

The Hapax Legomena of St. Paul.

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'CRITICS,' says Dean Farrar,¹ 'who have searched minutely into the comparative terminology of the New Testament Scriptures, tell us there are no less than 111 peculiar terms in the Epistle to the Romans, 186 in the two Epistles to the Corinthians, 57 and 54 respectively in the short Epistles to the Galatians and Philippians, 6 even in the few paragraphs addressed to Philemon. It is not, therefore, in the least degree surprising that there should be 74 in the First Epistle to Timothy, 67 in the Second, and 13 in that to Titus.'

In this statement, however, the Dean scarcely does justice to the argument of his opponents, for these numbers are obviously valueless as they stand, and can only be made of any service when the relative lengths of the Epistles are taken into account. In the following note an attempt will be made to exhibit, with an approach to scientific accuracy, the real value or valuelessness of the numbers in question. We shall extend the term Hapax Legomenon to include any word used in a particular Epistle and not again to be found in the New Testament, even if that word is used more than once in the Epistle in question. Indeed, words used more than once have, from some points of view, more importance in this relation than words used once only. For a word used more than once and not used again means often, if not usually, a trick of style unconsciously caught and unconsciously dropped, while a word used once only may be just the word, and the only possible word, for expressing a non-recurrent condition.

We must, in the first place, correct Dean Farrar's numbers. The details given are not sufficiently precise to enable us to be quite sure as to the meaning of the numbers, but they appear to be hopelessly at variance with the enumeration given in the Appendix to *Thayer's Grimm*, which we shall take as the basis of our argument. To simplify the argument, we shall include all words marked as doubtful because of various readings, but must emphasise the fact that their number is not sufficiently great to be of importance. Thayer's list of words peculiar to the various Epistles is:—

Romans, 113; 1 Corinthians, 110; 2 Corinthians, 99; Galatians, 34; Ephesians, 43; Philippians, 41; Colossians,

38; 1 Thessalonians, 23; 2 Thessalonians, 11; Philemon, 5; 1 Timothy, 82; 2 Timothy, 53; Titus, 33.

For purposes of comparison we add:—

Jude, 20; 2 Peter, 57; Luke's Gospel, 312; Acts, 478.

Now, as previously remarked, these numbers have no value until the comparative lengths of the books are taken into account. A rough-and-ready way of doing this is to divide each number by the number of pages which the book occupies in any evenly-printed edition of the English or Greek Testament, say in Westcott and Hort's edition. The results will then be the number of Hapax Legomena per page, and will clearly indicate relative frequency. So treated, the numbers become:—

Titus and 1 Timothy, 13; 2 Timothy, 11; Philippians, 6.8; Colossians, 6.3; 2 Corinthians, 6.0; Ephesians, 4.9; 1 Corinthians, 4.6; Romans, 4.3; 1 Thessalonians, 4.2; Galatians, 4.1; Philemon, 4; 2 Thessalonians, 3.6.

[Luke's Gospel, 4.3; Acts, 6.9; Jude, 10; 2 Peter, 13.5.]

When these numbers are fairly examined, the full force of this particular argument against the Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles will be seen. It is no longer possible for any candid man to say that there is no case for investigation. These Epistles are now seen to present twice as many unusual words as any other of Paul's, and three times as many as most. It is unsatisfactory to urge, as Farrar does, that this is due to the 'exigencies of the times,' or to the 'collision with heresies altogether new,' for, as a matter of fact, the heresies were not new, or at least may be said to have been still newer and perhaps more widely spread in the far more dogmatic and distinctly theological letter to the Colossians, which not only stands lower on the list, but actually occupies a place below that of Philippians, a letter instinct with personal feeling, and written to a church where there were no heresies to attack.

What, then, is the true answer to this objection? We conceive it to be twofold. In the first place, it is a striking fact, surely not devoid of significance, that in the list just given the Epistles stand, roughly, in the order of age, the latest coming first. The general tendency of a writer, as he advances in knowledge of a language, and mastery over its possibilities, is to use more unusual words and more involved constructions. Carlyle, for instance, in the *Latter-Day Pamphlets* is a very different

¹ *St. Paul*, vol. ii. p. 613, Library Edition.

writer from the Carlyle of *Heroes and Hero-Worship*. There are exceptions, of course, but the tendency is surely beyond dispute. In the second place, the number of unusual words in the writings of an author is a very variable quantity, and, as a matter of fact, there is nothing to excite comment in the fact that one writing contains three times as many as another.

We shall prove this statement in the case of Shakespeare. A somewhat laborious examination of the plays results in the following table:—

Love's Labour's Lost	218	7.6
The Comedy of Errors	88	4.5
The Two Gentlemen of Verona	80	3.4
Romeo and Juliet	188	5.7
King Henry VI., Part I.	138	4.6
" Part II.	150	4.5
" Part III.	118	3.5
Taming of the Shrew	142	5.1
Midsummer-Night's Dream	149	6.8
King Richard II.	137	4.6
King Richard III.	179	4.4
King John	147	5.4
Merchant of Venice	148	5.6
King Henry IV., Part I.	287	9.3
" Part II.	267	8.0
King Henry V.	277	8.3
Merry Wives of Windsor	193	6.9
Much Ado about Nothing	125	4.7
As You Like It	173	6.4
Twelfth-Night	195	7.5
All's Well that Ends Well	207	6.9
Julius Cæsar	93	3.4
Measure for Measure	201	7.0
Troilus and Cressida	366	10.1
Macbeth	245	9.7
Othello	264	7.3
Antony and Cleopatra	276	7.4
Coriolanus	265	6.8
King Lear	358	9.7
Timon of Athens	164	6.2
Cymbeline	252	6.7
The Tempest	217	9.3
Titus Andronicus	133	4.9
The Winter's Tale	257	8.0
Hamlet	426	10.4
King Henry VIII.	146	4.3
Pericles	133	5.2

In the first column is given the number of words used in any play and not found in any other play nor in the poems. These numbers are derived from the lists in the Henry Irving edition of the plays. In the second column is given the result of dividing the numbers of the first column by the number of pages in the Oxford one-volume edition.

Now here is exhibited at once the striking fact, which appears to us to be almost fatal to the argument against authenticity as drawn from Hapax Legomena, that the frequency in Shakespeare varies from 3.4 to 10.4, a range almost exactly the same as in St. Paul, where it varies from 3.6 to 13, though on the actual similarity of the numbers no sort of stress can, of course, be laid.

This examination of Shakespeare illustrates another point in the question of Hapax Legomena. It is an apparent difficulty that phrases which are common in the Pastoral Epistles (*ὕψιλοντες λόγους, πιστὸς ὁ λόγος*, and the like) are never found in the other Epistles. Surely a writer who has these phrases on the tip of his tongue would have betrayed the tendency of his mind elsewhere. But we find precisely the same phenomenon in Shakespeare. 'Pulpit,' for instance, occurs six times in one scene in *Julius Cæsar*, and never elsewhere, not even in the Roman plays; 'equivocator,' four times, and 'equivocate,' twice in the same scene in *Macbeth*, and never elsewhere; 'hovel,' five times in *King Lear*; 'mountaineer,' four times in *Cymbeline*; 'disposer,' four times in *Troilus and Cressida*; 'moon calf,' five times in *The Tempest*; and so forth. Surely such instances exhibit sufficiently the utter weakness of the argument.