

“*THE TEACHING OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES.*”

AN ANCIENT CHRISTIAN TREATISE, DISCOVERED AND EDITED BY PHILOTHEOS BRYENNIOS, METROPOLITAN OF NICOMEDIA, 1883.

THE news that in the nineteenth century a treatise has been discovered which was written by a Christian who lived in the first century, excites a feeling both of deep interest and of extreme astonishment. It sounds almost too good to be true. We had begun to imagine that the libraries of even the remotest monasteries had been thoroughly ransacked, and that there was little hope that anything of really capital importance would again be brought to light. Two discoveries have of late years tended to revive hopes which almost sound extravagant. One of these is the Armenian version of the Commentary by Ephraem Syrus on the Diatessaron of Tatian. This has been published by the Mechitarist Fathers at Venice, and since it finally and decisively proves that Tatian's work was a harmony of all four Gospels, it furnishes a strong additional evidence in favour of the genuineness of the Gospel of St. John.<sup>1</sup> Another is the complete form of the letters of Clement of Rome. Others may easily follow, since this MS. remained unnoticed, though many scholars had visited the library in which it was found. Even those who look upon our religion from the outside cannot deny that, at the very lowest, the existence of Christianity is a stupendous historical phenomenon. It has loomed so large upon the minds of millions of men for many centuries and generations, and it has filled so vast a space in the thoughts, the controversies, and the interests of the human race, that even the profoundest sceptic must admit the importance of its earliest documents.

<sup>1</sup> This discovery disposes of the *ex cathedrâ* assertion of M. Renan that *Diatessaron* is a term of Greek music, and has no connection with the Four Gospels.

To Christians of all Churches the study of an ancient pamphlet—forgotten and lost for ages, but now rediscovered—a pamphlet which may have been written before St. John had lain for a decade in his grave, and by a writer who may have had personal intercourse with some of those “who had seen the Lord,” can hardly fail to demand serious attention.

Alike by what it says and by what it omits, the little treatise must have an inevitable bearing on multitudes of controversies which have agitated the Church for many an age. It would at present be premature to attempt any estimate of the effects which this tract must insensibly produce. It will have to be searched with candles. Its history, its phraseology, its principles, its bearing on the growth of ecclesiastical institutions, its relation to the canonical books of Scripture, the position in which it stands to the most ancient forms of heresy, the explanation which it furnishes of the tendencies which led to Montanism, its contributions to the history of Church organization and Church doctrines, will all have to be settled hereafter, and co-ordinated with the fragmentary views which we deduce from Clemens Romanus, Hermas, Justin Martyr, and the sneers of Lucian in his life of Peregrinus. And this can only be done in course of time, when the book has been scrutinized, line for line and word for word, both philologically and historically by the labour of many minds. One thing, however, is certain—the book cannot be ignored.

My present task is a very simple one. It is merely to give an account of the treatise itself, and of this its *Editio Princeps*, published by a Greek Metropolitan last year—perhaps eighteen centuries after the hand that originally wrote it has crumbled into dust.

The book is edited by Philotheos Bryennios, Metropolitan of Nicomedia, and was published in 1883 by S. T. Boutyra, of Constantinople. It is called “The Teaching of

the Twelve Apostles," and was found in what is called "the Jerusalem Manuscript," which is numbered 456 in the library of the Patriarch of Jerusalem at Constantinople. The same MS. contains a synopsis of the Old and New Testaments by St. John Chrysostom, part of which has never before been edited; two Epistles of St. Clement of Rome to the Corinthians, one genuine and one spurious; the spurious letter of Mary of Castabola to St. Ignatius; twelve Epistles of St. Ignatius; and before the two latter writings this—*Διδαχὴ τῶν δωδέκα Ἀποστόλων*.<sup>1</sup> The actual manuscript is by no means ancient. It is dated June 11th, 1056. The scribe was a "notary and sinner" named Leo (*χειρὶ Λέοντος νοταρίου καὶ ἀλείτου*). Bryennios puts as a motto on the title-page a sentence from the Stromata of Clement of Alexandria:—"We must not, however, because of him who speaks also condemn ignorantly beforehand the things spoken, . . . but must examine things spoken, whether they pertain to the truth."

The actual treatise—the "Teaching"<sup>2</sup>—occupies fifty-five pages in this edition, but does not extend beyond some 300 lines, since the greater part of each page is occupied with footnotes. Two-thirds of the book are taken up by the Introduction, indices, etc., which are written throughout in modern Greek. Archbishop Bryennios is thoroughly familiar with recent theology, and although he complains of inadequate literary resources, quotes from Grabe, Tischendorf, Krabbe, Lagarde, von Drey, Hilgenfeld, Bickell, Harnack, Zahn, Lipsius, the writers in Herzog's Encyclopædia, and other German and English theologians. He is also well-read in Patristic literature, and especially (as is natural) in the writings of Athanasius and the Greek

<sup>1</sup> An account of the manuscript and its contents is given by Bryennios in his edition of the Letters of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians, published by him in 1875.

<sup>2</sup> *Διδαχὴ* is translated "doctrine" in our A.V. and "teaching" in the Revised Version. I shall adopt the latter word in speaking of this book.

Fathers. He is already honourably known by his edition of the letters of Clement of Rome, published in 1875, when he was Metropolitan of Serrae. He considers that the publication of the "Teaching," with its revelation of the simplicity of doctrine and practice which prevailed in the early Church, will consign to complete oblivion much that has hitherto been written about the Apostolical age. I will proceed to lay before the reader some of the points with which he deals in his Prolegomena. His labours in producing this edition have occupied seven years.

The treatise now first published bears two titles, "The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles," and "The Teaching of the Lord by the Twelve Apostles to the Gentiles."<sup>1</sup> The latter title is the one given to it by the original author; the other is only a shorter form of it.

Neither the Lord, however, nor the Apostles are introduced as speakers. The writer speaks in his own person and addresses the reader as "My child." Who the author was must remain for ever unknown, for he has not left us the slightest clue to his identification. Meanwhile the fact that he does *not* represent the Apostles as the direct authors—as is done in the Apostolical Constitutions, and in the "Epitome of the Decisions of the Apostles," and in all similar writings—is a proof of his simple good faith. He has not the least desire to be pseudonymous. He is so convinced that he is teaching the truths which the Apostles had delivered that he does not desire to put in a false claim of direct Apostolic authorship by way of enhancing the importance of his utterances. He stands above the need for adventitious emphasis and pious fraud. This is doubtless one reason why he made so favourable an impression on the ancient Fathers. St. Athanasius classes various books under the heads of "canonical," "apocryphal," "heretical," and "books that are read." By the latter books he means

<sup>1</sup> For the use of the word *Διδάχῃ* see Acts ii. 42; 2 John 9.

those of which the moral value had been publicly recognized by earlier authority; and among them he classes the book now before us. St. Clement of Alexandria had gone much further. He quotes the "Teaching" as Scripture.<sup>1</sup>

All that can safely be asserted of the writer is his piety, his good faith, his Christian simplicity, and his perfect orthodoxy. It is also clear that he belonged to the milder and less violently prejudiced section of Jewish Christians. He is by no means like "Barnabas," a vehement repudiator of the Jewish institutions, nor yet is he, like the Ebionites, an opponent of St. Paul. There is, it is true, no trace in his teaching of a single specifically Pauline doctrine. There is almost as total an absence of the technical terms of Pauline as of Johannine theology. On the other hand there is no expression which betrays any hostility to the views of the Apostle of the Gentiles, and there are possible—though not perhaps certain—allusions to one or two of his Epistles. But the writer's Jewish antecedents are indicated by his use of the phrase "*day and night*," which the Apostolical Constitutions alter into "*night and day*"; by his calling the "prophets"—*i.e.* the authorized preachers of the Church—"high priests"; by his remarks about first-fruits; by his allusion to the distinction of meats; and by his acceptance of weekly fasts on Wednesday and Friday in lieu of the "hypocrites'" fasts on Tuesday and Thursday. We may also be quite sure that he was not a Western Christian. We might have conjectured that he was an Asiatic, but for the absence of any decisive or indisputable traces of the writings of St. John. He may have written in Egypt or Syria, but the remark about the use of warm water in baptism has been thought to point to some district in which the winter was cold.

<sup>1</sup> The passage which he quotes as coming from "the Scripture" (*ἡ γραφή*) is, "My son, be not a liar; for lying leads to theft." Clem. Alex., *Strom.*, i. 20, § 100.

The readers whom he had in view are Jewish converts, and especially catechumens. He says that Baptism is to be administered after the candidates have been taught the truths which occupy his earlier chapters. Teachers and ministers are only addressed indirectly.

The only clue to the date at which so simple a moral and religious treatise was written, must be looked for in the state of church organization, and in the character of heresy or error to which the writer is opposed. As to the first point, the early date is proved by the fact that "Presbyters" are not mentioned, not having been as yet disintegrated from "bishops;" and that the title "Apostles" still retains its meaning of wandering emissaries. At the same time, the attempt to summarise the doctrines of the Twelve Apostles probably indicates that by this epoch even St. John was dead. The mention of "*the Twelve Apostles*," and the absence of direct references to St. Paul, are sufficient to prove that the writer had not come under the chief influence which moulded the destinies of Gentile Christianity. In all probability he was a Hellenist. As regards the dominance of particular errors, the writer recognizes the existence of "false prophets" who are guilty of greed, of immoral conduct, and of teaching doctrines opposed to those which he has set forth. These allusions are, however, far more vague and far less vehement than even those of St. Paul in the Pastoral Epistles, of St. John in the Apocalypse and his Epistles, and of St. Jude and the "Second Epistle of St. Peter." The learned Editor thinks that they are aimed at the Antitaktæ—Antinomians who embraced the views of Karpocrates, of the Balaamites, Nicolaitans, and other lewd and perverted sects which sprang from the views of Simon Magus, the traditional father of all heresies. To these heretics—who often falsely claimed Apostolical authority by forging books in the names of St. Peter, St. Thomas,

and other Apostles—the writer opposes the true “doctrine.” This view is possible, though it is one sign of the antiquity of the book that such teaching has not as yet assumed any very definite form. In the allusions to “false prophets” Bryennios sees a possible reference to the dawnings of actual Montanism. This seems to be a little doubtful. Apart from the question whether the teaching of Montanus may not have been grossly misrepresented by his ecclesiastical opponents, I cannot trace the slightest allusion to any of his most distinctive views, nor is it conceivable that any one who wrote against Montanistic tendencies would have omitted every allusion to the existence of Priscilla, Maximilla, or those who preceded them as prophetesses of the sect. It is the supposed reference to dangerous proclivities which were ultimately developed into Montanism, together with his belief that the writer of the “Teaching” has borrowed from Barnabas and Hermas, which induce Bryennios to date the book between A.D. 120 and A.D. 160. On the other hand, we shall see, later on, that the borrowing was probably on the other side, and that the plagiarists are not our author, but Barnabas and Hermas. I can only with extreme deference give the impression which the study of the book has left on my own mind, and that is, that the treatise is the earliest Christian writing which we possess outside the canon, with the possible exception of the Epistles of St. Clement of Rome, of St. Polycarp, and of St. Ignatius.

The “Teaching” is frequently alluded to by early Christian writers. Eusebius († 340) classes it among “spurious” books with the “Shepherd of Hermas,” the “Epistle of Barnabas,” and the “Acts of Paul and Thecla.” Athanasius († 373) says that it was one of the books which the Fathers had recommended to be read by catechumens with the “Wisdom of Solomon” and other books of the Apocrypha. Niceratus († 820) mentions it among “apocryphal”

books, and says that it contained two hundred lines. There can be no doubt that these writers are referring to this treatise, which in the Jerusalem MS. contains two hundred and three lines. Clement of Alexandria (as we have seen) quotes as “Scripture” a passage which occurs in it. Rufinus, the learned Presbyter of Aquileia († 410), places it among the “*libri ecclesiastici*.” It seems to be sometimes referred to under the title of “The Two Ways.”

The *substance* of the book is not new, for it is entirely embodied in the so-called “Apostolical Constitutions,” especially in the seventh book. Indeed, the previous six books of the “Constitutions,” and also the eighth, are practically based on the short “Teaching.” This might seem at first sight greatly to detract from its interest; but, on the contrary, the importance of the little book is really enhanced by these attempts to reproduce its substance. For we are thus enabled to contrast the widely different methods of handling identical and cognate topics in the first and in the fifth century. We can trace the growth and development of ecclesiastical teaching, and see the elements with which its primitive simplicity was gradually overlaid.

The “Apostolical Constitutions” profess to have been written down from the mouth of the assembled Apostles by Clement of Rome. They are thus as pseudonymous as they can possibly be. They are double-dyed with the spirit of the *falsarius*, which, after all palliations, remains an unhealthy spirit. There seem to have been several ancient books more or less similar in title, and referred to almost indifferently as “Teachings,” “Introductions,” “Ordinances,” “Rules,” etc., of the Apostles. Hence even our little treatise seems to be referred to by Eusebius in the plural. The existing “Apostolical Constitutions” are attributed by Bishop Pearson to the fifth, and by Archbishop Usher to the sixth century. The substance of the book

seems to have grown more or less by accretion, for a shorter form, called *Didascalia*, has been found in Syriac. Several critics—among them a writer in the *Christian Remembrancer* for 1854,—had already rightly conjectured that the "Constitutions" are the *rifacimento* of the ancient treatise to which Athanasius and others had referred; and this is, almost undoubtedly, the treatise which, after lying unknown for so many centuries, is now once more before us.

Bishop Bryennios has printed the seventh book of the Constitutions, and marked the passages taken from the "Teaching" in a different type. We are thus enabled at a glance to observe the differences between the two treatises. In the later work we find scarcely a trace of the genuine worth of the more ancient tractate. Its antique and venerable character, its naturalness and simplicity, its severe beauty, have disappeared in the hands of the later plagiarist. The "Constitutions" are diffuse where the "Teaching" is terse; and complex where the "Teaching" is simple; and ecclesiastical where the "Teaching" is religious. They expand the brief sentences of the original with needless verbosity, and explain it by a multitude of quotations. Where the "Teaching" describes with extreme simplicity the method of baptism, the "Constitutions" introduce unscriptural superfluities of holy oil and perfume. Where the Jewish Christian author of the "Teaching" is still so far entangled with Jewish tradition as to enjoin a bi-weekly fast, the "Constitutions" add a timid suggestion about fasting every day in the week, except Saturday and Sunday. The simple eucharistic formulæ of the "Teaching" are greatly expanded in the "Constitutions." The uninitiated, *i.e.* the unbaptized, are of course forbidden to eat of the Lord's supper; but the "Constitutions" add that, "if any unbaptized person conceals himself and partakes of the Lord's supper, he will eat eternal judgment, because, though he is not of the faith of Christ, he partakes

of what is not lawful, to his own retribution. But if any one should partake in ignorance, initiate him with all speed after elementary instruction, that he may not go forth as a despiser.”

There is no trace of unguent or myrrh-oil in the “Teaching,” but in the later book it is introduced into the administration of the Eucharist, as well as into Baptism. The “Constitutions” talk about “Priests,” (*ιερείς*) which is a title never given to ministers in the “Teaching,” any more than it is in the New Testament. We also meet with “tithes” and with Presbyters as distinct from “Bishops.” These are not mentioned in the earlier book, which speaks only of Apostles, Prophets, Teachers, “Bishops” and Deacons. In the “Constitutions,” too, we have the extravagant and entirely unscriptural super-exaltation of Bishops which began before the close of the second century. They are described in a page of sounding eulogies, and Christians are told “to honour them with all kinds of honour” and “to honour them as the Lord;” whereas all that the “Teaching” had said was, that “the Bishops and Deacons minister for you the ministry of the Prophets and Teachers. Do not therefore despise them, for they are the honoured among you with the Prophets and Teachers.” The “Teaching,” indeed, in alluding to the Prophets, *i.e.* the authorized and inspired preachers (not the “Bishops”), uses a metaphor very natural to a Jewish Christian. “The prophets,” he says, “are your High Priests,” in other words, your ministers in Divine things, and—though they are distinguished from the class of Bishops (*i.e.* Presbyters) and Deacons—they occupy among you a post of honour like that of the High Priest among the Jews. It cannot but be clear to every candid reader that there is no sacerdotalism here. The Prophets offer no “sacrifices” but are simply teachers; and yet they are to be supported because Christians were to honour them as the Jews did their Chief Priests. The

"Constitutions," however, seize on the metaphor with avidity, though the author of the "Teaching" had obviously no intention to give to Christian ministers that title of "Priests" which the Apostles and Evangelists expressly withhold from them, and confer only upon every member of the Christian community. The "Constitutions" use the word "Bishops" in a different sense from the older writer; call them "Levites"; say that they are to receive "tithes"; and further on designate the Bishops "Chief Priests," the Presbyters "Priests," and the Deacons "Levites." "Deaconesses" are mentioned in the "Constitutions," but not in the "Teaching."<sup>1</sup>

My own reading of the Teaching led me to infer that the learned editor has placed it too late, and to suppose that it must have been written about the year 100 A.D. I have since ascertained that eminent German scholars have come to the same conclusion. It seems probable that the general verdict of scholars will ultimately adopt this view. We have already seen that Bryennios thinks that it was written between A.D. 120 and A.D. 160, and appears to be convinced that the author of the "Teaching" copied from Barnabas and Hermas. But facts seem to shew that, on the contrary, those two writers copied from him. Compare for instance the following passages:

"TEACHING," Chapter 1.—"There are two ways, one of life and one of death, and there is a great difference between the two ways. The way of life, then, is as follows:—First, thou shalt love God who made thee; secondly, thy neighbour as thyself; and all things whatsoever thou wouldest not wish to be done to thee, do not thou to another."

Compare this with the Epistle of BARNABAS, chapter 18, where I have italicized the additional words and clauses. "But let us also pass to another kind of knowledge and

<sup>1</sup> In Romans xvi. 1 the title of Phæbe is ἡ διάκονος. In later times the word *διακόνισσα* was invented.

teaching. There are two ways of *teaching and of authority, that of light and that of darkness*, and there is a great difference between these two ways. *For over one have been appointed the light-bringing angels of God, and over the other the angels of Satan. And the One is Lord for ever and ever, and the other is prince of the present season of lawlessness.*

Chapter xix.—The way of *light*, then, is as follows, *if any one wishing to travel to the appointed place is zealous in his works. The knowledge, then, which is given to us for walking in this way is as follows: Thou shalt love Him who made thee, thou shalt fear Him who formed (πλάσαντα) thee, thou shalt glorify Him who redeemed thee from death; thou shalt be simple in thy heart and rich in thy spirit. Thou shalt not be united with those who walk in the way of death.*”

Or contrast one or two other clauses.

“TEACHING,” chapter 5.—“But the way of death is as follows:—First of all it is evil and full of curse; murders, adulteries,” &c.

BARNABAS, chapter xx.—“But the way of *the Black One* is *crooked* and full of curse. For it is the way of *eternal death with retribution*, in which are *the things which destroy their soul*, idolatry, audacity, loftiness of *power*,” etc.

Or, once again,

“TEACHING,” chapter xvi.—“Ye know not the hour in which your Lord comes. But ye shall frequently gather yourselves together, seeking the things which profit your souls. For the whole time of your faith shall not profit you unless ye be perfected in the last crisis. For in the last days false prophets shall be multiplied,” etc.

BARNABAS, chapter iv.—“*Therefore let us take heed in the last days. For the whole time of your life and of your faith shall profit you nothing, unless now in this lawless season, we also withstand the scandals that are to come as becometh the children of God. That the Black One may find*

*no means of entrance, let us, etc.—coming together unitedly, inquire together about your common advantage."*

I cannot help thinking that most readers of any literary insight and experience will incline to the view that the simpler, less verbose, and less artificial language of the "Teaching" must in all such passages be regarded as the earlier of the two. If so, the plagiarist or adapter—though what we call plagiarism would not connote much blame in those primitive days—was Barnabas, and not the pious and apostolically minded Jewish Christian who wrote the "Teaching." The same remark applies quite as strongly to the three passages of the Mandates of Hermas, which contain clauses identical with those of the "Teaching." The stamp of simplicity usually marks the earlier of two similar compositions.

I will now give a brief account of the little book itself. It will be seen that in reading it we might almost fancy ourselves to be reading one of the simpler New Testament Epistles. It lacks indeed the indefinable note of "inspiration" which we find in the sacred books; but on the other hand it is not so immeasurably inferior to them in dignity and sweetness as are some of the early Christian writings.

Chapter I. In this chapter, after saying that there are two ways, the one of life and the other of death, the writer begins with the utmost simplicity to describe the way of life. The substance of the description is borrowed almost entirely from the Sermon on the Mount. There are however two points of interest; one is the stern warning to those who take alms when they do not need them. In this there is perhaps a reference to a saying ascribed to "the Lord" in the Apostolical Constitutions<sup>1</sup>: "Woe to those who have and who receive in hypocrisy, or to those who are able to help themselves and prefer to receive from

<sup>1</sup> *Apost. Constt.*, iv. 3, sec. 1.

others. For each shall render an account to the Lord God in the Day of Judgment.” The other peculiarity is the quotation with which the chapter terminates: “But respecting this also, it has in truth been said, ‘Let thine *alms sweat* (*ἰδρωσάτω*) *into thy hands, as long as thou knowest to whom thou givest.*’” Whether this quotation is an “unrecorded saying” of Christ, to be reckoned with the other *ἄγραφα δόγματα*, we cannot tell; but the phrase, “*it has been said,*” implies that it is taken from some source which was accounted sacred. The importance attached to wise and discriminating charity is emphasized in the Apostolical Constitutions, and it is interesting to find that the Church was thus early on its guard against the peril of promiscuous dole-giving.

The following chapters, from the second to the sixth, are also occupied with a description of “The two ways.” The way of life consists of moral precepts and of warnings against heathen sins and vices, both moral and intellectual, which still were prevalent. The duties of giving, of honouring our spiritual teachers, and of general confession are also inculcated.

The way of death is a list of crimes and vices, and this section of the book ends with the remarkable words: “See that no man cause thee to err from the way of teaching, since he teacheth thee apart from God. For if thou art able to bear the whole yoke of the Lord, thou shalt be perfect; but if thou canst not, do what thou canst. But as regards food, bear what thou canst; but keep thyself strenuously from food offered to idols, for it is the service of dead gods.”

In these last words, some may see a retrogression from the broader and more liberal teaching of St. Paul, whose view was that the eating of idol-offerings was in itself a matter of absolute indifference, and that the only need to abstain from it was in cases where there was some danger

of wounding weak consciences. Fundamentally however there is no difference in the teaching. By the time that the *Διδαχὴ* was written, as still more markedly in the days of Justin Martyr, the active antagonism of Pagans, and the temptation to escape persecution by compliance, had caused the partaking of idol sacrifices to be regarded with far deeper abhorrence than in the days of St. Paul. Any relaxing of the rigid rule might have proved a direct temptation to apostasy and to unhallowed compromise.

Since these chapters were meant for the instruction of catechumens preparatory to Baptism, the writer in the 7th chapter plunges at once into the method of Baptism. It is to be performed, if possible in running ("living") water; if not, then in warm water; and if neither are procurable in sufficient quantity for immersion, then water is to be thrice poured on the head in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The candidate is to fast the previous day or two days. This last remark is another proof of the early date of the treatise. It shews that in speaking of Baptism the writer is mainly thinking of converts and of adults.

This leads the writer to the subject of fasting. It is not to be Pharisaic, nor on the Jewish days, Tuesday and Thursday, but on Wednesdays and Fridays. Nothing can more clearly prove that the bi-weekly fast is a Jewish-Christian Survival. The Pharisees had taught, as a part of their oral law, that Jews should fast on Monday, the day on which Moses was supposed to have ascended Sinai, and Thursday, the day on which he descended. Accustomed to this traditional observance—which is nowhere sanctioned or suggested in the New Testament, and to which the sole allusion in the Gospels (Luke xviii. 12) is by no means favourable—the Jewish Christians substituted for it a fast on Wednesday, the day of the Betrayal, and Friday, the day of the Crucifixion. The Lord's prayer is

to be repeated thrice a day. The form here given varies very slightly from that in St. Matthew. The doxology is shorter—"For thine is the power and the glory for ever." Debt (*ὀφειλήν*) is used for "debts" (*ὀφειλήματα*), and "heaven" (*οὐρανῶ*) for Matthew's characteristic word "heavens" (*οὐρανοῖς*).

The 9th and 10th chapters give directions about the administration of the Eucharist. The thanksgiving for the cup is offered first, and begins, "We thank Thee, our Father, for the Holy Vine of David thy Servant (*παιδός*) which Thou madest known to us by Jesus thy Servant. To Thee be the glory for ever." A similar thanksgiving is next offered for the Bread.

The questions raised by this interesting description are far too important to be lightly dismissed. It is however deeply interesting to see that the words, "This is my Body," "This is my Blood," were not used at this epoch; and even if, with Prof. Wordsworth, we conjecture that this may have been due to a determination to give no colour to the gross heathen misrepresentations which charged Christians with mysterious orgies and the murder of a child (*παιδός*—the word meaning ambiguously both "Son" and "Servant"),<sup>1</sup> still, in the words of consecration—perhaps the oldest liturgical forms which have come down to us—we find no shadow of any doctrine distantly resembling transubstantiation, no conception of any participation which is not purely and absolutely spiritual. Nothing can more clearly prove that the use of the term "sacrifice," metaphorically applied to the Eucharist in the 14th chapter, has the same meaning as our own use of the term in our Communion Service—"this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving."

<sup>1</sup> This use of the word, as applied both to David and to Christ, is in the New Testament confined to St. Luke, with whose writings the author seems to have been familiar.

The 10th chapter ends with the words, "But allow the prophets to give thanks after the Eucharist as much as they like." This elasticity in public worship—this emancipation from liturgical rigidity of those who had the grace of inspired teaching—might create difficulties in the present complexities of ecclesiastical organization, but was in itself entirely desirable.

The third section of the book, from the 11th to the 16th chapters, deals with questions affecting the ministry. The points of interest which it offers are too numerous to be here thoroughly dealt with. The tone of the directions implies an age of apostolic poverty and simplicity, when a man was to be regarded as a "false prophet" if he asked for money, or if, being a wandering missionary, he stayed in hospitable quarters over the second day. A "prophet" who "ordered a table" (for a Love-feast?), was not to partake of it himself. He was never to take with him more bread than would suffice till he reached his quarters for the night. Precautions are suggested against all idlers and "Christ-traffickers." Bishops and deacons are to be "appointed" by the Christian bodies themselves, and a provision is thus made by which an Apostle or itinerant teacher can be changed into a resident minister. There is in the 11th chapter a curious expression of which the meaning is, as yet, uncertain. "But every proved genuine prophet *who makes assemblies for a worldly mystery* (ποιῶν εἰς μυστήριον κοσμικὸν ἐκκλησίας),<sup>1</sup> but does not teach others to do what he does, shall not be judged by you, for he hath his judgment with God; for so did also the ancient prophets." Bishop Bryennios confesses that this clause is "dark and obscure" to him, but explains it of the public exhibition by prophets of symbolic actions. No explanation yet offered seems to be quite satisfactory.

The last chapter is an exhortation to be ready for the

<sup>1</sup> The translation as well as the meaning is uncertain.

second coming of the Lord. It contains a warning against "the world-deceiver," who shall appear as a Son of God. The word "Antichrist," is not used, but the thoughts seem to be coloured by Matt. xxiv. 3-14, and perhaps by 2 Thess. ii. 1-12. "Then shall the race of men come into the fire of probation, and many shall be offended and shall perish; but those who abide in their faith shall be saved ὑπ' αὐτοῦ τοῦ καταθέματος." These words possibly mean "under the very curse"; but Bryennios supposes them to imply "by Him whom they curse," or "by Him who is the Foundation." "And then shall appear the signs of the truth. First, the sign of the flight (of the saints, ἐκπετάσεως) in heaven (or possibly, 'of Christ with arms outspread, as on the cross'); then the sign of the voice of the trumpet; and the third, the resurrection of the dead; not indeed, of all, but as is spoken—'the Lord shall come, and all His saints with Him.' Then shall the world see the Lord coming above the clouds of the heaven."

Space does not permit me to say anything more about this remarkable little treatise, which will do much to revive many of the most interesting problems of early Church history. I must not however omit to say one word about the quotations. They too suggest considerations of the utmost importance; and on the whole they accord with what we might expect of a Jewish Christian, writing possibly in some Church of little prominence at the close of the first century.

In the first place, the large majority of his scriptural references seem to be made from memory. The Gospels with which he seems to be best acquainted are those of St. Matthew and St. Luke. The main allusions to St. Matthew are to the Sermon on the Mount or to the closing chapters. Scarcely one of them is verbally accurate, which implies that the writer did not actually possess a manuscript of the Gospel, and had not one at hand for the purposes of exact

quotation. There is no decisive reference to St. Mark or to any of the writings of St. John. It cannot be said with absolute certainty—so at least, it appears to me—that he was acquainted with any of the Epistles of St. Paul. There are one or two passages which bear a resemblance to the first and second Epistles to the Thessalonians; but on the other hand, as will be seen from the last extract, the writer is not in close accordance with, if not absolutely discrepant from, the first Epistle in the order of events at the Second Coming. Indeed, unless "abstain from fleshly and worldly lusts" can be regarded as a proof that he was acquainted with the first Epistle of St. Peter (1 Pet. ii. 11), it cannot be *proved* that he was familiar with any part of the New Testament, except one or two of the synoptic Gospels. I make this remark however with all reservations, because the quotations and phraseology require a more thorough examination than they have yet received. The resemblances to passages in the Epistles are of so general a character, that it cannot, I think, be positively asserted that they imply acquaintance with the canonical books, though they appear to do so at first sight. So far as I have observed there is no decisive reference, and indeed no reference at all, to any of the Antilegomena, or books of which the canonicity was in early days a matter of dispute. On the other hand, the writer, as was natural in the case of a Jewish-Christian, seems to have known the Book of Ecclesiasticus, to which there is at least one indisputable allusion.

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