

this conjecture, for 'quae decens et congruens est in ecclesiis' evidently contains another double rendering of a single Greek verb, and gives much the same sense as the Ethiopic. The expression 'impetum accepimus' (so literally) answers to 'perreximus' of the old Latin: I have little doubt that the Greek word was ὀρμήσαμεν.¹ The original clause therefore may have run something in this way: ἐπὶ κορυφῆν τῆς παραδόσεως τῆς καθηκούσης (? ἐν) ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις ὀρμήσαμεν, ὅπως οἱ εὖ διδαχθέντες τὴν ἕως νῦν διαμείνασαν παράδοσιν² ἡμῶν ἐκθεμένων³ φυλάσσωσιν.

7. The words 'qui bene a nobis didicistis', substituted for the οἱ ταχθέντες of Ap. Const., seem to be inspired by the Prologue: 'ii qui bene ducti (more probably docti) sunt'. The rest of the passage follows Ap. Const., but with (apparently accidental) omission of the words which I have supplied in brackets.

R. H. CONNOLLY.

THE *DE HABITU VIRGINUM* OF ST CYPRIAN.⁵

THE *De Habitu Virginum*, to give the homily its traditional title rather than that of *Ad Virgines* which is well attested by the Cheltenham List, is one of St Cyprian's earliest writings. It stands next to the *Ad Donatum*, the first of all, in the Cheltenham List, and has the same place in Pontius's *Vita Cypriani* § 7, as also in all the most important groups of MSS. And not only is there nothing in the homily itself inconsistent with such a date, but much that suits better with it than with a later period. There are two certain points. It is the work of a bishop, for in § 1 the writer expressly says that correction in the spirit of love is the office of *fratres et maxime sacerdotes*, i. e. bishops, and claims for his office, and therefore for his authority to reprove, that its existence is a proof of the fulfilment of a prophecy. *Pastor* is a *terminus technicus* for a bishop, and the words *et dabo vobis pastores secundum cor meum*, here, as elsewhere in Cyprian, are a literal statement that the

¹ Cf. *Philosophum*. v 6 περιλείπεται τῶν ἐπὶ τὸν τῶν αἱρέσεων ἔλεγχον ὀρμῶν.

² Cf. *ibid.* ix 12 (ad fin.) οὐ (Καλλίστου) διαμένει τὸ διδασκαλεῖον φυλάσσειν τὰ ἔθη καὶ τὴν παράδοσιν, x 27 καὶ οὕτως ἕως νῦν ἐπὶ τοῖς διαδόχοις διαμείνασαν (sc. the heresy of Noetus), and de *Antichr.* 51 ἐξ ἧν τὸ γένος ἕως τοῦ νῦν διαμένει.

³ Cf. *Philos. Proem.* ὅπως . . . ἡμῶν ἐκθεμένων τὰ δόξαντα αὐτοῖς . . . παύσανται τι τῆς ἀλογίστου γνώμης.

⁴ The verb is equivalent to 'docti estis', as the passive, meaning 'to be taught', is not much used.

⁵ A paper read before the Cambridge Theological Society in February 1904, and revised in accordance with some kind suggestions of Prof. C. H. Turner.

office of bishop was to be instituted. Thus he was already consecrated to that office ; but, for a reason which I will presently adduce, I do not think that we can safely argue from the humility of his tone towards the virgins that he had only of late been installed in it. It has been argued from § 3 *ad has loquimur, has adhortamur adfectu potius quam potestate, nec quo extremi et minimi et humilitatis nostrae admodum conscii aliquid ad censuram licentiae vindicemus* that he cannot have been sure of his ground, as a bishop firmly seated on his throne would be, when he wrote in such terms. But they are quite consistent with personal, not official, humility ; and find their counterpart, and obviously their origin, in the still more exaggerated language of Tertullian *Cult. Fem.* ii 1 *in.* who describes himself by the monstrous epithet *postremissimus*. A preacher who begins by emphasizing his office, and later on (§ 21) exclaims *audite, virgines, ut parentem, ut parentem*, would not derogate from it in an intervening passage of the same short address. Thus it was a bishop who wrote, though we cannot discover at what stage of his episcopate he was writing except by a negative test. There is no hint of persecution as more than a possibility. Such allusions as there are are either borrowed from Tertullian, or of such a generalized kind as evidently to belong, if it may be said without disrespect, to the commonplaces of Christian eloquence.

We may apply another test of date. St Cyprian must have compiled his *Testimonia* very early in his Christian career, and it is evident that even after they were published he continued working on the same lines. In his later writings we may find not only texts, but groups of texts, absent from the *Testimonia*, recurring in such a way as to shew that he was drawing not directly from the Bible but from a store of passages that he had accumulated for his own use. This appendix to the *Testimonia* remained, no doubt, unpublished ; but it was not in existence when he wrote the *De Habitu Virginum*. Apart from references to some very obvious passages, there is only one direct citation in the homily which is not found in the *Testimonia*, and that is so inevitable a passage as *Faciamus hominem ad imaginem et similitudinem nostram* in § 15. There is no other of his writings which is so absolutely dependent for its quotations upon that collection ; and we may, I think, infer from the absence of any other of the numerous passages, both pointed and picturesque, which he might have cited with effect, that he had not had time, when he wrote the *De Habitu Virginum*, to add to the store already accumulated in the *Testimonia*, and therefore that the homily quickly followed the compilation.¹

¹ There is, however, one quotation of Scripture that is worthy of notice. It is well known that Cyprian was scrupulous in citing Scripture to name the book which was his source. But it has not been so often noticed that he frequently

But there is a further peculiarity which compels us to put the *De Habitu Virginum* early in Cyprian's career. Though it would be inaccurate to call it, either in content or in manner, a cento or adaptation from Tertullian, it is deeply beholden to him. And its relation to him is different from that of Cyprian's other homilies, the *De Bono Patientiae* and in part the *De Dominica Oratione*, which are directly adapted from the corresponding treatises of Tertullian. In them the work came to hand and was done forthwith; there is no sign of literary effort. But the *De Habitu Virginum* borrows from every one, I think, of the six treatises which Tertullian devoted to the various aspects of feminine ethics. This is very different conduct from the masterful adjustment to his own purposes of the thoughts of a single treatise; so elaborate an employment of the works of an earlier writer must have required leisure, and may well be thought to imply a want of self-confidence. We cannot say whether the excerpts were made and combined for the purpose of writing our homily, or whether at a somewhat later stage than that at which Cyprian made them he turned them to use. In either case, conscious though he is of the official authority with which he speaks, his expression, and in great measure his thought, is that of one who has not yet learned to trust his own resources.

So composite an origin can hardly be that of a document framed to meet an actual need. The address must have been drawn up at leisure; and the leisure that of one who had as yet little practical experience of the difficulties and aims of Christian life. It is, to tell the truth, a very bookish production and one that shews no close touch with reality. It is exaggerated and even violent in its statements and denunciations, and both its Christianity and its common sense are sadly defective. Would Cyprian in the maturity of his powers have described the marital relation as a *stuprum*? And would he have risked a smile by recommending undyed wool for the wear of Christian ladies? It would be an interesting point of antiquarianism to enquire whether such a vesture could be purchased in the markets of the third century. The whole picture, in fact, seems to be largely drawn from imagination. But it has another source as well. Cyprian was a rhetorician, and vanity in dress was one of the standing themes of ancient literature. There are some curious resemblances between the

introduces pithy or proverbial phrases of the Bible with a mere *quodsi* or *quando*. An instance is the *quodsi non est maior domino suo servus* in § 8, which Hartel has, perhaps pardonably, overlooked in his Index of Scriptures. Now in § 2 a period ends with the words *quando qui uiolat et ipse uioletur*. If they are not quoted as an authority, the sentence ends with pitiful tameness and want of effect; and they are introduced exactly as Cyprian is wont to introduce such phrases. It is, in fact, an inaccurate quotation from 1 Cor. 3. 17, probably modified to get the *esse uideatur* termination.

De Habitu Virginum and Propertius's well-known poem *Quid iuvat ornato procedere, vita, capillo?* Just as he wrote in excellent literary form, and according to an accepted type, his *Ad Donatum*, he seems to have undertaken to handle from the Christian point of view this common topic. Tertullian, in his *De Pallio*, had done exactly the same thing. It must have seemed worth while to shew that Christians were not inferior in the accomplishments of the day to their pagan rivals. Hence also the strangely artificial style of the *De Habitu Virginum*. It is one of its author's few writings in which there is no sign of haste and no slip in grammar. It is, in fact, painfully laboured, its language being often tortured into affectation, and obscurity risked lest there should be any lapse into the commonplace. The use of prepositions in uncommon senses is especially worthy of notice. It is all brilliantly clever, in a debased style, and naturally enough excited admiration. This has found expression in the *De Doctrina Christiana* of St Augustine, but it is strange that Augustine's laudations have been taken seriously by successive generations, and of late by Archbishop Benson. For St Augustine, great as he was, was not superior to the temptation of a paradox, and he thought fit to protest that Cyprian and Ambrose were better material for education than all the classics. *Hoc Ithacus velit*; it was the very degradation that Julian had desired to inflict upon the Christian youth. Such a proposition, if it was to gain a hearing, could not be made in a tentative manner; there must be round and emphatic assertion. We can go far in agreement with his praise of St Ambrose, the most uniformly charming though not the most original of the Latin Fathers—would it be fair to say that he stands to St Augustine much as Schiller stands to Goethe?—but when we are boldly bidden to find in the *De Habitu Virginum* models of the *submissum* and *temperatum genus dicendi* and of the *dictio grandis* we cannot help remembering that the saint is engaged in special pleading, and that if we must demur to his plea against the classics we cannot accept his estimate of the passages which he adduces in illustration of the substitutes he proposes. We must, then, I think, take the *De Habitu Virginum* as an immature work of its author, as one deliberately composed for general purposes of edification and perhaps for the particular purpose of displaying the writer's capacity and his interest in his flock, rather than to meet a special need.

Nothing, in fact, is more striking about the address than its generality. There is less that a reader can take hold of as a clue than in any other of St Cyprian's writings. And this makes it practically impossible to discuss its contents at moderate length. Its interest lies in its being one of the earliest circumstantial evidences for the institution of Christian virgins, and incidentally in the light which it throws upon Christian

opinion in several respects in the third century and upon the social condition of the Church. As regards this last matter it is very instructive. The general belief that the Christians before Constantine were, as a class, poor, is one that seriously needs reconsideration. Not to speak of strong pieces of evidence to the contrary in Cyprian's epistles, two of his homilies, the present and *De Opere et Eleemosyna*, assume the opposite. They are pointless if there were not rich members among his flock, and so pointed as to be tactless if the rich were not comparatively numerous. Otherwise he would be indulging in unpardonable personalities. I mention the point because I have lately noticed that even Dr Kenyon in his *Introduction to N. T. Criticism* has assumed, as a reason why ancient copies of Scripture are so rare, that they were poor things as the property of poor men. Not to mention such examples as Pamphilus and the wealthy patrons of Origen, Cyprian himself was a rich man, and the family Bible of an Acilius Glabrio must have been well worth seeing. No doubt, in estimating the weight to be given as an evidence of wealth to such ostentation as Cyprian denounces, we must make allowance for the custom, where credit is undeveloped, of saving money in the form of jewellery. Another custom, that of expending an undue proportion of small means upon finery, we must not assume. St Cyprian would certainly have hit at that weakness if he had known of its prevalence. He does nothing of the kind. His complaint is that the virgins, and married women also, followed the fashion set by others, not under the same obligation to simplicity, who were of their own rank in life.

But it is noteworthy that he assumes throughout that these ladies had no idea that they were acting inconsistently with their profession. He speaks as informing them of an important truth which has never occurred to their minds. That most powerful of appeals, to the sense of having done wrong, which he uses elsewhere with singular force, is absent from the *De Habitu Virginum*. And I do not think that this is merely an evidence of the orator's courtesy. Very effectual use has often been made of this rhetorical device; but such psychological subtlety seems alien to the robust declamation of St Cyprian. It is best to take him literally, and believe that the custom at Carthage had been for well-to-do virgins to regard their vow as one of abstinence in one particular only, and to live exactly as other ladies did whose standard of comfort was the same as their own. Even the use of the *promiscua balnea*, which seems so strange to us, was so widely prevalent that custom must have become a safeguard of morality. The treatment of this part of the subject by the Abbé Duchesne is so admirable that no more can be said. He points out, as we know, that the glory was in the abstinence, because it was known to be difficult, and in no accessory

services of charity or worship. And when we consider the extraordinary degree of liberty which Roman custom actually forced upon women of independent means, married or unmarried, we can understand that the difficulty was as great for them as it unhappily is now for the rough girls who work in market-gardens or factories. The want of any rule of life enhanced the value of the self-sustained as well as self-imposed *disciplina*, with an eloquent praise of which the address begins.

But when we come to its details we have a curious sense of unreality. The dangers to the male acquaintances of the virgins are violently exaggerated, and stated in a way which is strangely uncomplimentary to the ladies. The existence of natural beauty is absolutely ignored; they are told that they would not be attractive unless they adorned themselves with ostentation; and they are bidden as a duty to dress themselves in such a manner that it shall be impossible for any one to fall in love with them (§ 9). And this must be, not by the assumption of a distinctive attire that shall command respect, but by the wearing of a mean variety of the ordinary dress. In this, and in a good deal else, the writer seems to be moving in an unreal world. But it is a world which we can easily enter. In the speeches, and outlines of speeches, in the rhetorical writings of the elder Seneca we find all manner of social as well as legal and political questions treated in the same artificial way. Reputation was gained, not by fixing upon sound positions and keeping close to real life, but by ingenuity in the development of fanciful situations. No doubt the Christians brought up in the same bad taste could transport themselves into the same imaginary world, and admire the dexterity which a Christian rhetorician could display in it. St Cyprian, perhaps for the last time in his life, was allowing a crude rhetorical theme to run away with him.

But the feeling which prompts these rhetorical excesses is obviously genuine, and the praise which he showers upon the virgins as sincere as his own self-depreciation. And this brings me to a point of biography which has, so far as I know, never been noticed. In § 22 he is extolling the virgins. They are living the life of the Resurrection. 'We', he says, 'shall be hereafter what you are already.' In other words, we are now what you are not. The point of comparison is not any general excellence of character, but clearly and precisely that abstinence which is the *differentia* of the virgin. That abstinence St Cyprian disclaims for himself. Had he been married? There had been ample time for him to win and to lose a wife before his conversion, and there was no possible reason why she, probably a pagan, should be mentioned among the few and intentionally vague particulars which are given us of his earlier life. Even if he had not been married a glance at Friedländer or Marquardt will shew that public opinion would not have affixed to

him the slightest reproach for levity of conduct. There is in Pontius (§ 2) a passage which confirms my suggestion. After saying that he begins his biography, where biographies ought to begin, with his hero's baptism, he proceeds: *inter fidei suae prima rudimenta nihil aliud credidit Deo dignum quam ut continentiam tueretur*. This would be consistent with either of the two suppositions I have named; and though it would be unfair to read too much into the words of Pontius, we must not make him mean less than he says. This hypothesis, and this only, will explain the language of extreme humility which he, no doubt in deliberate imitation of Tertullian, uses of himself. It was in an address to the *Ancillae Dei* that Tertullian had styled himself *postremissimus* (*Cult. Fem.* ii 1 in.). Tertullian was a married man, and I think it was because he was married that he inflicted that title upon himself. The *extremi et minimi et humilitatis nostrae admodum conscii* of St Cyprian is its exact counterpart.

Many points of interest have, no doubt, escaped my notice; there are many on which I have been intentionally silent, either from their width or from my own consciousness that my knowledge is inadequate. In particular, the general subject of celibacy and the comparison of St Cyprian's point of view with that of other ancient writers are themes too ambitious for me. May I only suggest that Clement of Alexandria seems to set forth most perfectly the other possible view of the matter as it presented itself to an ancient, and that much may be learned not only from the contrast between *Quis Dives* and *De Opere et Eleemosyna*, but also from that between the *Paedagogus* and *De Habitu Virginum*?

E. W. WATSON.

ST PETER'S TOKEN OF THE COCK CROW.

I.

THE commentators on St Peter's denial and on the Lord's prediction of it have interpreted the Cock-crowing as referring to the act of a living bird awaking from its slumber to salute the approach of morning.

I believe that this interpretation is incorrect, and that the token given by Christ, and recognized by St Peter, when he heard it, was not the crowing of a domestic cock aroused from sleep, but the *Gallicinium*, the signal given on the *buccina* at the close of the third night-watch, and the change of guard.¹

¹ The four night-watches are frequently mentioned by commentators, but the token given by our Lord has not been assigned by them, so far as I know, to