrary assumption." [2] The matter then is not so clear and certain as is often assumed, and as it has an important bearing on many questions of biblical criticism, it deserves careful investigation. It is a question of fact, what was the intention and moral character of pseudonymous writings in ancient times, to the discussion of which this paper is offered as a contribution; the bearing of the fact when ascertained on inspiration, or on the canonicity of particular books, is a different thing, which may be afterwards considered, but should be left out of view in the first place.

The practice of composing writings under fictitious names

[1] *The Writers of the New Testament*, p. 38.

[2] *Planting and Training of the Christian Church* (Eng. trans.), vol. ii., p. 15.

is probably as old as literature; but it has flourished especially in ages and countries in which literary skill was well developed in a part of the community, while in the generality there was an ignorant regard for learning that could easily be imposed on. The former of these circumstances would provide the power to produce such artifices, and the latter would secure that they would be both highly esteemed and not easily detected. These conditions existed from about the third century before Christ to the revival of letters. Before the former time book-learning was not so much cultivated as to give facility and motive to literary fictions; and since the sixteenth century criticism has acquired such discernment, as to make it impossible that any such fiction should long escape detection. The formation of the two great public libraries, that in the Museum of Alexandria, founded by Ptolemy Philadelphus (283–247 B.C.), and that of Pergamus, founded by Eumenes II. (197–159 B.C.), created a great demand for copies of the works of famous authors; and since large prices were given for these by the competing librarians, there was a temptation to ascribe to an illustrious name any anonymous work that was similar to those that truly bore it. This tendency is sufficient to account for the circumstance, that among the writings ascribed to Plato, Aristotle, and other great authors are included many pieces that are not theirs, but the work of scholars and followers. Then, as it came to be perceived that copies of works by the old classic authors were far more highly valued than productions of contemporary writers, men found it the most profitable exercise of their literary skill to compose imitations of ancient works and palm them off as genuine. It would be the interest of the collectors of books, no less than of the writers of such imitations, to have as many as possible received as genuine; and though the science of literary criticism had its birth in that age, and its great leader Aristarchus, its

methods were as yet very rude, and its tests of authenticity very far from searching.

The art of literary imitation, which was thus fostered by mercenary motives, came also to be often practised as a mere exercise of skill, and though naturally the test of success in such compositions would be the completeness of the deception effected, there might be no fraudulent purpose in the practice. Often however the secret was entirely kept, and unknown sophists foisted on the public works composed in the name of celebrated authors of earlier times, purely as efforts of literary art. Skill of this kind was obviously a dangerous weapon, and in the hands of an unscrupulous person might tempt him to an unworthy use of it for personal or party purposes. Especially frequent became the practice of endeavouring to gain acceptance for certain opinions or precepts by embodying them in works ascribed to venerated authorities. This could generally be better done by interpolations in genuine writings than by the composition of new ones; and a very early case of this kind is the conduct ascribed to Solon of inserting a verse in the *Iliad* to favour the Athenians' claims on the island of Salamis. Another motive that sometimes led to the assumption of a false name was the desire to conceal the authorship of unpopular opinions which would expose their propounder to discredit or danger. This was seldom necessary in the tolerant times of antiquity; the suspicious tyranny of the Roman emperors and the persecuting reign of orthodoxy gave too much occasion for it later.[1]

Besides these kinds of pseudonymous compositions, the reasons of which required that they should be seriously taken as the works of the assumed authors, there are two

[1] I need no apology for being indebted for the substance of the above paragraphs to Bentley's *Dissertation on the Epistles of Phalaris*, at the outset of which he gives, as Prof. Jebb says, "in a few words a broad view of the origin and growth of literary forgery in the ancient world."—"English Men of Letters," *Bentley*. By R. C. Jebb, p. 67.

other classes of such productions, in which that is not needed or desired. One may be called the dramatic, in which, for the purpose of bringing out with force and vividness the character and sentiments of a person in a certain situation, there are ascribed to him either spoken or written words, which the reader accepts only as what he might have said. Speeches of this kind, as parts of larger works, are as old as dramatic poetry of any kind; and were admitted by the ancient historians much more freely than by their modern successors. But separate compositions of this kind, such as the dramatic monologues with which Browning and Tennyson have made our age familiar, have not been very common; though Ovid's *Heroides* are a well-known example in ancient literature. In all such cases however the form is poetical, suited to the imaginative nature of the subject; and thus any possibility of deception is excluded. The effect aimed at by the author is not fully attained, unless the composition is known to be a work of fancy.

Another kind of pseudonymous writing in which no deception is meant may be described as ironical; which is used especially in controversy, when arguments against an opponent are put in the mouth of an imaginary person, inferior in knowledge or wisdom to the real author. Pascal's *Letters to a Provincial by one of his Friends*, in which in the character of a Parisian gentleman he exposes the morality of the Jesuits, afford the best specimen of this kind of composition; and examples may also be found in many of the papers of Steele and Addison, Swift's *Drapier's Letters*, Bentley's *Remarks on a Discourse on Freethinking*, in the character of a German scholar, Goldsmith's *Citizen of the World*, etc. This is a literary development of the inimitable irony, or affected ignorance, of Socrates, exhibited in the Platonic dialogues; yet it is remarkable that there is no instance of such composition among the many pseu-

donymous books of antiquity.[1] The essential feature, which gives controversial force to this style of writing, is that the character assumed is inferior to the real one; whereas the practice of those who wrote under false names in ancient times was rather to claim the superior authority of some great or venerable name.

Both the dramatic and the ironical form of pseudonymous composition require, for their appreciation, that the readers should have nearly as much literary culture as the writers; and hence could only flourish under conditions not favourable to successful deception. Thus since the revival of letters the dramatic form of fictitious authorship has very greatly increased, and the ironical may be said to have come into existence; while forms designed to be received as genuine have become rare or obsolete. The *Icon Basilike*, the Rowley poems of Chatterton, and the Ireland Shakspearian forgeries are the most noted in English literature; and these never obtained much or long credence.

It would seem therefore, from a general survey of the subject, that so far from innocent and recognised fictions in composition being more common in ancient than in modern literature, the very opposite is nearer the truth; for of ancient pseudonymous books a far larger proportion was meant to be received as genuine than of modern; and indeed it seems doubtful whether any but a very few were written in perfect good faith. The matter however deserves a closer investigation; and it may be ascertained whether this general presumption is borne out or modified, by examining, in the first place, how pseudonymous works are spoken of by ancient writers; and, secondly, what is the tone and character, in a moral point of view, of extant works that are undoubtedly pseudonymous. The former

[1] The device of Celsus, putting his arguments against Christianity in the mouth of a Jew, which Origen says was after the manner of the rhetoricians (*c. Cels.* i. 28), is not a parallel, since it occupied only part of his treatise.

inquiry may disclose evidence of a general understanding to regard such work as a legitimate literary device; and the latter may show such a high moral tone in them, that we cannot believe their authors to have been wilful deceivers.

In considering the external aspect of ancient pseudonymous writings, or how they were regarded by intelligent readers, we get the most valuable information from the Christian writers of the early centuries; for they had occasion very often to refer to such works, and they had a high moral standard of judgment. If they are found speaking with respect of books which they recognise to be pseudonymous, this would afford a presumption that dramatic personation was viewed as a legitimate and well understood literary device. But, in fact, they speak in a quite different way. A book very often quoted by the Fathers, and one which many modern critics confidently pronounce to be an example of such innocent personation,[1] is that entitled the *Wisdom of Solomon*. It was highly esteemed by the early Christians; but they almost all regarded it as a genuine writing of Solomon, and an inspired and prophetic book. In this way it is quoted by Clement of Alexandria;[2] and Tertullian, in his rhetorical way, contrasting Christianity with Stoicism, the philosophy of the Porch, says: "Our instruction comes from the porch of Solomon" (referring to the testimony of the apostles in Acts iii.), and then he proceeds, "who has himself taught us that the Lord should be sought in simplicity of heart" (Wisdom i. 1).[3] Elsewhere he quotes Wisdom i. 6 as Divine,[4] and Wisdom ii. as a prophecy.[5] Hippolytus also quotes the book as a prophecy of Solomon about Christ.[6] Cyprian

[1] See Dr. S. Davidson's *Introduction to the Old Testament*; Plumptre on Ecclesiastes (in Cambridge *Bible for Schools*); Delitzsch on Ecclesiastes.

[2] *Strom.* vi. 15. [3] *De Præscriptione Hær.*, cap. vii. [4] *De Anima*, cap. xv.

[5] *Contra Marcionem* iii. 22. [6] *Contra Judæos*, capp. ix., x.

quotes very loosely from the sapiential books, repeatedly using the phrase "in Solomon" with reference to the Wisdom of Ben Sirach; and once, after a quotation of Proverbs xiv. 25, as "in the proverbs of Solomon," adding Wisdom v. 1–9, with the words, "also in the same place." This last must have been a slip of memory, and so probably were the others; but Cyprian seems to have had no doubt that the book of Wisdom was by Solomon, and divinely inspired, for besides quoting it several times as sacred Scripture, he says expressly, "the Holy Spirit shows and predicts by Solomon." Lactantius and Melito of Sardes also refer to it as Solomon's and as Scripture. Origen in his treatise against Celsus calls it "Scripture," "the word of God," "the treatise of Solomon on wisdom"; but in the Latin version of his work *De Principiis*, we find expressions of doubt, as "Sapientia quæ dicitur Salomonis," and again the same phrase with the addition "qui utique liber non ab omnibus in auctoritate habetur." As the most distinct indications of dubiety occur only in Rufinus' Latin version of Origen's lost work, they may be due to the translator, who is known to have modified some of his author's expressions into conformity with the orthodoxy of the time; but even if they are by Origen himself, they only show that, as in regard to the Epistle of the Hebrews, he sometimes used the language of popular opinion, and sometimes expressed his own critical doubts. When the book was recognised to be undoubtedly not the work of Solomon, it was also judged not to be canonical, as by Jerome, who says that it is not found in Hebrew and is redolent of Greek style, and therefore should not be used to support any doctrine, though it may continue to be read in churches.[1] The only trace of its being regarded as authoritative, though not composed by Solomon, is to be found in an obscure and doubtful clause in the Fragment of Muratori,

[1] *Præfatio in Libros Salomonis.*

which in the most literal form that is intelligible seems to say that Wisdom was written by the friends of Solomon in honour of him, and was held in authority in the catholic Church. But critics are very much divided in opinion as to the meaning and purpose of the statement; and some think that it refers, not to the book now known as the Wisdom of Solomon, but to the book of Proverbs, which was often called by that name in the ancient Church.[1] If there had been any general opinion that Wisdom was a legitimate dramatic personation, there would surely have been more evidence of it than this single doubtful statement. The prevalent belief of its genuineness is indeed very surprising, and shows how rude and inexact was the criticism of that age; but this makes it very unlikely that the author intended it to be received as anything else than a real writing of Solomon.

Another pseudonymous work, frequently quoted by early Christian writers, and referred to by heathen authors, is the collection of Sibylline oracles. These however are uniformly appealed to as real predictions by ancient Gentile prophetesses,[2] though a great part of them is undoubtedly of Jewish origin, and much is quite as certainly Christian. Origen says that Celsus charged the Christians with interpolating the Sibylline books; and the way in which he meets this charge is remarkable. He simply denies that Celsus had proved it, since he had not produced copies in which the alleged interpolations were absent.[3] Now it is very hard to believe that a man of Origen's learning and scholarship was unaware that some portions of these so called oracles were really the work of Christians not long before his own time. If he knew these parts of the collec-

[1] See the Fragment in its original and critically corrected form in Westcott on the *Canon of the New Testament*.

[2] This is done by Justin Martyr, *Apol.* i. 20; *Coh. ad Gent.*, cap. 37; *Coh.*, cap. 38; Clemens Alex., *Prot.* cap. iv.; *Strom.* vi. 5; and others.

[3] *Contrà Celsum* v. 61 and vii. 56.

tion, and believed them to be the utterances of the ancient sibyls, this gives a very astonishing idea of the uncritical character of the age. But perhaps it is not inconsistent with the general character of Origen as a controversialist[1] to surmise, that he may have been aware that his opponent's charge was not without foundation, and have adopted an evasive mode of answering it, so as neither to assert boldly the authority of these oracles, nor frankly to abandon testimonies on which many of his less learned fellow Christians laid much stress. Anyhow it is clear that the accusation of Celsus was one of forgery with intent to deceive; and that neither he nor Origen had any idea that such verses in the name of a sibyl might have been composed innocently as a mere literary device, such as Vergil's adaptation of Sibylline oracles to a Roman child in his fourth Eclogue.

Several other facts may be mentioned, as showing the view generally taken of pseudonymous books. Eusebius relates that Serapion, who was bishop of the Church at Antioch about 190 A.D., found the Gospel of Peter used in the Church at Rhossus in Cilicia, and at first did not object to its being read, though he did not believe it to be a genuine work of the apostle, but afterwards, when he found that they were being led into heresy, condemned it as the production of some of the Docetæ.[2] This shows that the mere fact of a book being known to bear a fictitious name was not sufficient of itself to condemn it, but that its use might be tolerated, if it were harmless; though such toleration proved in this case to be dangerous, and the fiction was not an innocent one.

Tertullian informs us, that the book entitled the "Acts

[1] A charge against Origen of want of candour and strict veracity as a controversialist is made by Bishop Horsley in regard to two points that came into discussion in his controversy with Dr. Priestley, and on both there seems to be too good ground for it.

[2] Eus., *H. E.*, vi. 12; comp. Westcott, *On the Canon*, p. 342.

of Paul and Thekla" was composed by a presbyter in Asia, who being convicted, and confessing that he had done it out of love to Paul, was removed from his office.[1] This shows what was the judgment of the Christian community on literary personation.

In the Muratorian Fragment, immediately before the obscure statement about Wisdom formerly quoted, there occurs this: "There is also in circulation another epistle to the Laodiceans [and another] to the Alexandrians, composed in the name of Paul bearing on the heresy of Marcion, and several others, which cannot be received into the catholic Church, for it is not fitting that gall be mingled with honey." It may be doubted whether these pseudonymous writings were regarded as gall, merely because they bore a false name, or also on account of their erroneous contents; but in general these two features were found together in the same books.

Thus Cyril of Jerusalem, when giving a list of the canonical books, says: "The four gospels alone, but the rest are falsely inscribed and hurtful (*ψευδεπίγραφα καὶ βλαβερά*). The Manichæans also wrote a Gospel according to Thomas, which, tinged with the fragrance of the evangelical title, corrupts the souls of the more simple."[2] Manichæans, on being received into the catholic Church, were required to abjure the use of apocryphal writings; and a bishop of the fifth century, Turibius, did not scruple to assert that they had either invented or corrupted every apocryphal book.

The circumstance that pseudonymous books were chiefly composed by heretics such as Gnostics[3] and Manichæans, may be accounted for, without ascribing to them an absolutely inferior morality, by the consideration that those who

[1] Tertullian, *De Baptismo*, cap. 17. [2] Cyril Hieros., *Catech.* iv. 36.
[3] This is stated by Hegesippus in Eus., *H. E.* iv. 22. See Mosheim, *Church History* i. 177.

held theories not contained in the genuine apostolic writings would find a need and a temptation to discover other testimony in their favour, which was not felt by those who did not carry their speculations beyond the teaching of the acknowledged canonical books. Still even they were sometimes led by zeal and enthusiasm to imagine that Jewish and heathen predictions of Christ must have been more distinct than they really are, and in the desire of converting unbelievers to use or invent fictitious oracles.[1] The Ignatian Epistles, which, even if some be in substance genuine, were undoubtedly all interpolated, and some fabricated, in the interest of the episcopal government of the Church, afford proof that in the fourth century and afterwards the defenders of the catholic faith and Church order did not scruple to have recourse to such arts.

From these facts it would seem to follow, that in the early Christian centuries, when any work was given out as of ancient or venerable authorship, it was either received as genuine, which was done with very great facility of belief, or rejected as an imposture; that such fictions, though very common, were regarded, at least by the stricter Christian teachers, as morally blameworthy; and that the notion of dramatic personation as a legitimate literary device is never mentioned, and seems never to have been thought of as a defence of such compositions. If any author wrote a pseudonymous book in such a way, he must have been very unsuccessful in his purpose; for it was generally taken as a genuine work, or else rejected as feigned and worthless.

On the other hand, the great number of such compositions on moral and religious subjects that appeared in those times seems to show that they were not due to mere selfish or worldly motives, but that in some way or other

[1] See Westcott, *On the Canon*, p. 355; Harnack, *Dogmengeschichte*, i. 72 Mosheim, *loc. cit.*

the deception of the readers was reconcilable with piety. This seems best accounted for by the prevalence of the idea that it was lawful, and sometimes necessary, to employ falsehood or fiction in support of religion, and to deceive men for their higher good. This view was held especially by the Pythagoreans and Platonists, who thought that a certain class of men were peculiarly fit, by mental ability or learning, to receive the highest truth, which could not be apprehended by the vulgar, and should not be divulged to them. These must be treated like children or imbeciles, whom it is lawful and expedient to deceive for their own good.[1] This view was adopted by Philo-Judæus,[2] and by some of the early Christian writers. It is easy to see how this theory and practice would be countenanced in the pagan world of those times by the fact that the philosophers, though entirely disbelieving the religion and mythology of the people, yet conformed to its rites in daily life, and maintained them as useful for public order; and it is equally obvious, that such a prevalent idea would make it seem to many earnest men quite legitimate to endeavour to impress moral and religious lessons by compositions deriving authority from fictitious names. This would not appear so glaring an inconsistency as it rightly does to us now. But since genuine Christianity rejects that depreciation of the profane vulgar which in some of the best systems of ancient philosophy was made a justification of such fictions, and attaches a more absolute obligation to truthfulness than current pagan morality did, everything of the nature of pious frauds was condemned by the more earnest Christian teachers, although with the rise of the ecclesiastical hierarchy in a later age such

[1] The system of the Pythagoreans and Platonists, veiling truth from the vulgar, is described by Clemens Alex., *Strom.* v. 8–10, and the legitimacy of deceiving men in certain cases for their own good is asserted by him, *ib.* vii. 9, as also by Plato, *Rep.* iii., p. 389, and by Origen, *c. Cels.* i., pref. § 5.

[2] *De Cherubim.*, p. 110.

artifices were resorted to in support of the Church and her faith. Even in the apostolic age they seem not to have been entirely unknown. In 2 Thessalonians ii. 3 Paul warns his readers against being deceived into a belief of the immediate approach of the day of the Lord, either by spirit—that is, by fancied prophetic communication—or by word or by letter as from us—that is, by oral or written teaching purporting to come from Paul. A false report of his word might proceed from a mere mistake; but a letter wrongly ascribed to him could only be a fiction designed to deceive. That Paul anticipated that such practices would increase among those who departed from pure Christianity appears from 1 Timothy iv. 1, where he characterizes the seducers of the last days as "speaking falsely in hypocrisy," that is, acting a part,—a phrase which in its proper meaning exactly describes the literary forgeries that were so largely associated with Gnostic, Manichæan, and ascetic errors, such as he describes in the following verses.

The instances commonly adduced, when any evidence is indicated, in support of the statement that literary personation was anciently looked on as a legitimate form of composition, are the speeches in the Greek and Latin histories, Xenophon's and Plato's Apologies of Socrates, and the Dialogues of Plato as a whole. But of these only the Apologies of Socrates are cases of whole pieces written by one author in the name of another; they purport to be reports of what was spoken, not written, by the man whose name they bear; and that ascribed to Xenophon is judged by competent critics to be certainly spurious, while that of Plato was in all probability, not a mere production of his own imagination, but in substance a true record of what Socrates actually said.[1] The same thing may be asserted

[1] See Zeller, *Socrates and the Socratic Schools*, p. 165; also Thirlwall's *History of Greece*, and Whewell's *Platonic Dialogues for English Readers*.

in regard to some of Plato's Dialogues, and the speeches given by the best historians; and though in others of these dialogues and speeches there is more imagination than fact, these are not analogous to entire letters and treatises bearing to have been written by one different from their real author. The greater freedom used by ancient than by modern historians in regard to speeches might raise a presumption that there would also be a more general recognition of imaginative personation in written documents; but the facts do not show that this was actually the case. The known instances of pseudonymous books were actually received as genuine, and presumably were designed to be so. When Delitzsch says,[1] "The arts by which it is sought to impart to that which is introduced into a more recent period the appearance of genuineness were unknown to antiquity," he makes too sweeping an assertion. It is true that imitative skill was not so great in ancient as in modern times; but it is not the fact that attempts were not made, by an archaic colouring of style, or imitation of the writer personated, to give an appearance of truth to the picture. The authors of the Sibylline oracles departed from the strict rules of versification observed in their own time, and affected the less regular metres of the Homeric poems, in order to give an air of antiquity to their productions; and Bentley mentions an odd forgery of Anaximenes the historian, who, "having a spite to his rival historian Theopompus, wrote a bitter invective against the three most powerful governments of Greece, the Athenian, Lacedæmonian, and Theban, where he exactly imitated Theopompus' style. This book he sends abroad in Theopompus' name, and so makes him odious all over Greece."[2] But while the imitation of the

[1] Introduction to Ecclesiastes (Eng. trans.), p. 208.

[2] "Dissertation on Phalaris," second edition, in Bentley's *Works*, edited by Dyce, vol. i., p. 87.

style of another person or age was not unknown in antiquity, it would be unsafe to conclude that its absence is a sure proof that no deceit was intended, since that might be due to mere lack of ability or care on the part of the writer. The reading public was very easily imposed upon in ancient times, and the clumsiness of a forgery is no evidence of its innocence.

On the whole, the external evidence available on the subject points to the conclusion, not that avowedly dramatic fiction was a common form of literature in the times when pseudonymous books were most rife, but that there prevailed in those days a philosophic view and standard of morality which permitted earnest and good men to sanction and practise the use of falsehood in support of religion and morals. Whether the moral character of any certainly pseudonymous work is so high as to make this explanation impossible is a question that requires separate discussion.

JAS. S. CANDLISH.