

in the course of their reading. In their political and social life the men have been interested, guided, helped. The effects on the residents, too, in the wise direction and strengthening of effort have been no less marked; and the influence of such an institution on a part of London at once

one of the most crowded and most desolate is most wide and beneficial. It is, in fact, in itself an assertion of the principles which Arnold Toynbee loved to teach; the dignity of individual man, and the doctrine of social responsibility.

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## The Epistle to the Hebrews in the Syrian Church.

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It is a commonplace of New Testament criticism to note the difference of the reception which has been accorded to the *Apocalypse* and to the *Epistle to the Hebrews* in the different parts of the Church.<sup>1</sup> The presence or absence of one or other of these books may even be a sign of the origin and locality of a particular list of canonical writings.<sup>2</sup> While the exclusion of the Hebrews would suggest that the list was western, that epistle would certainly be found in any genuine Syrian list. The Church of Edessa appears to have received all the fourteen Epistles of St. Paul, at least from the first days when a formal list of his writings was first compiled by the Syriac doctors. The object of this paper will be to state the grounds on which such an assertion is confidently made.

It is interesting, and useful for the present purpose, to compare the contents of a Greek and of a Syriac New Testament as they were published in the fourth and fifth centuries. We have the unimpeachable evidence of the MSS. themselves, which we inherit from the copyists of those days. Of the fourth century, we possess the *Sinaitic* and the *Vatican* Greek New Testaments; the former contains all which is included in the English New Testament; the latter originally, no doubt, contained as much, but in its present state it is without the last part of the *Epistle to the Hebrews* (ix. 15 f.) and the *Revelation*. Of the fifth century, the *Alexandrian MS.* contains the whole New Testament, a few leaves being lost; the *Parisian* fragments (*Cod. C.*) represent the same Canon.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See, e.g. *History of the New Testament Canon* (Westcott), p. 245. The acceptance of these books is well shown in a Table in *Studia Biblica*, iii. (Oxford, 1891), pp. 254-257.

<sup>2</sup> Professor Sanday in *Studia Biblica*, p. 244.

<sup>3</sup> See the convenient Table, pp. 107, 108, of that useful manual. *A Guide to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament*, E. Miller, 1886.

The contents of these ancient documents are evidence that whatever doubts might have been entertained by individual writers, whatever hesitation might have been felt at an earlier period, the Canon of the Greeks of the fourth and fifth centuries was the same as that of our New Testament. In like manner, the opinion of the Church of Edessa may be inferred from an examination of a complete Syriac New Testament, which is preserved in the British Museum.<sup>4</sup> Like the above-named Greek MSS. it is undated; but with at least as much confidence as they are assigned to particular periods, this Peshitto codex may be assigned to the century A.D. 450-550. There is no presumption against its having been written in the middle of the fifth century; it is almost certain that it is older than the Cambridge MS. (D), and than most of the fragments which form the group of sixth century New Testament uncials. Its contents and arrangement are as follows:—(1) *SS. Matthew, Mark, Luke, John*; (2) the Epistles of St. Paul, in the familiar order, concluding with *Hebrews*; (3) the *Acts*; (4) *James, 1 Peter, 1 John*. Colophon: "Here endeth the writing of the Holy Gospel and of the Apostle, and of the Praxis and of the Three Catholic Epistles, of Jakob one, and of Petros one, and of Juchanan one." So much, and no more, seems always to have been included in a Peshitto New Testament. The order, too, was seldom varied; and if, as in the case of Add. 14,448,<sup>5</sup> the *Apostolus* came last, or, as in the Jacobite Massorah,<sup>6</sup> the Holy Gospels, yet the Three Epistles were always attached to the Acts, and the Epistles of St. Paul were arranged as in the English Bible.

<sup>4</sup> Add. 14,470. See *Catalogue of Syriac B. M. MSS.*, part i. p. 40.

<sup>5</sup> Dated apparently A.D. 699-700, *B. M. Cat.* p. 41.

<sup>6</sup> *B. M. Cat.* p. 108, *Horæ Syriacæ* (Wiseman), p. 217.

The most significant fact here is the limitations imposed on the Syrian Canon. The theologians and critics of Edessa were conservative, and most unwilling to admit additions to their Bible. When at a later period the other Catholic Epistles and the Revelation obtained a place, they came in through another translation, and were never part of the Peshitto. It must therefore have been for good and valid reasons that the Syrians from the first included the *Hebrews* amongst the Epistles of St. Paul. That they did so appears certain when the following further evidence is taken into account:—

(1) The Syrians, like the Greeks, frequently avoided the expense of an entire New Testament by making a copy of a part. Among such parts there are extant several *Apostoli*. These always contain the fourteen Epistles of St. Paul, ending with the *Hebrews*, and they include no more. One of the most interesting is the British Museum copy,<sup>1</sup> which is dated A. GR. 845 = A.D. 534—one of the oldest dated MSS. in existence. The evidence of this venerable codex is confirmed by the contents of others in the same collection, and which, although undated, may be confidently assigned to about the same era.

But (2) we can go behind the evidence of even these ancient codices; the testimony of the quotations in the Homilies of Aphraates, which were composed between the years 337 and 345, and in the works of Mar-Ephraim (born about 308 A.D., died 373), confirms the diplomatic evidence as to the contents of the Syriac *Apostolus*. The biblical quotations in the former writer are very numerous. Some of his sentences are little more than strings of Peshitto texts. He quotes repeatedly from all St. Paul's Epistles, with the exception (apparently) of *2 Thessalonians* and *Philemon*; nor is there any certain reference to *St. James*. The quotations in Mar-Ephraim have lately been made the subject of a special investigation by the Rev. F. H. Woods.<sup>2</sup> He finds references to all St. Paul's Epistles, except *2 Thessalonians* and *Philemon*; but he also notices a possible allusion to *2 Peter*, and a distinct allusion to the *Apocalypse*. *St. James* is not quoted.

It would not have been surprising to find no reference in either of these early writers to such an

<sup>1</sup> Add. 14,479, *Catalogue*, p. 86.

<sup>2</sup> In *Studia Biblica*, iii. 1891, Essay iv. On pp. 118, 119 are some remarks on the quotations from the *Gospels* in Aphraates.

epistle as *Philemon*; it is, however, worthy of remark that both appear to disregard the same three books, *Philemon*, *2 Thessalonians*, and *James*. If weight is to be given to an argument, which, after all, is merely *e silentio*, then it may be supposed that the days of Aphraates and Ephraim form a stage in the history of the Canon of the Syrian Church. The Peshitto MSS. which have been mentioned show that before the middle of the fifth century (how long before it is impossible to say) a definite *Table of Contents* for a Peshitto New Testament had been arranged, and one less comprehensive than that which was authorised in the west. Subsequently, by Philoxenus, or by Thomas Heracleensis, the other Catholic Epistles and the Apocalypse were added to the Syriac New Testament, but they never formed part of the Peshitto.<sup>3</sup> According to a passage in the *Doctrine of Addai*,<sup>4</sup> a work itself perhaps later than the days of Ephraim, but which embodies early traditions, the Syrian Church only received at first the *Gospels*, *Acts*, and *Pauline Epistles*.<sup>5</sup> In the time of Aphraates and Ephraim the Epistles *1 Peter* and *1 John* were winning recognition. *St. James* was perhaps admitted at a somewhat later period; but no doubt seems to have been entertained about the *Epistle to the Hebrews*, or of its right to be included amongst those ascribed to St. Paul.

But it may be thought that the critical value of the Syriac Canon is affected by the early recognition of certain books, which were not included in the Edessene Canon as finally received. The case is this:—(1) It has been thought that Aphraates quotes the apocryphal *Third Epistle to the Corinthians*.<sup>6</sup> (2) There is extant in Armenian a Commentary on this work,<sup>7</sup> attributed to St.

<sup>3</sup> The antilegomena *Epistles* appear to be Philoxenian, the *Apocalypse* Heracleian. So Dr. Gwynn in *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, xxvii. No. viii. pp. 29–36.

<sup>4</sup> Edited, with English translation, by George Phillips, D.D.

<sup>5</sup> The passage is quoted by Professor Sanday, *op. cit.* p. 245. His words imply that Aphraates did not quote *1 Peter* and *1 John*; so Zahn, *op. cit. inf.* i. p. 375, and Bert's Index in *Texte und Untersuchungen*, iii. 3, p. 431. But see *The Homilies of Aphraates*, edited, from fifth and sixth century MSS., by that eminent Syriac scholar, the late Dr. Wright, pp. 69, 144.

<sup>6</sup> Zahn, *Gesch. des Neutestam. Kanons*, ii. Band, ii. Hälfte, 1 Abth. p. 561.

<sup>7</sup> See W. F. Rinck's *Das dritte Sendschreiben an die Korinther*, Heidelberg, 1823; Zahn, *op. cit.* pp. 595–611; "La Correspondance Apocryphe de S. Paul et les Corin-