

ever been devised for the benefit of man :—such scepticism is not, as it sometimes assumes to be, peculiarly rational and philosophical, but is plainly unreasonable, and is wrong.

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TATIAN'S DIATESSARON.

HAVING seen good reasons for accepting the conclusions of Moesinger and Harnack, that we really have before us in a Latin translation Ephraem's Commentary on Tatian's Diatessaron, and consequently in great measure the Diatessaron itself, it remains to enquire more particularly into the extent and accuracy of our new acquisition. This enquiry seems to lead to at least one conclusion which has been hitherto generally doubted, and which must therefore be advanced with some diffidence. But the evidence in its favour will, we think, appear considerable, and the consequences it invites or suggests are of great interest. This conclusion is that in the Harmony of which we owe the preservation to Victor of Capua, contained in the famous *Codex Fuldensis*, and which, in place of the four Gospels, presents us with a single Gospel, composed out of the four, we possess a document which is at all events very closely allied with Tatian's Diatessaron. Indeed the impression of the present writer is that it exhibits substantially the document on which Ephraem commented, with some occasional alterations of order and some few additions; while there is also the important difference that in Victor's *Evangelium* Tatian has been transferred into the Latin text of St. Jerome, whereas Ephraem commented upon him in a Syriac translation. This conclusion, for reasons we will presently mention, would give Tatian a very curious and interesting place in the history of German Christianity;

but we will proceed at once to consider the facts immediately in question.

It is easily seen that Ephraem's exposition makes no pretence to be a continuous commentary upon the work before him. It passes from one salient text in the Evangelical narrative to another, frequently implying, in the observations it makes, a recognition of all that lies between them, but not always distinctly quoting those intervening statements or commenting upon them. Thus, at the outset, in dealing with St. Luke's narrative of the conception and birth of John the Baptist, the texts specifically quoted are St. Luke i. 5, 6, 14, 15, 76, 13, 18, 17, 24, 26, 32, 36, 38, 43, 48, 45, 42, 78, 79. Again, in the narrative of the visit of Nicodemus to our Lord the only texts quoted are St. John iii. 13, 12, 10, 8, 4, 5, 6, 14. The narrative in fact is taken for granted, and only a few leading points are emphasized. Sometimes only a Verse or two out of a whole Chapter is noticed. Thus from the 21st Chapter of St. John, all that is quoted is from the last two words of Verse 19, "Follow me," to the end of Verse 22, but the commentary, which speaks of our Lord teaching Simon *per interrogationes*, implies that the rest of the narrative was in the context.

What we have preserved to us, therefore, is a kind of selection of leading texts. They enable us to form a clear conception of the general course of the harmony as a whole, but they imply a great deal more as their context and background; nor can we be justified in concluding that a passage or a verse which is not commented upon by Ephraem was not present in Tatian—a consideration which bars some negative conclusions towards which Harnack points. The verses themselves which we have above quoted are printed in spaced type by Moesinger; and from some of his notes it may be concluded, though the statement is nowhere made explicitly, that these quotations are marked by red ink in the original MS. It is evident that out of such

materials as these we could but partially reconstruct the work to which they belong, but they are sufficient to enable us to test very closely the claims of any similar work which has been treated as Tatian's.

Now Victor of Capua tells us that, about the year 540, a volume came into his hands which contained the four Gospels made into one. It was without a title, and he could not discover the name of the author. But he found in Eusebius two notices of such Harmonies, one in the *Epistle to Carpianus*, describing a work by Ammonius of Alexandria, another in the *Hist. Ecc.*, iv. 29, describing the work of Tatian. The Harmony of Ammonius is said to have given St. Matthew continuously, and to have appended to his text throughout the passages of the other Evangelists. This, as Victor rightly concluded, could not be the work before him, since, although it mainly followed the guidance of St. Matthew in the order of the narrative, it by no means followed him so closely as Eusebius's account implies. Victor accordingly was satisfied to attribute it to Tatian, without taking account of difficulties which we shall have to notice. He made some curious errors in his Preface which we pass over as of no consequence to our present argument; but he spent great labour in correcting the text, and supplying it with references to the Gospels themselves, and we owe to his care the present invaluable Codex at Fulda. The real difficulties in the way of his supposition consist in the fact, that, in more than one particular, the Harmony fails to present the characteristics which, as we have seen, are known to have been those of Tatian's work. Tatian is said to have begun with the words, "In the beginning was the Word," whereas in Victor's Codex St. Luke's four verses of preface precede these words from St. John. Again, it was an essential characteristic of Tatian's work to omit the genealogies; but both the genealogies are

given in the Codex. These objections would probably be sufficient to decide the question, as they are considered to do by Dr. Lightfoot (*Contemporary Review*, May, 1877), in the absence of strong evidence on the other side. But if there were other good reasons for believing that Victor's book is substantially Tatian's Harmony, such difficulties might, it would seem, be very simply accounted for by supposing that the Diatessaron which, as we have seen, was popular even among the orthodox, had been in some parts supplemented and corrected for their use. This being the state of the case, we proceed to explain what is the new evidence afforded by Dr. Moesinger's publication.

Observing that the order of the quotations in the opening of Ephraem's Commentary followed closely that in the Codex Fuldensis, we proceeded to compare them throughout, underlining every passage in the Codex which is quoted in Ephraem, and marking every quotation in Ephraem according to the page in the Codex, and *vice versâ*; and the result is to shew that for the most part the two proceed *pari passu*, and more particularly that they agree together in their order in a number of instances in which that order is a very remarkable one. Harnack's observation of one such case (*Zeitschrift für Kirchengesch.*, 1881, p. 90) led him to throw out the enquiry whether there might not be some relation between the two works; but he seems to have had no anticipation of the close correspondence which actually exists.

The first seventeen Chapters in the Codex contain in the same order the passages which are commented upon in the first four Chapters of Ephraem. We enumerate their contents as they stand at the head of the Codex; and it is worth observing that although the first few verses of the text of the Codex are St. Luke's Preface, the first *Chapter*, as thus given, is "In principio verbum," shewing that it

was felt that these words were substantially the commencement of the Harmony. Then follows the account of the priesthood of Zacharias, the message of the angel Gabriel to Mary, the nativity of John the Baptist, the generation and nativity of Christ, the appearance of the angel to the shepherds, the circumcision of our Lord, the visit of the Magi, the flight of our Lord and his parents to Egypt, the massacre of the Innocents, our Lord's return from Egypt, his visit to Jerusalem and his staying behind in the temple. Then follows the appearance of John the Baptist, our Lord's baptism by him, our Lord's temptation, the narrative of John's two disciples following Jesus, and the incident of Philip and Nathanael. Chapter xviii. in the Codex, giving St. Luke's account of the commencement of our Lord's ministry in the synagogue of Nazareth, to which is added, from St. Matthew and St. Mark, the brief summary of his message—"The time is fulfilled, repent and believe the gospel, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand"—is passed over by Ephraem in this place, but a reference is made to it later on. Then follows, at the end of Ephraem's Chapter iv., a heading which perplexes Moesinger, and at the meaning of which Harnack only guesses: "*Ordo et solennitas apostolorum Domini.*" A few brief comments follow, speaking of the apostles as having been catchers of fish, and as having become catchers of men. Moesinger says in a note, "Nescio quo ex libro ecclesiastico sequentia desumpta sint." Harnack says, "Probably the author placed here an account of the twelve apostles." The point, however, seems at once explained by the Codex. There follows in Chapters xix. xx. xxi. xxii. and xxiii. a succession of passages from St. Matthew, St. Luke and St. John, describing the various calls of the disciples, the miraculous draught of fish which led to Peter's falling on his knees and to our Lord's assurance to him that henceforth he should catch men, our Lord's returning to Judæa

with his disciples, and there baptizing, or rather his disciples baptizing, and finally the enumeration of the Twelve in St. Matthew x.¹ That this important subject should be thus introduced in its entirety by both Harmonies at this point is a striking illustration of their similarity; while the fact that Ephraem should be content to notice it in a single brief paragraph shows very clearly the fragmentary nature of his work.

At this point we encounter an apparent break in the parallelism of the two texts. The Codex proceeds to give the Sermon on the Mount, as though an essential part of the commission of the Twelve. Whereas the next Chapter, the 5th, in Ephraem's Harmony, notices the marriage in Cana, recurs to the appointment of the Twelve, and the night's fishing of St. Peter, and finally treats the healing of the paralytic, and the disciples plucking the ears of corn on the sabbath. Even here, however, it is remarkable that there are indications of agreement. For while the Codex gives the marriage feast in Cana immediately after the Sermon and the commission of the Twelve, and the other incidents occur in the same connexion, it is observable that in its 19th Chapter, in connexion with the story of St. Peter fishing, and before the Sermon, it interpolates from the narrative of Cana the single verse (John ii. 11) "and his disciples believed on him." The idea of the connexion between the miracle in Cana and the commission of the Apostles is thus present in both. Then follows in Ephraem the Sermon, and the mission of the Twelve in St. Matthew x., a part of which in the Codex likewise follows the Sermon, and is combined with the mission of the Seventy in Luke x. The incidents, in a word, in this portion of Ephraem's Harmony, which occupies his Chapters v.-viii., are all in

¹ St. Matt. iv. 17-22. St. Mark i. 15. St. Luke v. 1-11. St. John ii. 11. St. Matt. ix. 9. St. John iii. 22-iv. 3. St. Matt. iv. 12-16-iv. 23-v. 10; x. 2-4. St. Mark iii. 13, 14. St. Luke iv. 42, 43; vi. 13, 20.

Victor's Harmony, and in a similar connexion, though not in the same order. But after we pass to Chapter ix. of Ephraem, which commences with John's message to our Lord enquiring whether he were the Christ, the two fall once more into agreement and with only occasional and unimportant exceptions they run side by side to the close. In this portion is contained the great bulk of both works, occupying from Chapters ix. to xxii. in Ephraem's work, and from l xv. to clxxxii. in Victor's. The order, moreover, in these portions of the work is, in some instances, so marked and peculiar as to preclude any supposition of its having been accidentally adopted by two independent writers. Thus in both, immediately before the particular starting-point which we have just named—the message of John—comes the incident of our Lord's visit to Martha and Mary. After the discourse in St. John respecting the bread from heaven, there follows immediately in Ephraem, but in the Codex with the interval of a few verses on the ceremonial particularity of the Pharisees, the saying "Whosoever curseth father or mother, let him die the death; but ye say," etc. In Ephraem the connexion is obscure; the Codex renders the connexion quite plain. But the most remarkable of these special illustrations is furnished by the position assigned to the visit of Nicodemus to our Lord. By both Harmonies it is placed during our Lord's last visit to Jerusalem, after his triumphal entry into the Holy City. Another instance may be mentioned in the same connexion, in which the Codex serves to explain Ephraem's order. In Ephraem we have in immediate succession the drying up of the fig-tree, the visit of Nicodemus, and the unjust judge. Why should the unjust judge appear in such a connexion? But in the Codex, we have first the visit of Nicodemus, then the drying up of the fig-tree, and then the unjust judge; and the latter parable is evidently introduced as falling in with the lesson of earnestness in prayer which our Lord urged

on the disciples from the miracle. It is difficult not to suppose that, in this instance at all events, the Codex represents the original order of the Harmony; but it is not so easy to decide whether the order in which Ephraem's scholia treat the incidents is the order in which they stood in his text, or whether he accidentally disregarded it.

With all this continuous and specific parallelism, it seems difficult to avoid the conclusion that in the Codex Fuldensis we have, in the Hieronymian version, substantially the same work as that on which Ephraem commented, although occasionally supplemented, and, in a few instances, partially re-arranged. The additions, however, can hardly have been numerous. Looking through the copy of the Codex Fuldensis, in which, as has been said above, the passages actually quoted by Ephraem have been marked, there appear to be only 19 pages out of 137 from which some quotation has not been made. Even those omissions are sometimes only apparent, as an unmarked page may belong to a passage commencing or concluding on the one next to it, and the marked quotation on the latter may indicate that Ephraem has commented on the whole passage. We repeat that all this is totally independent of the text, respecting which Ephraem's version has an independent and unique value. But it seems to establish the very interesting fact that Tatian's Diatessaron found acceptance in the West as well as in the East, and was transferred, rather than translated, into a Western Version. The statement of Theodoret, referred to in the previous article, renders this very intelligible. If the work was so popular in the East, and so easily available for orthodox use, that more than two hundred copies were current in his diocese not long before in the year 453, it is not surprising to find it existing in a Latin form in the time of Victor, a hundred years later.

In the present article we must content ourselves with pointing out this apparent identity in substance of Tatian's

Harmony with Victor's. If it be established, it will give a new interest to Victor's work; but it would be beyond our scope to press this branch of our inquiry further. One other very interesting historical consequence may, however, in conclusion, be mentioned. Victor's Harmony was the basis of two of the most precious documents of old German literature. It was translated into Old German in the first third of the 9th century (a good edition was published in 1872, with a complete glossary by Sievers), and it is also the main source of the noble Old Saxon epic, *the Heliand*. This is a poem in which it has been said (Hase, *Geschichte Jesu*) that the Gospel seems transferred into the very flesh and blood of the German people. It must have familiarized them with the story of the Gospels, just as Cædmon familiarized our Anglo-Saxon forefathers with the Scripture histories in his poetical narratives. It must have been the popular German Gospel of the time and district. But, as we have said, it is mainly derived from Victor, and Victor, as we have seen, is substantially Tatian. It follows that some of the best inspiration of Old German Christianity, and some of our noblest relics of Old German literature, are indirectly due to that heretical writer. It would be difficult to name any work of Christian antiquity which has had so varied and, in some respects, so useful a career. Popular for three hundred years in the country in which it was written, it finds a home and a clothing in the West a hundred years afterwards. The copy of it which Victor had transcribed is said to have been the companion of St. Boniface, and was perhaps in his hands at the hour of his martyrdom. The work was then transferred to German song, and lived in the heart of the German people. Then it was long forgotten, and its true history lost. But at length a monk from the Germany which it had helped to Christianize re-discovers it in another form in an obscure branch of Eastern literature; and the Harmony having thus travelled

from East to West twice over, through a space of some 1700 years, Tatian at last receives the justice which, for one service at all events, is eminently his due.

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THE HISTORICAL CHRIST OF ST. PAUL.

III. SECOND EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

2 CORINTHIANS i. 5: "For as the sufferings of Christ overflow to us." We have here a distinct recognition of the Christian Founder as a Man of Sorrows, and as a Man of Sorrows after the Pauline type. It will not be denied that, in speaking of a suffering Christ, St. Paul can only be speaking of a historical Christ; he would not apply such an expression to the exalted or risen Messiah. But what he here says is that the sufferings, which admittedly belonged to the personal Christ, had, so to speak, burst their personal embankment and run over into his own life. If we wish to know, therefore, what was the nature of those sorrows which distinguished the life of the Son of Man, we shall find a miniature portrait of them in the experience of the Gentile Apostle. We see that one great feature of St. Paul's suffering was the absence of a bond of sympathy between himself and those for whose salvation he laboured. Witness that remarkable passage, Galatians iv. 19, where he strikes the very key-note of his spiritual sufferings: "My little children of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you." He desires us to believe that, in the experience of this suffering, he has received, as it were, a mantle of apostolic succession from the Founder of Christianity Himself, and invites us to read in his experience the illustration and the narrative of that special phase of sorrow which distinguished the historical life of the Son of Man.