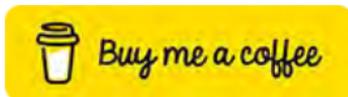


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The word was rare, and the copyists of Prudentius, like those of Hilary, as I imagine, were puzzled by it and offered substitutes for it. But it is not a bad word, and it would suit this passage well enough:—‘When the glory of Adam and of the perishable body had been thrown to the ground.’

III 25. The word *perlex*, or *pellex*, is unknown to the dictionaries. Dreves, in his reprint of these verses, emends *perlex erat* into *perlexerat*, which is very simple. Dreves had not thought of comparing with this poem the passage of Hilary's Commentary on St Matthew to which I have referred; the comparison makes his emendation more tempting. But Dreves curiously leaves *Adae* in the genitive, which of course is impossible with *pellexerat*. If *pellexerat* had been the right reading no scribe would have gone out of his way to change *Adam* into *Adae*. We must therefore find something to suit *Adae*. At first I thought of *pellax*, a word which in itself needs no recommendation. But the meaning of *pellax* is not quite what we want; and I have no doubt now that the MS is perfectly right, and that *perlex* is the word. *Allex* and *illex* are well-recognized Latin words connected with *allicio*, *illicio*. *Pellex* would be a parallel form connected with *pellicio*. I think, therefore, that we may add it to our dictionaries. I need hardly say that it has nothing to do with the word *paelex*, a concubine or rival wife, though that is sometimes barbarously spelt *pellex* in the printed books, to make it seem to be connected with *pellicio*.

A. J. MASON.

THE INTERPOLATIONS IN ST CYPRIAN'S *DE UNITATE ECCLESIAE.*

DOM JOHN CHAPMAN has earned the admiration and gratitude of all who are interested in the text of St Cyprian and in the history of its transmission. Since Dr von Hartel no one has contributed so much as he to our knowledge of a subject, the intricacy of which only those who have attempted to unravel it can appreciate. He has lately added to our debt by three articles in the *Revue Bénédictine* (nos. 3 and 4, 1902, and no. 1, 1903) in which, whether or no we regard him as somewhat hasty in his main conclusion, a substantial addition is made to our acquaintance with St Cyprian.

It is well known that in *De Unitate* § 4 a variation of the text, of no great theological importance, has been for upwards of three centuries

the cause of strife. Was it, or was it not, an interpolation made in order to claim the authority of St Cyprian for views which he did not hold? And in after-times was it foisted into the printed text with the same object by those who were well aware of its spuriousness? It is impossible not to regret the acrimony with which the attack has often been urged. Yet it must be remembered that this was but one point in a long line of battle, and that the same spirit must inevitably pervade all the combatants in a common cause. Again, it is only to-day that we know the extent to which ancient Christian literature was infected with a habit which it is too severe to name forgery, and which was too prevalent to deserve in any particular case an extreme censure. Hermann Reuter in his *Augustinische Studien* would hardly have spoken on the subject so strongly as he does had he been writing now. The charge is one that should neither be made nor repelled with excessive vigour.

This particular literary difficulty is well stated by Dom Chapman. There is the accepted text of the passage, so well attested that grave doubt must rest upon its competitor; and there is the competitor in two forms. In M Q and some other MSS it takes the place of what may be called the authentic text; in T¹ and its allies and in well-known early citations it appears in a conflate form, the two texts being somewhat clumsily combined. It is curious that the evidence for this impossible combination should be much stronger than that for the alternative text in the pure form; it reaches back if not to the third century, as Dom Chapman holds, at least well towards it.

There is nothing inconsistent either in style or in thought in the so-called interpolation with Cyprianic authorship, and Dom Chapman has not strengthened his case by a minute research for likenesses to undoubted passages of the same writer and by still more minute discussion of the probability of a forger acting exactly as the author of the 'interpolation' has done². But the few clauses in question give no scope for an exact determination of the authorship, if the conclusions so often adventured on grounds of purely internal evidence can ever be called exact. Dom Chapman passes the bounds of criticism when he

¹ It is one of Dom Chapman's merits that he divined, and afterwards verified the correctness of his conjecture, that this important MS is in line with the rest of its group.

² On p. 48, vol. 1903, is a singularly unfortunate argument. In a cognate passage St Cyprian has *fundata est ecclesia*. In *Un.* 4 the words are in the order *fundata ecclesia est*. Dom Chapman reasons that a forger would have copied exactly, and that therefore the 'interpolator' was no forger. But the words form part of the clause *qui cathedram Petri super quam (or quem) fundata ecclesia est deservit*, which gives a proper rhythmical ending. It was impossible for any one with a tinge of rhetorical culture to end a clause with a double dactyl. Dom Chapman should have consulted the Abbé Bayard.

claims that no one living in St Cyprian's day but St Cyprian himself could be the author. He should have recalled the anonymous writings which pass under the name of 'Pseudo-Cyprian'. For the Cyprianic authorship of one of these we have the arguments of Wölfflin himself, to whom the study of late Latin owes as much as that of the Catacombs owes to de Rossi, and he has stamped with his approval the similar argument of Matzinger on behalf of another¹. If their conclusions concerning the *De Spectaculis* and *De Bono Pudicitiae* have not been generally accepted, the doubt has been based not on discrepancy of style but on wider grounds of inadequate evidence. Other writings in the same group have strongly marked Cyprianic characteristics, or rather characteristics of a rhetorical school to which both he and their authors belonged; notably the *De Laude Martyrii*, which is more Cyprianic than Cyprian himself, though its Biblical citations shew that it cannot be his. It may be that Dom Chapman accepts as St Cyprian's everything that in style resembles his undoubted writings, and in that case there will be one sole writer who possesses this marked style. But at least he should have told us of this belief of his; and we should still have had to decide whether these scraps of 'interpolation' contain anything definite enough to compel us to father them upon St Cyprian. Most of us will be content to hold that there is nothing in them to prejudice us in advance against his further arguments.

These are based upon history. We know that the deacon Felicissimus was a most formidable opponent of his bishop, and the *De Unitate*, with the text in the accredited form, is perfectly suited for the purposes of being read at Carthage and dispatched to Rome as an indictment of him and his party. It presents the author and his antagonist as he would have wished them to be seen both in the light of present circumstances and of permanent principles. Such a document must have been preserved and circulated; and in fact it gained, and has retained, a circulation and an authority which is truly surprising if we accept Dom Chapman's account of what followed. It was recited at the Council held soon after the Easter of 251, and had been prepared with a view to the exigencies of the moment; a consideration which, in combination with its rhetorical character, might have warned Dom Chapman not to press its terms as though it were a leisurely scholastic treatise. But at the very time when the Council was assembled at Carthage, in April and probably early in the month, came the conflicting messages from Cornelius and Novatian, each announcing his election

¹ It is true that Wölfflin in his *Archiv* ix 319 has changed his mind, and now follows a common, though surely ill grounded, opinion that these two treatises are by Novatian. But he still holds that their style is in the main that of Cyprian, which is the point with which we are concerned.

to the see of Rome¹. A contested election was an opportunity for making their weight felt which the bishops of the great sees never neglected, and Cornelius had to suffer anxiety until St Cyprian strengthened his position by a public recognition. It was made secure by the secession from Novatian of the great body of Roman confessors, to whom Cyprian wrote, as soon as he heard of their decision, a letter of congratulation (Ep. 54) to which he appended copies of the *De Lapsis* and the *De Unitate*. It was in this copy that Dom Chapman holds the change was made by the author; a change which, as he rightly says, makes the immediate context more suitable to the new circumstances than the vaguer language which had been employed in regard to the schism of Felicissimus.

This startling suggestion, advanced as a conjecture, but as one which 'accords perfectly with the circumstances', must now be examined. The first point to strike a student is the importance and the publicity of the transaction. It was to the credit of the confessors and to the obvious advantage of Cornelius that this budget from Carthage should be circulated as widely as possible. Throughout the Empire, and in the provinces where Latin literature was read as well as in those of Greek speech, Novatian communities were rising. This authoritative antidote would surely be disseminated by all the means which the world-wide connexions of the Roman Church put at Cornelius's disposal. And we should expect, if the earlier version remained in existence, to find that it had escaped oblivion as narrowly as the African type of the Old Latin Bible has done. Just as the Italian, perhaps the specifically Roman, type of the Old Latin is richly represented in comparison with the few and fragmentary witnesses to the African text, so must the orthodox reading in *De Unitate* § 4 have descended to us, if at all, in one or two MSS, and have laboured under the inevitable suspicion of spuriousness. Yet Dom Chapman holds that the revised text which St Cyprian sent to Rome was neglected by its recipients and lingered in obscurity till after the author's death. Then the first collection of his writings was promptly made, and in one of the copies which reached Rome some unknown hand made a marginal insertion, over against the place where the first version was written, of St Cyprian's revision. From this one copy by substitution or conflation the later text has reached us through a few channels, while the main stream of tradition has carried down in triumph the uncorrected draft. Setting

¹ It may be worth while incidentally to point out how the delay of a month in the arrival of the tidings of an event which, in the case of Cornelius, had happened on March 5, is accounted for by the fact that the navigation of the Mediterranean was opened in April. This may induce us to put the Council a little later in that month than Archbishop Benson has done.

aside the question whether St Cyprian, an expert literary man and accustomed to circulate his own writings, would have allowed one of them to go forth in a double shape, is it probable that the history of the passage should have shaped itself as it has done if Dom Chapman's conjecture is right? And could not a case almost as strong be made out for the 'interpolation' as the original, which St Cyprian failed to supersede, though he had a large measure of success in the attempt, by the corrected version with which we are familiar in Hartef's text?¹ Is it not more reasonable to acquiesce in the old-fashioned view that there has really been an interpolation, and at the same time to clear our minds of modern notions of literary propriety and of an indignation which is an anachronism?

It was perhaps inevitable that a large part of Dom Chapman's space should be occupied with well-worn controversial topics. He says what we should expect him to say, and says it well; and he delivers some telling strokes. Father Puller, for instance, is keenly and not unjustly criticized for his explanation of the word *principalis*; in illustration of which, however, there are interesting passages to be cited which have escaped the notice of both combatants. In fact, Dom Chapman more than holds his own in the points which he has chosen for attack. But we must bear in mind that they are his choice, and that there are weak points in his own armour which become very conspicuous as he develops his argument. And it is one of the merits of the Papacy that it taught Europe that the more skilful duellist has not necessarily the better cause. But, after all, no one has anything to gain by the controversy. The one side may rightly make the most of the foundation upon St Peter; the other has an equal right to dwell upon the *pari consortio præditi et honoris et potestatis*, which is the one passage where, unconsciously no doubt, Dom Chapman seems a little to fail in candour in his explanation. It is a drawn battle; the authority of St Cyprian can be equally urged on both sides, even though his emphasis be on that which is the less acceptable to the learned Benedictine. But is there one of the Fathers, down to and including St Bernard, who can be cited by any school as a constant witness in its favour?

E. W. WATSON.

¹ I confess that on first reading Dom Chapman I was greatly taken with this idea:—both Cyprianic, and therefore both have survived, but that which had his final sanction with the greater weight of attestation.