

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*?

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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

The division of the night into four watches, termed *Vigilia Prima*, *Secunda*, *Tertia*, and *Quarta* (or φυλακή πρώτη, &c.) was part of Roman military discipline. By the beginning of the first century A.D. it had superseded in Palestine the older Hebrew division into three (First Watch, Lam. ii 19; Middle Watch, Judges vii 19; and the Last Watch, Exod. xiv 24).

That the Roman division was known to our Lord is shewn in Mk. xiii 35: 'Watch, therefore, for ye know not when the lord of the house cometh, whether at even, or at midnight, or at cock-crowing, or in the morning'; ὄψέ, μεσονύκτιον, ἀλεκτοροφωνία and πρωί.

The close of one watch and the commencement of another was made known by a blast of the *buccina*, and the four watches were sometimes called *buccina prima*, *secunda*, &c., in consequence. The soldier who gave the signal was guided by a clepsydra in keeping his times correctly. Trimalchio is held up to ridicule by Petronius for introducing a military custom into his domestic arrangements. 'Trimalchio, lautissimus homo, horologium in triclinio et Buccinatorem habet subornatum, uti subinde sciat, quantum de vita perdidit' (Petronius, 26).

The Roman garrison in occupation of the Antonia, which dominated Jerusalem, was in near proximity to the Temple, and the signal of the change of the watch given from this eminence must have been heard throughout the city, and have been a leading feature in the passage of the night.

This blast, at the close of the third night-watch, the *Gallicinium*, as it was popularly called—or ἀλεκτοροφωνία—I submit was the signal made at a definite moment, which would promptly recall the attention of the apostle to his lapse.

The term *Gallicinium* had long ceased to be connected with an actual cock-crowing, from which it had been derived. That it was commonly used as a note of time is seen in Apuleius *Met.* viii, which begins 'Noctis Gallicinio venit quidam iuvenis ex proxima civitate'.

This interpretation meets the requirements of the narratives in Matthew, Luke, and John, and gives to the token a definite point or application, in which the crowing of cocks is lacking.

A late writer, Vegetius (*Epitome Rei Militaris*), supplies a more elaborate account of the proceedings on a change of watch, though one in harmony with the earlier custom, and adds 'A tubicine omnes uigiliae committuntur et finitis horis a cornicine reuocantur'.

the trumpet blast given by the soldier on duty. E. g. Plummer, in his commentary on St Luke (4th ed. 1901), p. 505, states on verse 34 of chap. xxii that

'the third of the four Roman Watches was called ἀλεκτοροφωνία, *Gallicinium*. . . . The expression here is equivalent to "Before the night is past"'. . .

According to this interpretation the cock-crowing, considered as a token, seems to disappear. It is only a phrase or fashion of speech. But on p. 516, commenting on verse 60, he reverts to an actual crowing.

II.

St Mark, the earliest of the four, is the only Evangelist who speaks of *two* cock-crowings. Is he correct? And did our Lord give, as a token to St Peter, two cock-crowings or one?

The two later Synoptists, Matthew and Luke, as well as the writer of the Fourth Gospel, all posterior to Mark in point of time, desert him in this particular. Against accepting Mark's version there are the following considerations:—

1. The element of uncertainty in the text. Mk. xiv 68: 'And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew'. Here W. H., followed by Swete, omits *καὶ ἀλέκτωρ ἐφώνησεν*, with Codex Sinaiticus, C. Vaticanus, and some other MSS.

Swete also encloses in square brackets [*ἡ δὲ*] in Mk. xiv 30, as omitted by C. Sinaiticus, C. Bezae, &c., and adds in a footnote 'Δὲς (cf. v. 72) is peculiar to Mark in the Canonical Gospels, but is supported by the Fayûm papyrus'.

Swete again in Mk. xiv 72 encloses *δὲς* in square brackets, and in a footnote states 'Mark, according to the best text (see v. 68 app. crit.), has not referred to an earlier cock-crowing'.

2. The refusal of Matthew and Luke, who had Mark before them, to follow him in this particular—for which it may be presumed they had adequate reason.

3. The especial claim of Luke to full and accurate knowledge.

4. The testimony of the Fourth Gospel, which, if written by the Apostle John, is the witness of one who was on the scenes at the time of the denial; and, if written by another John, shews the accepted tradition at the time of the composition of this Gospel.

5. When Mark inserts graphic or realistic details not mentioned elsewhere they are most acceptable. The case would be different when an occurrence affecting the whole *mise en scène* is introduced—such as the mention of two cock-crowings in the place of one; the latter statement marking a point of time, the former the speed with which one event followed another.

6. Our Lord's prediction, according to Mark, does not assert that a cock should crow *twice*; but before a second crowing succeeded a first (which would follow at a very short interval) three denials would take place. *Πρὶν ἢ δὲς ἀλέκτορα φωνῆσαι τρίς με ἀπαρνήσῃ* (Mk. xiv 30).

7. The *ἐκ δευτέρου* in Mk. xiv 72 is the interpretation attached to *δὲς* by the source from which Mark received his information. 'And straightway, the second time the cock crew'. But if the *δὲς* is uncertain, the comment shares its fate.

8. The presence of *δὲς* in Mark's version of our Lord's prediction may

easily be accounted for on the score of its assonance with *τῆς*, for by this addition the sentence gains in forcefulness.

But the prediction in this form suggests the influence of a proverb to the effect that the event foretold will be followed by another, as closely as the successive crowings of a cock. It is no longer a distinct mark of the time of the event, but of the speed with which one denial followed another.

9. Two allusions are made in classical writers to a *second cock*, or to a cock crowing the *second* time (Juv. ix 106 and Aristoph. *Ecccl.* 389-392), but in both cases the idea is the brief interval between the crowing of a cock and the response of his rival to the challenge, or between two consecutive crowings of the same bird. The references do not touch the question of a second burst of vocal energy after a considerable interval.

10. Travellers in the East have reported three outbursts of cock-crowing during the night—at 11.30 p.m., 1.30 a.m., and 3 a.m.

The first of these is put aside as being too early for the denial, and it is acknowledged that cock-crowing is heard all through the night; and Thompson remarks that 'it seems to be an objection to the sign given to Peter, that a thousand cocks in Jerusalem might crow at any hour' (*Land and The Book*). The uncertainty thus arising is sought to be countered by supposing that it was a cock in the High Priest's palace, or a bird belonging to a Roman soldier in the Antonia, that gave the token.

I submit, therefore, that the interpretation of the cock-crowing as the *Gallicinium* not only completely harmonizes with the accounts given in Matthew, Luke, and John, but also

1. Gives a clear and decisive mark of time, which is absent from the crowing of the living bird; and was a token easily to be recognized by St Peter when it came.
2. Obviates the difficulties occasioned by the *three* bursts of crowing during the night, and by the irregular crowings at other times.
3. Removes any objection to an actual cock-crowing in Jerusalem, arising from the presumed uncleanness of this dung-hill bird.
4. And agrees with a revised text of St Mark's narrative.

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