

version of the Christian Didache published by Schlecht in 1900. The argument of the paper was that the author of the Didache was working on the N.T. itself and reconstructing therefrom what the Twelve Apostles might reasonably be thought to have enjoined. The author, he held, disguised alike his borrowings from the N.T. and the conditions of his own time, with the result that 'he contributes almost nothing, except doubtful exegesis, to advance our knowledge of the early Christian ministry'.¹ A thesis so startling, argued with such brilliance, by a scholar so eminent attracted a good deal of attention, but so far as I know at that time it won few, if any, converts. Professor Burkitt, whose lectures on 'the Principles of Christian Worship' I was attending that year, was obviously attracted by the theory, and he continued to be attracted by it until the end of his life. But he did not then commit himself. Professor Swete told me that he could not escape the impression that the document was primitive both in character and in phraseology and that it reflected the actual conditions of the writer's time. I am not sure whether it was Professor Sanday or another who was credited with the comment that he did not know which to admire the more, the ingenuity of the author of the Didache or the ingenuity of the Dean of Wells in unmasking him. In his Donnellan Lectures of 1920 Armitage Robinson returned to the Didache, and on this second occasion he attacked the problem from the other end. He had remarked in his earlier paper that he was ready to believe that both Barnabas and Hermas had been used in the Didache, and in these lectures he developed the arguments which had completed his conversion to this view. The contention is that the Epistle of Barnabas is a single work, the original creation of one mind; that there are significant points of contact between the first seventeen chapters of Barnabas and the last four (which include 'The Two Ways') alike in style, thought, and in the use of certain documents, notably the Epistle to the Ephesians, and that, in consequence, the internal evidence of the Epistle lends no support to the hypothesis of a 'Two Ways' document as a source of the Epistle. Advancing to the *Shepherd* of Hermas, where by common consent there are echoes of 'The Two Ways' which cannot be mere coincidence, he maintained that these are dependent upon our Epistle of Barnabas; and finally, with regard to the Didache, he argued that it is directly dependent upon both the *Shepherd* and the Epistle of Barnabas. At the same time he disputed the opinion that Clement of Alexandria knew the Didache and quoted it as Scripture. Very characteristically he republished, in an appendix, the old article of 1912 without change, although his new view of 'The Two Ways' was discordant with the view expressed in the article. The

¹ *J.T.S. loc. cit.* p. 354.

THE DIDACHE

I

IN his edition of the Apostolic Fathers the veteran Roman Catholic scholar F. X. Funk summed up the opinion at which in the year 1901 scholars had arrived concerning the Didache after the testings of eighteen years: 'Scripturam summae antiquitatis speciem prae se ferre hodie nemo est qui neget.'¹ In 1938 it is no longer possible to assert the same unanimity of opinion, for in the course of the last twenty years certain scholars in this country and in America have argued for a very different date and a very different estimate of its value. Dr J. Muilenburg, for instance, has said that 'the temporal locus of the Teaching some time towards the end of the first century must be shifted, perhaps a century'.² If this is so, it will undoubtedly mean, as Dr Muilenburg goes on to say, 'a complete change in prevailing opinion', and 'many pages of early Church History will need revision'. 'It may be a third century document', Dr Armitage Robinson has written.³ More recently Dom Connolly has argued that the book dates from the end of the second century and that it is of Montanist provenance.⁴ These opinions have gained attention, and in Britain and America at any rate there is now widespread uncertainty where before there was fairly general agreement and, though the scholars to whom I have referred are not themselves in agreement as to a new dating for the Didache, or as to an alternative historical interpretation, it is widely believed that the grounds for accepting a date either at the close of the first century or in the early decades of the second century have been shaken.

The moving spirit behind the books and articles of which I here treat has been that penetrating and inspiring Cambridge scholar for whom I, like many another student of theology of my generation, cherish a feeling of almost filial affection and reverence, Joseph Armitage Robinson. Armitage Robinson in his lifetime twice published opinions on the interpretation of the Didache. The earlier publication—a paper in this JOURNAL (1912) vol. xiii pp. 339–356—was devoted exclusively to the later part of the document—that is, the Church Order proper—though in passing he accepted the then prevailing view that 'The Two Ways' was based upon a Jewish manual of ethical catechism, probably substantially identical with the Latin

¹ *Patres Apostolici*, ed. F. X. Funk, vol. i p. xii.

² J. Muilenburg, *Literary Relations of the Epistle of Barnabas and the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* (Marburg 1929) p. 168.

³ J. A. Robinson, *Barnabas, Hermas and the Didache* (S.P.C.K. 1920) p. 82.

⁴ 'The Didache and Montanism', *Downside Review* vol. lv July 1937.

former article was a whole in itself, representing a definite phase of his opinions, and he would not attempt a revision until he felt ready to put his hand to a complete recasting of his views on the Didache in its entirety.

Once again his argument seemed to fall flat. It received but little attention, and such comment as there was was not favourable. Thus in an article in this JOURNAL, April 1921 (vol. xxii pp. 239 ff), *The Didache Reconsidered*, Dr Vernon Bartlett severely criticized alike the republished article of 1912 and the new defence of the dependence of the Didache upon Barnabas; and Bishop Maclean's workmanlike revision of Dr Bigg's edition of the Didache (S.P.C.K. 1922) was likewise unfavourable. But if the harvest has been delayed, in the last few years it has been abundant. Two scholars, the American Dr J. Muilenburg and Dom Connolly of Downside, have advocated opinions closely similar to those of Armitage Robinson and, it may be assumed, in large measure under his influence, and their championship of the cause has rallied a considerable measure of support. Muilenburg's book *The Literary Relations of the Epistle of Barnabas and the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* (Marburg 1929) is a detailed examination of the structure of the Epistle of Barnabas and of the Didache and of the relations between the two documents. 'He has', wrote Professor Burkitt in *J.T.S.* Oct. 1931 vol. xxxiii p. 27, 'so it seems to me, proved what Dean Armitage Robinson had indicated and rendered extremely probable, viz. that the Didache depends upon Barnabas, and that Barnabas is an original document, which there is little reason to suppose dependent upon any other writings than Scripture itself.' This support encouraged Armitage Robinson to return to the charge, this time with the help of Dom R. H. Connolly, who in *J.T.S.* April 1932 contributed a most arresting study of the Didache ch. v—the chapter dealing with 'The Way of Death'. At the time of his death in May 1933 Armitage Robinson had projected a full-dress commentary on the Didache to be written jointly by Dom Connolly and himself, and its publication had been undertaken by the Cambridge University Press. In preparation for this project he had rewritten two chapters of his earlier work, and these have been since published by Dom Connolly in their revised form.¹ Dom Connolly himself has carried on the defence of the main positions common to himself and to Armitage Robinson.

Among the few scholars who have pronounced definitely against these theories is the late Canon Streeter. Likening himself to a knight-errant hurrying to the rescue of a damsel in distress, Streeter contributed an article, 'The much-belaboured Didache', to this JOURNAL

¹ *J.T.S.* vol. xxxv pp. 113-146, 225-248.

(Oct. 1936) in which he defended the main positions of what I think may still be called the accepted view. That forcible paper is, however, no longer adequate to the position; for in the first place it has elicited two further papers from Dom Connolly which Streeter, alas, will never himself now answer, and secondly, Dom Connolly has boldly attacked the outstanding problem which hitherto these critics have left on one side—the historical setting of the Didache and the motives of its author.

In these circumstances it appears to me that there is a call, and an urgent call, to attempt a fresh survey of the position. For I agree with Streeter in thinking that this recent intensive study has in truth made a permanent contribution to criticism and that it calls for a modification in the views which have hitherto been widely accepted. The nature and extent of this modification must first be examined. We must next consider what conclusions as to date the literary evidence requires or allows. Lastly we must seek to discover, if we may, the true historical setting of the book.

I begin, then, with the three specific literary problems which have been the chief topics discussed in the recent debate.

I. It is commonly asserted that Clement of Alexandria was acquainted with the Didache and that he quoted it as Scripture. Both assertions will be found in so recent a book as Lietzmann's *Geschichte der alten Kirche*,¹ but, as Connolly has pointed out, neither is beyond dispute.

It will be convenient to have before us the words of Clement here in question (*Stromat.* i 100 4). As elsewhere in the first book of the *Stromateis*, Clement is dealing with the value and the limitations of Greek philosophy, and he is charging the Greek philosophers with dishonesty in appropriating the teachings of the Old Testament prophets: *ἐμπαλιν οὖν ἀδικεῖ, he says, ὁ σφετερισάμενος τὰ βαρβάρων καὶ ὡς ἴδια αὐχῶν, τὴν ἑαυτοῦ δόξαν αὐξῶν καὶ ψευδόμενος τὴν ἀλήθειαν. οὗτος "κλέπτης" ὑπὸ τῆς γραφῆς εἴρηται. φησὶ γοῦν "οὐκ εἶ, μὴ γίνου ψεύστης· ὁδηγεῖ γὰρ τὸ ψεῦσμα πρὸς τὴν κλοπὴν."*

Clement's words as a whole certainly suggest at first sight that the quotation in the latter sentence is the Scripture which he had in mind in the sentence preceding. On the other hand, O. Stählin has pointed out in a note,² to which Connolly has recently called attention, that Clement elsewhere in this book frequently interprets the words of John x 8 πάντες ὅσοι ἤλθον πρὸ ἐμοῦ κλέπται εἰσὶν καὶ λησταί of the Greek philosophers, and the parallels between these other passages and the passage here in question are so close that it is likely that here, too, John x 8 is the γραφή referred to. On this interpretation the

¹ vol. ii p. 95.

² *Z.N.W.* 1913 p. 271 f.

quotation following is adduced as additional support, but is not itself spoken of as *γραφή*.

The saying quoted in the last sentence is found in Didache iii 5 (the verbal differences *τέκνον μου* for *υἱέ*, *ἐπειδή* for *γάρ*, *εἰς* for *πρός* are negligible), and as the Didache was certainly current not much later than Clement's time there is no difficulty in supposing that the Didache is the actual source of Clement's quotation. It has, however, been pointed out that Didache iii has stylistic peculiarities of its own and that for this and other reasons it may be plausibly conjectured that the author—or compiler—of the Didache has derived this section from some earlier source. Though we have no other reason for postulating the independent survival of this source, the possibility remains open that Clement is quoting not the Didache itself but a source of the Didache.

The case for supposing that Clement did know the Didache itself is strengthened by another parallel found in *Quis dives salvetur?* xxix 4. Here Clement, interpreting the parable of the Good Samaritan, says of Christ that he 'pours in wine, the blood of the vine of David'. The unusual phrase 'the vine of David' is found in the Eucharistic prayer of the Didache for the Cup: 'We thank thee, O Father, for the holy vine of David thy servant.' The thought, as Armitage Robinson has pointed out, is certainly different in the two books, for 'in Clement "the vine of David" would seem to be Christ Himself, who pours in wine that is His own blood', whereas in the Didache the "'vine of David" is *made known* to us through *Jesus*. . . . Nor is there any suggestion in the thanksgiving of the Didache that the Cup is connected with the Blood of Christ.'¹ All this is true, but what is common to the two is a Eucharistic association of the unusual phrase. If Clement knew the Eucharistic prayer of the Didache he might easily have derived the phrase from it and applied it in a somewhat different way for his own purpose. Though not in itself decisive, the parallel deserves notice.² And we may recall that another Egyptian text—the Eucharistic Anaphora of Serapion—is undoubtedly dependent upon another Eucharistic prayer of the Didache—the Prayer of Didache ch. ix *περὶ τοῦ κλάσματος*.

II. It is commonly asserted that the section Didache i 3 b–ii 1 is, on the textual evidence, an interpolation into an earlier form of text which lacked it. The question of its originality has a particular interest because of the close connexion between Didache i 5 and Hermas *M* ii 4–6 and the probability that Hermas, not Didache (in the longer text),

¹ J. A. Robinson *op. cit.* p. 81 f.

² The same collocation of words and ideas reappears in Origen *Hom. in Jud.* vi 2: *antequam verae vitis, quae ascendit de radice David, sanguine inebriemur.*

is prior. If this section of the Didache is not original, there is no strong ground for supposing the Didache to depend on Hermas.

As against this common view Armitage Robinson, Muilenburg, and Connolly maintain the integrity of the longer text. Their defence may be brought under the following heads:—

(1) Demonstrable cases of omission are frequent in the literature of the Church Orders, so that there is no *a priori* objection to accounting for the shorter text as due to deliberate omission. Possible motives for the omission are suggested. (See especially Connolly's article in *J.T.S.* vol. xxxviii pp. 364 f and Muilenburg *op. cit.* pp. 44 f.)

(2) The textual evidence for the full text is very strong (Didascalia, Apostolic Constit. bk. vii, The Oxyrhyncus Papyrus, the MS of Bryennius, and the Georgian Version)—stronger than the evidence for a shorter text (Latin Version, Apostolic Church Order, Panegyric of Schnudi, and perhaps the *Syntagma Doctrinae* attributed to Athanasius).

(3) The evidence of the best authorities for the text is corroborated by many small similarities in style and method of composition between the disputed section and the rest of the Didache.

It appears to me that the arguments adduced under these heads do not suffice to remove the doubt which must continue to attach to this section of the Didache.

The external evidence for the full text is undoubtedly strong, as is the external evidence for the 'Western non-interpolations' in Luke. But in the case of the Didache, as in the case of the Lukan Gospel, the problem is to explain how, if the long text of the best MSS is original, the short text of other early authorities came to be. In both cases alteration must have been deliberate, and in both cases alteration is easier to explain on the hypothesis of interpolation than on the hypothesis of omission.

The critics whom I am here criticizing have not entirely overlooked so obvious a contention and they have suggested motives which may account for the shorter text. Thus in his last article (*J.T.S.* vol. xxxviii p. 366) Connolly argues that 'in a document [such as the Apostolic Church Order] in which the Two Ways of the Didache is divided up amongst the Apostles, and in which curtailment was desirable, it is easily conceivable that the author would select for omission such parts as were to be found in more authentic form in the New Testament itself'. (It will be recalled that the missing section includes sayings culled from the Sermon on the Mount.) But if we assume that this is the *vera causa* of the shorter text in the Apostolic Church Order we must vary the explanation when we come to the Latin Version and again when we come to the Life of Schnudi. The fundamental weakness of the defence of the longer text is its failure to allow due weight

to the *coincidence* of these three independent authorities in omission.¹ All, it is true, abbreviate in various ways, but that all should independently agree in cutting out this identical passage, containing as it does injunctions so distinctively Christian, is in the highest degree improbable.

We conclude then that the Didache was current in the early centuries in a text which lacked as well as in a text which contained i 3 b-ii 1. It remains to point out that internal evidence strongly suggests that the shorter text is the original.

The Didache opens with the statement that there are two Ways, the one of Life and the other of Death. Next it defines the Way of Life in terms of the two great commands of the Gospel followed by the Golden Rule in the negative form. Then it proceeds: 'Of these words the teaching is this.' Here the texts diverge. In the longer text the sentence just quoted introduces the disputed passage which in its turn ends with a new introductory clause: 'The second commandment of the teaching [is as follows].' Then comes the series of negative injunctions, 'Thou shalt not kill', &c. (parallel to the 'Two Ways' of Barnabas). In the shorter text the series of negative injunctions follows immediately as the exposition of the Way of Life which has just been defined in terms of the two great commandments and the Golden Rule in its negative form.

No one who compares the two can fail to feel that in place of the clumsy transition of the longer text at ii 1 which has been a standing problem to expositors² the omission establishes a natural and orderly sequence. This strongly confirms the argument from general probability as already stated.

Armitage Robinson and Connolly have undoubtedly shewn that there are coincidences in phrasing and thought between the disputed section and other sections of the Didache. These parallels, when taken in conjunction with the strong textual support for the disputed section, may incline us to conjecture a very early date for the interpolation and a provenance not very different from that of the original text. One can easily imagine that Hermas's injunctions on almsgiving

¹ Muienburg's suggestion (*op. cit.* p. 46) that Schnudi and A.C.O. may be reduced to one witness, Schnudi being supposed dependent on A.C.O., is not tenable, since Schnudi reproduces other sections of the Didache which are not found in A.C.O.

² J. A. Robinson *op. cit.* pp. 50f proposed to take i 3 b-end as exposition of the two commands of the Gospel and to refer back 'the second commandment of the teaching' (ii 1) to the negative Golden Rule. He appears to have become dissatisfied with this very strained interpretation, for it disappears from the revised version in *J.T.S.* vol. xxxv pp. 225 ff. But he puts forward no alternative solution.

would seem to an ecclesiastical administrator to call for some interpretative gloss, and he may well have considered also that the negative injunctions of the Way of Life, however good in themselves, called for some amplification from the positive ethics of the Gospel. These good intentions would explain the origin of the interpolated text.

III. The remaining literary problem on which these critics have concentrated their attention is the most obscure and the most important of the three, viz. the literary relationship between Barnabas and the Didache, and here there has been a definite advance.

No one can doubt that there is close relationship of some kind between the concluding chapters of Barnabas and the opening chapters of the Didache. Armitage Robinson, Muilenburg, and Connolly have returned to the opinion of Bryennius and the earlier view of Harnack that Barnabas is the original. This view is defended on two distinct lines of argument: (1) it is maintained that Barnabas is a unity so closely bound together in all its parts that the hypothesis of sources is improbable; (2) it is argued that, while the variations of the Didache from Barnabas are explicable on the supposition of editorial modification by the writer of the Didache, the converse cannot be maintained.

With Streeter, I accept the second of these contentions. The argument has been stated in its most cogent form by Connolly in a detailed study of Didache ch. v 'The Way of Death', with its parallel in Barnabas (*J.T.S.* vol. xxxiii pp. 237 f). Connolly has here shewn that the additions to the catalogue of vices in the Didache as compared with the corresponding list in Barnabas are most of them balanced by the contents of c. iii 1-6, a portion of the Didache's 'Way of Life' which has no counterpart in Barnabas. The inference is almost inevitable that the same hand appended chapter iii 1-6 to the 'Way of Life' and expanded the catalogue of vices in the 'Way of Death'. The converse of this hypothesis would involve the impossible supposition that Barnabas not only dropped Didache iii 1-6 but also carefully excised the corresponding material in Didache ch. v. Connolly further points out that the verbal similarity between Barnabas xx 2 and Didache v 2 is so close that a documentary solution of the problem as a whole is demanded, for it is not open to us to suppose that the variations elsewhere in the chapter are due to failure of memory, when in the two sections named the same disorder appears identically in both texts. So far I accept Connolly's argument; but I would endorse Streeter's contention, with his very relevant appeal to the analogy of the Synoptic problem, that the documentary solution *need* not be the direct use of Barnabas. So far as this argument is concerned, there is no decisive objection to the hypothesis of a common source. But the case for supposing that it is Barnabas and no other 'Two Ways' document which lies behind

the Didache has been strengthened by the observation that parallels between the Didache and Barnabas are not confined to the 'Two Ways', Didache xvi 2 presenting a close parallel to Barnabas iv 9. I shall return to this point later.

As for the unity in language and thought which is claimed for Barnabas, the cross-references which have been accumulated by Armitage Robinson, Muilenburg, and Connolly are impressive, and it can scarcely be questioned that they are fatal to any theory which would treat Barnabas as a mere combination of diverse sources. If Barnabas used sources he has made them his own and worked them into the texture of his book. Thus the doctrine of the Two Ways was certainly in his mind when he wrote i 4, iv 10, v 4, x 10, as well as in the concluding chapters, xviii ff. This, however, and much more may be admitted without ruling out the hypothesis that sources have been employed, and on general grounds it seems to me likely that the anonymous 'Barnabas' is not an entirely new creation. Parallels to some of Barnabas's exegetical fancies are adduced from the letter of Aristeas, and it appears probable that, if his favourite flight of exegesis (ix 8-9) was his own discovery, he is for the most part following up and adapting the labours of predecessors. Again, the transition in ch. xviii to the formal exposition of the Two Ways has generally been felt to be abrupt and is well explained on the hypothesis of a transition to a special source. The hypothesis does not cease to be probable if, with Muilenburg, we accept the plain indication that the absence of the 'Two Ways' from the Latin Version of Barnabas is due to mutilation and not to the survival of an earlier and shorter form of the book.

Connolly adduces cases in which the 'Two Ways', both in Barnabas and in the Didache, seems to him to include phrases specially characteristic of Barnabas. It may be questioned whether they are decisive. The unusual construction *κολλᾶσθαι μετὰ* is found in Barnabas xix 2, xix 6, and also in x 11. Barnabas xix 2 has no parallel in the Didache, but *κολλᾶσθαι μετὰ* reappears in Didache iii 9 (the parallel to Barnabas xix 6). Though unusual, the construction, as Connolly observes, is not unparalleled (LXX Ruth ii 8 21). In the 'Two Ways' both in Barnabas and in the Didache *φθορά* and *φθορεῖς* are used apparently in connexion with *procuratio abortus*. Connolly thinks that Barnabas x 7 lies behind the use in the 'Two Ways'. But it appears to me that the context definitely favours a wider meaning in x 7 rather than the meaning found in the 'Two Ways'.

Two points may now be mentioned which, though not sufficient to establish a case, look in the other direction: (1) The Two Ways of the Didache are characterized as the Way of Life and the Way of Death. In Barnabas, on the other hand, they are the Way of Light

and the Way of Darkness. It is, perhaps, more likely that Barnabas—for him the Devil is 'the Black One'—has changed the more biblical phrase 'Life and Death' into 'Light and Darkness' to suit his favourite imagery, than vice versa. In any case, in ch. xx he says that the Way of the Black One is 'the Way of eternal death', thus, perhaps, betraying the language of his source.

(2) In his careful analysis of the catalogue of vices in Didache v Connolly finds that ἀλαζονεία is the one vice peculiar to the list in the Didache which is not explicable either from Barnabas or from the additional material of ch. iii. But he points out that ἀλαζονεία is present among the vices in Hermas *Mand.* vi 2 5 (cf. also *Mand.* viii 5) where, as he says, 'the writer is certainly dependent on some form of the Two Ways' (*J.T.S.* vol. xxxiii p. 243). After pointing out (*loc. cit.* n. 1) several parallels between Hermas and Barnabas, he concludes: 'I have little doubt that Hermas knew the Epistle of Barnabas and the Two Ways as therein given.' Possibly; but this is a hypothesis which gives no explanation of the agreement between Hermas and the Didache *against* Barnabas, with which the note started. The point, for what it is worth, favours the hypothesis of an earlier source used independently by Barnabas, by Hermas, and by the Didache.

The data, as I judge, do not allow of more than conjecture. I do not feel certain that Connolly is wrong, but I put forward as a conjecture, which seems to me at least as probable as Connolly's view, the hypothesis that both Barnabas and the Didache (and Hermas) depend upon a common source which after elaborating the doctrine of the two Ways led up, like Barnabas and like the Didache (compare also the Apology of Aristides), to a section on the judgement to come; that Barnabas has retained this conclusion in his last chapter, but abbreviated it here in order to end in an epistolary form; and that he has worked in at ch. iv 9 ff some of the material which he has thus sacrificed at the end. On this hypothesis the text Didache xvi 2 = Barnabas iv 9 once stood in the concluding section of the original 'Two Ways'. It will be noticed that the conception of the two Ways is prominent in Barnabas iv 10 (φύγωμεν ἀπὸ πάσης ματαιότητος, μισήσωμεν τελείως τὰ ἔργα τῆς πονηρᾶς ὁδοῦ, cf. also iv 12-13) and that it stands there in close relation to the teaching on the judgement.

II

The conclusions to which the foregoing discussions seem to point are these: (1) There is good reason to believe that Clement of Alexandria knew and quoted from the Didache, though we cannot exclude the possibility that he was quoting not from the Didache but from some

source of the Didache which, though otherwise unknown to us, may have continued in circulation in the Church.

(2) It may be taken as certain that the Didache was known in the third and fourth centuries in a form which lacked the section $\text{i } 3 \beta\text{-ii } 1$, as well as in the strongly attested full form. Internal evidence as well as general probability favours the hypothesis that the shorter form was original. If the shorter form was original, there is no convincing case for supposing literary dependence of the Didache upon Hermas.

(3) The 'Two Ways' of the Didache cannot be the source of the 'Two Ways' of Barnabas, but it is not certain that Barnabas is the source of the 'Two Ways' of the Didache. The hypothesis of a common source is still open.

These conclusions do not carry us very far. If the Didache is not a source either of Hermas or of Barnabas—and I agree with Armitage Robinson, Muilenburg, and Connolly that it is not—there is no absolute bar on the score of literary relations to any later date which can be made plausible in itself, provided that it allows for the currency of the Didache in a Latin dress about the middle of the third century, and for its use in the third-century Didascalia.

On the other hand, even if direct dependence upon both Hermas and Barnabas were much more probable than I think it to be, this dependence would still allow us to assign to the Didache a date in the first half, or quite possibly within the first quarter, of the second century, if on general grounds we think such a dating to be probable. Muilenburg accepts 131 as the date for Barnabas, but the evidence is admittedly very ambiguous and there are good critics who think that Barnabas may well be a generation earlier.¹ So far as Hermas is concerned, the difficulties in accepting the statement of that very unreliable person, the author of the Muratorian Fragment, are notorious, and there is a steady tendency to date *The Shepherd* back into the early years of the second century and the closing years of the first. Thus it would not be impossible, while admitting dependence upon both Hermas and Barnabas, to argue for a date about 120–125; whereas if a common 'Two Ways' source is the fundamental explanation of the relation between Barnabas and the Didache, the date of the Didache might be 100±, although so early a date is by no means a necessary consequence of adopting this literary hypothesis.

To this we must add a negative statement which is of great importance for the argument of this paper: there is no positive literary

¹ See, for example, Dr Lukyn Williams in *J.T.S.* vol. xxxiv pp. 337 ff 'The date of the Epistle of Barnabas'. Dr Lukyn Williams argues that the Epistle must have been written before A.D. 100, and agrees with Funk in preferring a date in the reign of Nerva, Sept. 96–Jan. 98 A.D.

evidence which requires or which even suggests a date later than the middle of the second century.

Here, however, I must for the moment introduce a qualification, for in his last article in this JOURNAL (Oct. 1937) Connolly calls attention to a curious similarity between the form of certain sayings from the Sermon on the Mount as reproduced at the beginning of the ordinary text of the Didache and the form of those same sayings as reproduced by Justin Martyr. Without verbal warrant either from St Matthew or St Luke, the Didache (i 3) gives the injunctions, 'Pray for your enemies', and a little later, 'Love them that *hate you*.'¹ Similarly Justin (*Apol.* i. 15) gives a free citation of the Gospel texts, which, though not in all respects the equivalent of the version in the Didache, begins thus: 'Pray for your enemies and love them *that hate you*.' The same wording reappears in *Dial. c. Tryph.* ch. 133 *fin.* Connolly argues that though either of these variations might easily have arisen from a memory quotation, we should not expect two writers to combine independently these two variations. If, then, the agreement between Justin and the Didache be not accidental he asks whether we should conclude that the Didache with the 'interpolation' was known to Justin, or whether the author of the 'interpolation', if not the Didachist himself, knew Justin. Connolly then proceeds to argue that dependence of Justin on the Didache is not likely, since (1) Justin quotes much more of the Sermon on the Mount than is to be found in the Didache, and (2) his quotations shew none of the additional matter of the Didache. Thus he is led to conclude with 'the interesting question: Did the "interpolator" of the Didache—or possibly even the Didachist himself—know Justin?'

I am not myself sure that it is necessary to postulate any literary connexion to account for this similarity, for all the terms used are present in the Gospel texts and the rearrangement is very slight. But if it is thought necessary to postulate literary connexion I do not think we shall hesitate which alternative to prefer. If Justin were familiar with the Didache, it would be very natural that the phrasing of the Gospel sayings as there reproduced in an authoritative catechetical form should linger in his mind and affect the form of his own quotation. On the other hand, the supposition that the author—or the interpolator—of the Didache in composing his catechetical form should have been directly influenced by casual variations of these Gospel texts as they occur embedded in the writings of the prolix and quotation-loving Justin is surely not plausible.

¹ Mt. v 44 gives ἀγαπᾶτε τοὺς ἐχθροὺς ὑμῶν καὶ προσεύχεσθε ὑπὲρ τῶν διακόντων ὑμᾶς and Luke vi 27, 28 ἀγαπᾶτε τοὺς ἐχθροὺς ὑμῶν, καλῶς ποιεῖτε τοῖς μισοῦσιν ὑμᾶς, εὐλογεῖτε τοὺς καταραμένους ὑμᾶς, προσεύχεσθε περὶ τῶν ἐπηρεαζόντων ὑμᾶς.

Therefore I reaffirm without qualification the negative statement which I have already put forward: there is no literary evidence which requires or which even suggests a date for the *Didache* later than the middle of the second century.

III

Since literary arguments as to the date of the *Didache* are thus inconclusive, we must turn to wider considerations based on the contents of the document itself and known circumstances of history. It is not too much to say that until quite recently all the three scholars whose views we have been examining have in their published writings left these wider considerations almost entirely on one side. Muilenburg, for instance, after devoting almost all his book to the single question of the literary relation between Barnabas and the *Didache* passes at once to the claim that the *Didache* may well date from a hundred years later than has usually been supposed. He makes no attempt to give precision to the problem by reference to our not inconsiderable knowledge of the conditions of church life at the close of the second century and the beginning of the third. Armitage Robinson was tantalizingly vague in his suggestions as to the date and motive of the author. 'His object may have been', he says, 'to recall the Church of his own day to a greater simplicity by presenting this picture of the primitive Christian society.'¹ As to a possible period, he threw out two widely differing hints: 'I should find it rather hard', he wrote in 1912, 'to conceive that it was written after Montanism had attained any considerable vogue. For from the orthodox standpoint there is too much said about Prophets, and from the Montanist standpoint there is too little.'² In the text of the *Donnellan Lectures*, on the other hand, he suggested that it might date from the third century.³ 'Some points of vocabulary', he added, 'which cannot be dealt with here, would be more easily explained if that were the case.'⁴ Until quite recently Connolly had rigorously restricted himself in his published work to the literary problem, but he was well aware that the historical question must sooner or later be faced if a date much later than that commonly received was to win acceptance. Those two eminent scholars', he acutely observes, 'the late Dean Armitage Robinson and the late Professor F. C. Burkitt, though they would not date the *Didache* earlier than the second half of the second century, were both at a loss to account for its apparent "archaism". Was this little Church manual to be regarded as a piece of pure antiquarianism, or what?' He then

¹ *Barnabas, Hermas and the Didache* p. 83.

² *Ibid.* p. 103.

³ *Ibid.* p. 83.

⁴ So far as I know he did not deal with this point further.

continues: 'Antiquarian I believe it to be, but in *method* only, not in motive. I am unable to conceive of a Christian writer of the later second century sitting down to draw, simply for the interest of the thing, a picture of Church life as he supposed it to have been in the days of the Apostles.' The difficulty in which Armitage Robinson and Burkitt leave us could not be more clearly put; nor is it easy to withhold assent from this statement of the problem which is raised on the hypothesis of a late date: 'A second-century or early third-century tract on Church order, like most other writings of the period, would naturally have been occasional—written in the interests of or in opposition to some form of novelty, or to repel attack. What occasion then can be assigned for the writing of the Didache at about that date? In what interest was it put forward?'¹

The answer which Connolly propounds to the question thus clearly stated, viz. that the Didache was composed in the interest of Montanism, is not entirely new, for shortly after the first publication of the document Hilgenfeld argued that the book shewed traces of Montanism. But this view of Hilgenfeld's, as well as the opposed view of Bryennius that the author was concerned to oppose Montanism, had been very generally discarded, so that Connolly's thesis is a fresh factor in those recent discussions which form the subject of this paper.

Connolly supports this interpretation of the Didache by arguing (1) that the prophets of the Didache are more important persons in the community than we have any reason to suppose prophets to have been at the beginning of the second century; (2) that the provision in the Didache of a settlement for the prophets agrees with the account of the proceedings of Montanus recorded by the anti-Montanist writer Apollonius;² and (3) that the object of the Didache is not, as is stated by Streeter and others, to provide an alternative for a prophetic ministry which is obsolescent, but rather to make provision for a prophetic ministry alongside a recognized and established hierarchy.

I pass over for the moment the supposed discrepancy between the conditions of the prophetic ministry presupposed in the Didache and those of the early second century in order to concentrate on the positive arguments alleged in favour of a Montanist origin of the book. Little weight, as it seems to me, attaches to the similarity between the Didache and the evidence of Apollonius as to a provision for the prophets from the offerings of the faithful. Wherever professional prophets exist the problem of their maintenance must always arise. There is nothing here which we need think of as distinctive of Montanism. Much more important is the interpretation adopted by

¹ *Downside Review* vol. lv July 1937.

² *Apud Eus. H.E.* v 18.

Connolly of the relation between prophets and the official ministry as described in the Didache.

Here I do not see how to avoid the conclusion that Connolly's interpretation involves a complete inversion of the evidence. The text of the Didache states, at any rate it necessarily implies, that the true prophet has an unassailable position in the Church. So far from asserting a claim for a new prophetic ministry, the Didache assumes that the prophet who is a prophet indeed must be accepted and obeyed. To question his authority or to submit his utterances to any test is to be guilty of the gravest presumption. But at once the document passes on to explain that not every one who speaks in the spirit *is* a prophet; that there are prophets and false prophets; and that to determine whether or not the seeming prophet really is a prophet certain tests must be applied. That is not the tone we should expect from a champion of a 'new prophecy', but it entirely suits the role of an ecclesiastical administrator who is trying to regulate a prophetic ministry which is being exploited by unworthy representatives. Again, Connolly challenges Streeter's statement that in face of the problem of the false prophets 'the Didachist endeavours to strengthen the position of the Bishops and Deacons', but he neither quotes nor discusses the text which most clearly supports, and indeed requires, the interpretation which Streeter here puts upon the document—I mean the last words of Didache xv 1 when, after enjoining the appointment of bishops and deacons who are 'worthy of the Lord, meek men, not covetous of money, true and well tried', he adds the significant words 'for they too minister to you the ministry of the prophets and teachers': *ὑμῖν γὰρ λειτουργοῦσι καὶ αὐτοὶ τὴν λειτουργίαν τῶν προφητῶν καὶ διδασκάλων*. No Montanist could happily accept this lofty interpretation of the ministry of bishops and deacons.

Along with these significant discrepancies between the intentions of the Didachist and the attitude of Montanists, we may observe an equally noteworthy omission. If the Didachist were, as is suggested, a Montanist or a crypto-Montanist, looking for N.T. precedents to strengthen the case for the 'new prophecy', why does he fail to introduce the N.T. precedents which might have given such valuable support to the cause of the women who with Montanus were the chief organs of the prophetic spirit? Why does he speak only of prophets and say not a word of prophetesses?

The second feature of the Didache to which Connolly appeals in support of his thesis is the instruction with regard to fasting. He recalls that Montanist stringency with regard to the obligation and duration of the weekly fasts on Wednesdays and Fridays was a main point at issue between Montanists and the great Church. Here it only

seems necessary to quote Connolly's own admission that the language of the *Didache* may be interpreted to mean that 'the assignment of Wednesday and Friday as fasting days is not to be understood as a command that those days be kept every week and by all, but merely specifies them as the days which Christians should *choose* for their fasts'. If this is a possible interpretation—and I do not see how this can be questioned—then the *Didache* gives no guidance on those questions as to fasting which were in dispute between Montanists and Catholics, but merely states, or may be understood merely to state, what every Christian of the day would have accepted.

It appears, then, that the *Didache* contains nothing which can be regarded as specifically Montanist; that it omits what a Montanist had every motive to include; and that it presupposes an attitude towards prophets and prophecy fundamentally different from the Montanist attitude.

There is one further consideration to which, very surprisingly, Connolly makes no allusion. We know that in the third and fourth centuries the *Didache* had come to hold a place of high honour in the Church and that it was used as a source by the authors of the *Didascalia*, of the *Apostolic Constitutions*, and of the *Apostolic Church Order*. Now the history of the writings of Tertullian will shew that in certain circumstances the works of a Christian author might continue to be studied by orthodox Christians in spite of a taint of Montanism. But this would be a very weak analogy to the extraordinary literary history which we should be obliged to postulate on the assumption that the *Didache* was Montanist. Tertullian was a writer of genius and a magnificent defender of the common Christian faith. The *Didache*, on the other hand, is a pedestrian composition, concerned with Church Order and withal representing a type of Church Order which on its merits could hardly be expected to commend itself to Catholic Christians of the age of Hippolytus or of Cyprian. It seems difficult to explain the position of honour which in fact the *Didache* held except on the assumption that it had been long established with a weighty official status. If, however, this Church Order originated in the late second century with a movement which early fell into schism—a schism which was never healed—how came it to be adopted by the fully developed Catholic Church of the third and fourth centuries?

It is sometimes suggested by those who have been influenced by the prevailing uncertainty about the *Didache* and its provenance—I may mention Muilenburg and Mr Vokes¹—that the whole history of Christian Institutions from N.T. days onwards may have to be rewritten when the *Didache* has found its proper place at a comparatively late date.

¹ F. E. Vokes *The Riddle of the Didache* (S.P.C.K. 1938).

I am inclined to think that the problems of reconstruction will be most severely felt by the historians of the late second and third centuries rather than by the historians of the apostolic and sub-apostolic age. It will be of great interest to watch the further fortunes of Connolly's theory. Doubters as to the early date of the Didache ought, if they are not prepared to follow Connolly, to be looking for another solution. I question whether, if they succeed, the early history of Christian institutions will be very fundamentally affected. No doubt it is true that the Didache has figured prominently in recent histories of the early Church, and, if it be the early document that it is usually supposed to be, quite rightly so. It has served to fill out the picture of early church life and has given substance to what otherwise must have remained conjecture. But the main problems have not been raised by the Didache. What impresses me about the document is the easy manner in which it appears to fit in with such evidence as we have from other sources. In some way or another the leadership in the Church which in St Paul's day lay first with apostles, then prophets, and thirdly teachers, passed into the hands of bishops, presbyters, and deacons. The Didache apparently illuminates the process of transition, but even if we had no Didache we should still know that the transition had actually occurred. In the Didache the apostles, though they still stand at the head, seem to be fading out. The introduction of apostles is perhaps a real touch of archaism though, I suspect, unconscious archaism. In the Didache, as in Hermas, a firm tradition still calls for a mention of apostles, but practical interest in the Didache—and to a less degree in Hermas—centres upon prophets. But the prophets are on the point of yielding primacy of place to the ministry of bishops and deacons. Even without the Didache, we might have surmised that something of the kind must have happened.

I cannot here deal adequately with the large problems raised by the directions in the Didache concerning the Eucharist, but I must briefly direct attention to the serious problem which these are going to raise for the church historian of the late second and third centuries if it must fall to him to account for the origin of the document. In a second paper in the *Downside Review*¹ Connolly has grappled boldly with the question. He finds it impossible to think that the Didachist—writing *ex hypothesi* at the end of the second century—intended the prayers and directions of Didache ix and x to apply to the Eucharist at all. He draws a sharp distinction between the rite of ch. ix-x and the Sunday service of ch. xiv. The latter alone, he thinks, was a Eucharist, while the earlier passage merely gave direction for an Agape. Connolly admits that he can offer no parallel for the use of Ἐὐχαριστία to denote an Agape as distinguished from a Eucharist. None the less, he feels driven to accept this heroic

¹ 'Agape and Eucharist in the Didache', *Downside Review* vol. lv Oct. 1937.

solution. But this one word—taken in conjunction with the prominent position of the directions—is decisive. It is surely impossible that any Christian of any age could use the word *Εὐχαριστία* to denote a rite which was not the Eucharist. If we go back to the practice which from other evidence we know to have been general at an earlier period when the blessing and partaking of the Bread and the Cup were part of a common meal, the problems are greatly eased, and those which remain are found to link up in a remarkable fashion with other problems raised in other quarters. Here, again, it seems to me probable that the Didache represents a period of transition. There may be this much truth in Connolly's distinction, that the Sunday Eucharist of ch. xiv may have been beginning to have an independent life of its own apart from the meal. But it seems necessary to suppose that the compiler of the book thought it natural for the Eucharist to be attached to a meal. The Eucharistic prayers of the Didache may well be older than the Didache itself.

I think it is relevant in this year 1938 to recall the judgement of that great critic J. B. Lightfoot when towards the end of his life he was confronted for the first time with the newly recovered Didache. Lightfoot had worked out his views on the history of the ministry eighteen years before the Didache appeared.¹ The Didache was published by Bryennius in 1884 just after the appearance of the first edition of Lightfoot's *Ignatius*. In the second edition of his *Ignatius* Lightfoot referred to the new document. He criticized the comparatively late date which Harnack then advocated, and put forward the view that it dated from the later decades of the first century or the beginning of the second century. The point which I wish to make here is that Lightfoot felt that the evidence of the Didache fitted in with the conditions of the sub-apostolic age as he had already come to know them. 'The remarkable document entitled *Διδαχὴ τῶν δώδεκα ἀποστόλων* given to the world by Bryennius . . . seems to me to confirm very strongly the historical views put forward in the Essay to which I have referred. Nor does it necessitate any modification of what I have written in this discussion on the genuineness of the Epistles of Ignatius.'² So it has been. The Didache raises many questions to which in this paper I have made no reference, but taken as a whole it has been found to fit in, on the assumption of a relatively early date, with conclusions otherwise attained. It has yet to be shewn that it will fit easily into the conditions of any period considerably later than the first three decades of the second century.

J. M. CREED.

¹ J. B. Lightfoot *Saint Paul's Epistle to the Philippians* dissertation i 'The Christian Ministry' (1st ed. 1868).

² J. B. Lightfoot *The Apostolic Fathers* part ii, S. Ignatius, S. Polycarp (2nd ed. 1889) vol. i p. 390 n.