

THE PRESBYTERIAN QUARTERLY.

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I. CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS.¹

You have called me to the discharge of most responsible duty and exalted service in this honored school of sacred learning. I sincerely pray that your call and my acceptance may unite in being an outward expression of the mind of the Spirit and of the will of God in regard to the way in which Christ's cause may be served and his name honored by means of this institution. Having hope that such is the case, it will be the earnest and undivided effort of my life, so long as I remain in your service, to perform the duties of this high office to the best of my ability, ever seeking the needed wisdom and promised grace which Christ's servants may claim.

You have also informed me that a short time prior to my election the scope of the chair whose work is committed to my trust was so enlarged as to include the entire field of Christian apologetics. This, in my judgment, is a very important change, and it makes exceedingly useful modifications of the work pertaining to this chair possible. Its incumbent will now be in a position to deal with several great topics not embraced in the field of the relations of science and revelation; and he will at the same time be able to construe many things which emerge in the discussion of these relations under the category of Christian apologetics. In this way the work of this professorship may be made wider in its scope and more systematic in the treatment of its materials than was possible under its former designation.

¹ Inaugural address by F. R. Beattie, on the occasion of his installation as Professor in the Theological Seminary at Columbia, S. C., May, 1890.

II. THE APOCRYPHAL SCRIPTURES.

It seems strange that any believer in divine inspiration should attempt to palm off his own production as a part of the Word of God. It is only less strange that an unbeliever or a disbeliever should do so. Pious frauds of this kind have, however, been practiced from ante-Christian days down to the present time. Much of this impersonation of others is done in other fields of literature. The literary impostors of the eighteenth century exemplify it. All fiction, in drama, epic, or novel, is a phase of it. Daniel Webster essayed to reproduce the speech of the elder Adams on the Declaration of Independence; and, we may say, the disposition to counterfeit others is one of the most common of human passions. There are several motives which may prompt to this in literature. The most powerful, doubtless, is a pride of imitation, coupled with the pleasure of deceiving others. The love of money has also been known to operate. Some have tried to persuade themselves that they were serving both God and man in their attempted contributions to the sacred Scriptures.

These writings are called apocryphal, because the evidence of their inspiration is regarded as hidden, obscure, unsatisfactory. In Matthew's English Bible of 1537, and in Cranmer's of 1539, the apocryphal books of the Old Testament are placed together and are called the *Hagiographa*, the name given by the Alexandrian Jews to their third division of the books of the Old Testament. As the inspired books are known as canonical, the apocryphal were dignified as deutero-canonical; that is, canonical in a secondary or qualified sense.

OLD TESTAMENT.

THE HIGHER APOCRYPHAL WRITINGS; DEUTERO-CANONICAL.

A broad distinction is to be observed in those books that pass among Protestants under the general name of apocryphal. They are to be divided into two classes, the first of which is variously

styled *Hagiographa*, *Deutero-canonical*, *Ecclesiastical*. The marks of this class (so far as it belongs to the Old Testament) are: 1, They are not found in the Hebrew or Jewish canon, and are not recognized by the Jews as inspired. 2, They are found in the old Greek versions, the Septuagint, in the old Latin version, and in the Syriac (?). 3, They are publicly read as a part of the service in some branches of the Christian church. They are: I. and II. Esdras, Tobit, Judith, The Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, with The Epistle of Jeremiah, The Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Holy Children, The History of Susannah, The Destruction of Bel and the Dragon, The Prayer of Manasses, and I., II. and III. Maccabees; and Additions to Esther.

The Eastern or Greek Church receives all of these, and makes no distinction between them and the canonical books. The Council of Trent, acting for the Church of Rome, at its fourth session, April 8, 1546, adopted, after discussion, the views of Augustine as opposed to those of Jerome, and accepted "as sacred and canonical" all of the above books except I. and II. Esdras, The Prayer of Manasses, and III. Maccabees.

The Anglican Church, in the edition of the *Thirty-nine Articles* of 1562, accepted the canon of Jerome, which is the Hebrew, and rejected the deutero-canonical as of inspired authority, but held them to be "read for example of life and instruction of manners, but not to establish any doctrine." This church includes in this class all of the above books except III. Maccabees, but no lessons are taken from the other two books of Maccabees. The sixth of the Articles of the Protestant Episcopal Church in this country is of similar import with that of the Church of England. In the "Tables of Lessons of Holy Scripture to be read," as given in the *Book of Common Prayer*, authorized by the Episcopal Church of the United States, there are a score or more of selections from *Wisdom* and *Ecclesiasticus*, but none from the other books of this secondary class.

The *Helvetic Confession* of the Reformed Church of Switzerland, March 1, 1566, accepts the Hebrew canon as alone inspired, but, like the Church of England, considers the deutero-canonical

as good to be read, but not for authority in belief. The position of the Reformed Church of Holland is the same.

The *Confession of Augsburg*, which is the doctrinal formulary of the Lutheran Church, has no rule on the canon. It is strange that no definite deliverance was made on this vital question. The Lutherans have no rule on the subject except Luther's Bible, in which the canonical books of the Old Testament are placed first, and, between them and the New Testament, are put the deuterocanonical; just as many of our old Bibles were printed.

The fifth of the *Articles of Religion* of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, recognizes none but the canonical, and does not even refer to the apocryphal.

The *Westminster Confession* (Chap. I., Sec. II.) pronounces in favor of the canonical, and, in the third section, says: "The books commonly called Apocrypha not being of divine inspiration, are no part of the canon of the Scripture; and therefore are of no authority in the church of God, nor to be any otherwise approved or made use of than other human writings."

As the Greek and Roman churches, constituting a large majority of the professed Christians of the world, receive these books as inspired and a part of the rule of faith, it is a matter of interest to examine the evidence which bears upon the question.

In favor of their inspiration there is:

I. *The Ancient MSS.*

The Alexandrian, the Vatican, the Sinaitic, and the Ephraem, four of the oldest and best, contain these books. A and B have *IV. Maccabees*, the Sinaitic has the *Epistle of Barnabas* and the *Shepherd of Hermas*.

II. *The Versions.*

The Septuagint and the Italic form of the Vulgate have them. The Peshito Syriac, it is thought, did not have them at first, but they were added to it at an early day.

III. *The Early Catalogues of the Books.*

1. That of Melito, bishop of Sardis, 170 A. D., has the Hebrew canon only, and omits from it the book of Esther. 2. That of the Council of Laodicea, 365 A. D., has, in addition to the canonical, the book of Baruch, with the Epistle of Jeremiah. It

also omits Revelation from the New Testament. 3. That of the Council of Hippo, where Augustine was present as a bishop, 393 A. D., in addition to the Hebrew canon, enumerates Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Tobit, Judith, and two books of Maccabees. The third and fourth Councils of Carthage agree with that of Hippo. 4. That of Augustine accepts Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, and the two books of Maccabees, as the Council of Hippo had done. 5. That of Innocent I., 405 A. D., is also the same, except that he rejects Esther.

IV. The fathers, Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, Augustine, and many others of these, are said to have recognized them as belonging to the canonical Scriptures. It is said in Kitto's *Cyclopedia* (from which most of these facts are gathered) that "the only copies of the Scriptures in existence for the first three hundred years after Christ, either among the Jews or Christians of Greece, Italy, or Africa, contained these books without any mark of distinction that we know of."

Against their canonicity it may be urged:

I. That all the arguments given in their favor amount only to this: that a great many, and probably a majority, of the early Christians accepted them. A majority still accept them, as has been stated. That this fact affords a presumption in their favor need not be questioned. It will impair its weight somewhat, however, to remember that these early witnesses are by no means unanimous, nor is their judgment such as the believers in the apocryphal books would be willing to accept in its entirety. They reject some books that all Christendom now receive, and they accept others which are as unanimously rejected. As Jerome, Hilary, and others disputed their canonicity in early days, so there are theologians of the Roman Church who contend that the Council of Trent meant to give only a secondary authority to these books.

II. They are now, and have always been, unanimously repudiated by the Jews. Philo never recognizes them, and Josephus expressly limits the number to the regular Hebrew canon. (*Contra Apion* i. 8.)

III. While they contain many truths well expressed, and are so far valuable, most of them give strong internal evidence against

their own inspiration. The books of Esdras, or Ezra, are four in all. *I. Esdras* is the canonical book of *Ezra*, and *II. Esdras* the canonical book of *Nehemiah*. *III. Esdras* is *I. Esdras* of the Apocrypha, and is a parallel history to canonical Ezra, with some interpolations from 2 Chronicles and Nehemiah. The most interesting thing in it is the contest between Zerubbabel and his two companions as to which of them should speak the wisest sentence. The first wrote, "Wine is the strongest"; the second, "The King is the strongest," and Zerubbabel, "Women are strongest, but, above all things, truth beareth away the victory." All the people shout, "Great is truth, and mighty above all things." The king, Darius, confirmed this decision and gave the reward of victory to Zerubbabel. *IV. Esdras* is *II. Esdras* of the Apocrypha, and is a collection of moral and prophetic statements. It is discredited by historical difficulties and many questionable utterances. It is certainly pseudepigraphal, as is *III. Esdras*. *Tobit* contains both historical and geographical difficulties inconsistent with its inspiration; but is condemned also by its superstitions as to Asmodeus, the evil spirit, who killed the seven husbands of Sara, and as to the efficacy of "the ashes of perfume" and the heart and liver of the fish in driving Asmodeus away. This book also makes Raphael, a holy angel, tell a direct lie in asserting himself to be "Azarias, the son of Ananias the Great."

Competent scholars assert that there are insuperable difficulties, both in geography and history, in the book of *Judith*. These discrepancies are seen by every careful and intelligent reader. To most persons, moreover, the book is discredited for moral reasons. Judith is set forth as a pious heroine of the true faith. She prays, she fasts, she prophesies, she consecrates herself to the deliverance of her people, sorely pressed by Holofernes, the captain of Nabuchadonozor. The means used by this champion of truth and virtue are lying, both in act and word, and an immodest exposure of herself to Holofernes, who fortunately becomes so stupefied in the drunken revel that he does not accomplish what he designed and what she knew was his purpose when she went voluntarily into his tent.

The *Additions to Esther* are quite unimportant, being a mere

enlargement or filling out of the canonical book. The fact that they are not in the book as received by the Jews, and that there is nothing in them which would offend Jewish prejudices, would seem sufficient to reject them. There is no special objection to them, except that, if Josephus is to be credited, they would make Mordecai one hundred and sixty-five years old.

The Wisdom of Solomon, from which lessons are read in the Episcopal churches of this country, is a collection of excellent truths, well expressed, and illustrated in God's dealings with the people in olden times. There seems no special objection to it. It is very much like the Psalms and Proverbs, but is probably pseud-epigraphal.

The Wisdom of Jesus, the Son of Sirach, or Ecclesiasticus, is the other book from which the Prayer Book has selected readings for the holidays. It does not seem to be equal to the preceding, and, while like it in many respects, is much longer and more varied. It is mostly very good. Possibly our maidens would object to "Hast thou daughters? have a care of their body, and show not thyself cheerful toward them" (vii. 24); our sopranos and altos might be offended with this injunction, "Use not much the company of a woman that is a singer, lest thou be taken with her attempts" (ix. 4); we preachers might consider this lesson as somewhat personal, "Let thy speech be short, comprehending much in few words; be as one that knoweth and yet holdeth his tongue" (xxxii. 8); and the modern cook or housemaid would be highly indignant at this, "Fodder, a wand and burdens are for the ass; and bread, correction and work for a servant" (xxxiii. 24). It is quite remarkable that, in an extended account of the Old Testament worthies, there is no mention of Daniel or Ezra, while Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Nehemiah, Joshua, the son of Josedech, and Zerubbabel are celebrated.

Baruch is a penitential confession and lamentation; Jerusalem is introduced as a desolate widow weeping for the sins of her children, and she is comforted with the promise of the deliverance of her captives. *The Epistle of Jeremiah* is a strong, common sense dissuasive from idolatry, addressed by Jeremiah to the Jews at Babylon. This epistle is sometimes made a part of Baruch, and

both were, in early days, occasionally incorporated with the prophecy of Jeremiah. While many critics doubt that these books proceeded from the writers whose names they bear, there is nothing in either plainly inconsistent with its inspiration.

The additions to Daniel embrace the *Prayer of Azarias* and the *Song of the Three Holy Children*, the *History of Susannah*, and the *History of the Destruction of Bel and the Dragon*. Azarias makes for himself, his companions and his people, a confession of sin and a prayer for God's mercy and salvation. All three are then in the fiery furnace. The angel of the Lord comes down into the oven and "smites the flame of fire out of the oven, and makes the midst of the furnace as it had been a moist, whistling wind, so that the fire touched them not at all." The three now join in a song of triumphal praise. *Susannah* is the story of an innocent and beautiful woman, the wife of Joachim, accused and condemned by the men who had sought in vain to seduce her, and who were the regular Jewish judges among the captives. She is rescued from execution by the wisdom of Daniel in unveiling the plot of the conspirators. *Bel* is an idol, as is also the *Dragon*. The former consumed daily twelve measures of flour, forty sheep, and six vessels of wine. Cyrus, the king, was convinced from this that Bel was a real, living being, blessed with a hearty appetite. Daniel, upon the forfeit of his life, denied to the king that this food was eaten by Bel. Whereupon the test was made; the ordinary provisions were placed before the idol and the doors were locked, after Daniel, with the knowledge of the king, but not of the priests of Bel, had strewed the floor with ashes. The seventy priests, with their wives and children, entered the temple at night through their customary secret under-ground passway, and consumed the viands. In the morning, after all had assembled and the doors were opened, the king shouted the triumph of Bel; but Daniel laughed and pointed to the footprints of the men, women and children on the floor. The king protested, however, that, though Bel was an imposture, the Dragon was a living god who ate and drank. Daniel proposed to slay the Dragon without sword or staff; and when permission was given, burst the idol in sunder by means of "pitch, fat and hair" seethed and thrust into its mouth.

The destruction of these gods is represented as producing such an outcry that the king is forced to put Daniel into the lions' den. The account given of this differs from that in the canonical parts of Daniel: 1, In making it occur under Cyrus, instead of Darius; 2, In the reason which prompted the act; here it is the destruction of the idol, there it is Daniel's praying to Jehovah; 3, In the time of Daniel's remaining in the den; there it is merely over night, here it is six days; 4, In the circumstance that here, the prophet Habakkuk, who is carrying some food to reapers in Judea, is taken by an angel of the Lord by the crown and borne by the hair of his head to Babylon, where he gives the food to famishing Daniel in the den, and is then carried back to his home along the same aerial bee-line.

The Prayer of Manasses, King of Judah, is penitential and proper, and purports to have been offered by him when he was a captive in Babylon. This book was rejected by the Council of Trent.

There are altogether five books of the Maccabees, only three of which are deuterocanonical, the remaining two being rejected by all the churches. It is doubtful whether we now have *V. Maccabees*. The work that is so called is mainly an account of the pontificate of John Hyrcanus. It does not agree with Josephus. *IV. Maccabees* is found in both the Alexandrian and Vatican MSS., and is usually regarded the same as the *Supremacy of Reason* attributed to Josephus. It is an amplification of the sixth and seventh chapters of *II. Maccabees*, which give an account of the tyranny and cruelty of Antiochus Epiphanes and of the torture of Eleazar, the seven brothers and their mother. It is not consistent with *II. Maccabees*, and teaches the stoical doctrine of the equality of all crimes. *III. Maccabees* is received by the Greek Church, but is rejected by all others. Its history antedates that of *I.* and *II. Maccabees*, and is an account of the persecution of the Egyptian Jews by Ptolemy Philopator. *III. Maccabees* is one of the undisputed deuterocanonical books. Beginning as far back as Jeremiah and Nehemiah, it brings the narrative down to Nicanor's death, 161 B. C., only so far as the seventh chapter of *I. Maccabees* carries it. It professes to be an abridgment of a work in five volumes, pre-

pared by Jason of Cyrene. The letters in the book are inconsistent with the narrative, and in several particulars it contradicts the first Maccabees, to which it is quite inferior. *I. Maccabees* is a reliable history of the revolt of the Maccabees, beginning with their father, Mattathias, and continuing the history to the death of Simon, the last of his priestly, warrior sons. This is very interesting to all lovers of liberty, who rejoice at the enterprise, wisdom, courage and success of the patriot brothers. It is remarkable that the first four books of the Maccabees, so far from being successive to each other, are rather in an inverse chronological order. The fifth book really succeeds the first, although it restates some of its history.

Taking these books as a class, it is clear that most of them contain within themselves evidences of their lack of divine inspiration.

IV. The determining reason why they should be rejected from the canon is the fact that they were not recognized as inspired by Christ and the apostles. This is the true test of the Old Testament canon; it is not the belief of the Jews, nor is it the opinions of the early fathers, nor is it the decrees of equally fallible councils, but it is the unerring and inspired judgment of Christ and his apostles. The books which they received are inspired, and none others are. Let the question be decided on this issue. That the so-called deuterocanonical were not so recognized is shown, 1, By the fact that no one of them is quoted or referred to as *Scripture* in the New Testament. This is disputed, and a score of passages are brought forward from the New Testament, which are said to refer to similar passages in the Apocrypha. With regard to these it will be seen, (1), That in the majority of these cases there are passages fully as similar found in the Old Testament; (2), That the name of no one of these apocryphal books is mentioned in these places, nor anywhere else in the Old Testament or New Testament; (3), That there are direct quotations avowedly made in the New Testament from the Book of Enoch and the Anabasis of Moses, which no church receives, and also from the heathen poets, so that mere quotation is not sufficient; it must be quoted as scripture; (4), That but a single one of these

alleged quotations even remotely refers to the passage as quoted, or as of authority. In every case but this one, it is merely a similarity of idea or of expression that is relied on to prove the reference. The one exception is Matt. ix. 13: "But go ye and learn what that meaneth: I will have mercy and not sacrifice; for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance." It is alleged that this refers to the *Prayer of Manasses*. Now, as this seems to be the strongest case in the list, we must notice, *a*, That the *Prayer of Manasses* is not accepted by the Roman, though it is by the Greek Church; *b*, That the expression quoted is not found in the *Prayer of Manasses*, nor is there any similar language to be read there; the resemblance is solely in thought; *c*, That the idea similarly expressed is to be found in Prov. xxi. 3, and Micah vi. 6-8, while the direct quotation is from Hos. vi. 6. We may, therefore, confidently repeat our first point under this argument, that no one of these disputed books is referred to or quoted as scripture anywhere in the New Testament.

2. Not only is there the absence of any special reference to the *Apocrypha* on the part of Christ and the apostles, but also they form no part of the collection of books to which appeal was constantly made. In several places "scripture" or "scriptures" are referred to as the inspired volume. This seems vague. In other passages the appeal is to the "law"; in several others to "the law and the prophets"; and in one, to "the law, the prophets, and the psalms." It is hardly susceptible of doubt that all these expressions refer to the same collection of writings. It was called "scripture," because it was the written revelation of God; "the law," because that was regarded as the foundation and principal part of the whole; "the law and the prophets," because these were its two main divisions; and, finally, "the law, the prophets, and the psalms," because the collection was so divided by the Rabbis. They are all the same volume; and, historically, that volume is the Jewish canon, as received by Protestants to-day.

So much for the higher class in the Old Testament of the apocryphal writings, called deutero-canonical, and received as inspired by a part of the church.

THE LOWER APOCRYPHAL WRITINGS, OLD TESTAMENT.

This class embraces those books not received as canonical by any church.

I. *Books not mentioned in the Bible.*

They will be simply enumerated: A *Book of Elias*, in existence in Origen's day and condemned by him; *IV. Maccabees*; *V. Maccabees*, what is so-called is mainly an account of the pontificate of John Hyrcanus, was originally written in Hebrew, has fifty-eight chapters, does not agree with Josephus, begins with the attempt of Heliodorus on the treasury of the temple, and brings the history down to Herod's murder of Mariamne and their two sons; the *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs*; the *Assumption of Moses*, still in existence; the *Ascension of Isaiah*, still in existence; the *Apocalypse of Daniel*; the *Book of Zohar*; the *Testament of Judah*; the *Testament of Benjamin*; the *Additions to Job*; and the *One Hundred and Fifty-first Psalm*. All of these are referred to in the patristic literature.

II. *Books mentioned in the Bible, but now lost.*

These have all long since perished, and are supposed to have been the original memoirs or official annals, to which the inspired writers had access, and from which they gathered much of their material. There are three of these that may merit a brief special notice.

The *Book of Enoch* is the only one of this class to which any reference is made by name in the New Testament. Jude says, verses 14 and 15, "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." There is in the possession of the Christian world to-day a book which claims to be the one from which Jude quotes. Our first historical acquaintance with it is as found in an Ethiopic manuscript of the Scriptures coming from Abyssinia. It was regarded canonical by the early Abyssinian church, and was placed immediately before the Book of Job in the Old Testament. It could not have been written by Enoch, as it brings the history down to the time of Herod. It is

thought to be the composition of a Jew, probably a Christian Jew, of the first century. It teaches the Trinity, Christ's eternity, that he is to be worshipped, and is the Supreme Judge; that there is to be a future state of retribution and eternal punishment. Tertulian is the only one of the fathers who considered it canonical.

The *Book of Jasher* is mentioned, Joshua x. 13, and 2 Sam. i. 18. There is no work extant which is claimed to be the book thus referred to. Several explanations have been given of the name: 1. That it means "Of the Upright," as will be seen in the margins of our Bibles. 2. "Of Songs." 3. That it was the first word in the book, and gave name to it according to the Jewish custom. 4. That it is the name of the author. Josephus says that it was one of the books of the temple, but does not regard it as one of the sacred twenty-two. (*Antiq.* v. 1-17.) Theodoret thinks that all of Joshua was taken from it. Jerome considers it the same as Genesis; others identify it with the Pentateuch, and others still think it was a treatise on archery. There are two rabbinical works that bear this name.

A work purporting to be the "Book of the Wars of the Lord," referred to in Num. xxi. 14, was in existence during the life of Augustine, and was stigmatized by him as apocryphal.

The remaining books of this class will be merely mentioned: *Book of the Acts of Solomon*, 1 Kings xi. 41; *Chronicles of the Kings of Israel*, 1 Kings xv. 31; *Chronicles of King David*, 1 Chron. xxvii. 24; *Book of Samuel the Seer*, *Book of Nathan the Prophet*, *Book of Gad the Seer*, 1 Chron. xxix. 29; *Prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite*, the *Visions of Iddo the Seer against Jeroboam*, 2 Chron. ix. 29; *Book of Shemaiah the Prophet*, of *Iddo the Seer concerning Genealogies*, 2 Chron. xii. 15; the *Story* (Commentary, margin) of the *Prophet Iddo*, 2 Chron. xiii. 22; *Book of Jehu*, and *Book of the Kings of Israel*, 2 Chron. xx. 34; *Story* (Commentary, margin) of the *Book of the Kings*, 2 Chron. xxiv. 27; *The Sayings of the Seers* (*Hosai*, margin) 2 Chron. xxxiii. 19; *The Lamentations*, 2 Chron. xxxv. 25.

THE NEW TESTAMENT—THE ANTILEGOMENA.

The books written after the coming of Christ may, of course, be divided into the two classes of canonical and non-canonical.

All that were received as inspired by any one of the apostles, and no others, belong to the former class. The fathers, however, at the suggestion of Eusebius, divided these into two sections: 1. The *Homologoumena*—that is, those universally confessed as inspired. These are all now found in our Bibles, except, 2, The *Antilegomena*: Hebrews, James, II. Peter, II. and III. John, Jude, and Revelation. This latter class were so named because in the first centuries there were some Christians who disputed their canonicity. *The Epistle to the Hebrews* was discredited because it was anonymous. Though the popular belief settled to the conviction of a Pauline authorship, concealed because of Jewish antipathy to the apostle of the Gentiles, still many critics to this day consider it the work of another hand, most probably of Luke or Barnabas. The doubt as to *James* arose from the fact that its authorship was questioned, inasmuch as the salutation differs from that of the other epistles, and the author does not call himself an apostle. Luther denied its apostolic authorship, and held it to be “a right strawy epistle,” because chiefly of its seeming opposition to the doctrine of justification by faith. *II. Peter* has perhaps been more seriously questioned than any other book of the New Testament. The testimony of the early church is less favorable to it, and the remarkable resemblance of its central portion to the *Epistle of Jude* makes many now doubt that Peter wrote it. *II. and III. John* were less known to the early church, partly by reason of their shortness, but mainly because they were addressed to private individuals. *Jude* has been, and is yet, doubted, on account of the quotation, verse 9, from the *Anabasis of Moses*, and, in verses 14 and 15, from the spurious *Book of Enoch*. Suspicion was cast upon *The Revelation* by virtue of the encouragement it was thought to give to error in the Chiliastic controversy, and for this reason Dionysius, Origen’s pupil, and bishop of Alexandria, denied that John wrote it. Calvin takes no notice of *II. or III. John* and of the *Apocalypse*, attributes *II. Peter* to one of Peter’s disciples, and accepts *James* and *Jude*. Tyndale, the great English translator, was at first in doubt as to *Hebrews*, *James*, *Jude*, and the *Apocalypse*, but finally seemed satisfied as to all but the last one. Luther made a marked difference between these four

books and the rest of the New Testament, placing them together at the end of his translation and distinctly denying the apostolic authorship of all of them. The Council of Trent accepted both the Homologoumena and the Antilegomena of Eusebius, and adopted as the papal canon of the New Testament the twenty-seven books which are found in our ordinary Bibles. All of the Protestant churches have acquiesced in this decision, so that there is no ecclesiastical disagreement as to the canonical books of the New Testament. There are, however, many critical students in all of the churches who seriously doubt, if they do not deny, the canonicity of II. Peter and Jude.

THE EARLY APOCRYPHAL NEW TESTAMENT.

One is greatly surprised to find the large number of books which were put forward in primitive times as of apostolic authorship and inspiration. Of these there have come down to us, or have been noted in history, nearly fifty spurious gospels, fourteen books of Acts, thirteen Epistles, and seven Revelations. Some fifty-five of these frauds have been translated into English, and are now to be found in many private libraries. Indeed, in an American publication of these fabrications a list of some seventy other books is given: "Apocryphal Pieces not now extant, mentioned by Writers in the first Four Centuries." A list is here given of those which the writer has in two volumes; one the T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, collection, and the other bearing the imprint of Benj. B. Mussey & Co., Boston.

Gospels: "History of Joseph the Carpenter," "Gospel of the Infancy," "Protevangelium of James," "Gospel of Thomas," in three forms, two Greek and one Latin; "Gospel of the Nativity of Mary," "Gospel of Marcion," "Gospel of Nicodemus," in six forms, three Greek and three Latin; "Paradosis and Death of Pilate"; *John*, mutilated and altered, as used by the Templars; "Book of the Apostle John;" *Pseudo Matthew*; "Letter of Pontius Pilate, "Report of Pilate," in two forms; "The Death of Pilate," "The Narrative of Joseph," "The Avenging of the Saviour."

Acts: "The Holy Apostles, Peter and Paul, containing the

Story of Perpetua," "Paul and Thecla," *Barnabas*; *Philip*; "Philip, when he went to Upper Hellas," "Martyrdom of the Holy Apostle Andrew," "Andrew and Matthias in the City of the Maneaters," "Peter and Andrew," "Martyrdom of Matthew the Apostle," "The Holy Apostle Thomas," "The Consummation of Thomas the Apostle," "The Martyrdom of the Holy and Glorious Apostle Bartholomew," "The Holy Apostle Thaddaeus," "The Holy Apostle and Evangelist John." Here may be placed the *Διδασχί*, or "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles," unless it may be more appropriately classed with the Epistles.

Epistles: "Jesus Christ and Abgarus," "Paul and Seneca," "Paul to the Laodiceans," "1st and 2nd of Clement to the Corinthians," "General of Barnabas," "Ignatius to the Ephesians, Magnesians, Trallians, Romans, Philadelphians, Smyrnaeans, and Polycarp," "Polycarp to the Philippians."

Revelations: "The Shepherd of Hermas," *Paul*; *John*; "The Assumption of Mary," in three forms.

Of these *Gospels*, one needs to read but a few pages that he may see how different from the genuine and how inferior they are. As I open the Boston compilation my eyes rest upon the second chapter of the *Gospel of Thomas*, and I read, "Besides this, the son of Anna the scribe was standing there with Joseph, and took a bough of a willow tree and scattered the waters which Jesus had gathered into lakes. But the boy Jesus, seeing what he had done, became angry and said to him, Thou fool, what harm did the lakes to thee, that thou shouldst scatter the water? Behold, now thou shalt wither as a tree, and shalt not bring forth either leaves, or branches, or fruit. And immediately he became withered all over. Then Jesus went away home. But the parents of the boy who was withered, lamenting the misfortune of his youth, took and carried him to Joseph, accusing him, and said, Why dost thou keep a son who is guilty of such actions? Then Jesus, at the request of all who were present, did heal him, leaving only some small member to continue withered that they might take warning." It will be further observed that "the Lady St. Mary" and Pilate are as conspicuous in these fabrications as is Jesus.

In the various *Acts*, all of the original twelve are remembered

except the two Jameses and the two Judases. Though aside from the present inquiry, it must strike every intelligent reader of the New Testament that the title *Acts of the Apostles* is a misnomer for the book to which it is prefixed. Except Peter and Paul, the other apostles are not much more than mentioned. As to Peter, fully two-thirds of the chapters say nothing about him, and he drops out of the narrative when it is half written. Paul is more prominent; but the book is not a history of the life and work of Paul, for it closes abruptly when it brings him to Rome. The book seems designed to give an account of the introduction of Christianity into the centres of civilization. This was Dr. Addison Alexander's judgment, if I am not mistaken.

There is one work classed with the *Acts* which merits a particular notice; it is the *Δοδαχή*, or "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles." This is thought to be the book referred to by Eusebius, Athanasius, Nicephorus, and Clement of Alexandria, and, though not a production of the apostles or of the apostolic age, is supposed to have been written early in the second century. This early authorship is inferred "from the entire absence of reference to doctrinal matters, the specific teachings of heretics, and the hierarchical constitution of the church." We notice, in Chap. IV., "If aught thou hast, by thy hands thou shalt make atonement for thy sins"; Chap. VII., "And touching baptism. thus baptize: Having first declared all these things, baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost in living water. But if thou have not living water, baptize in other water; and if thou canst not in cold, then in warm. But if thou have neither, pour on the head water thrice, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit"; Chap. IX., "Let none eat or drink of your eucharist save those baptized in the name of the Lord"; Chap. X., "And when you are filled give thanks thus" (this has reference to the Lord's supper); Chap. XI., "Let every apostle who cometh to you be received as the Lord. He shall not overstay one day, though, if need be, the next; but if he remain three days, he is a false prophet"; Chap. XV., "Choose for yourselves bishops and deacons worthy of the Lord, men meek and not avaricious, and true and proved, for they too perform for you the functions of prophets and teachers."

These extracts seem to show, 1, That the *Αδαχχ* is not inspired; 2, That baptism by pouring was practiced when it was written; 3, That deacons were regarded as prophets and teachers.

There are several of the apocryphal *Epistles* which may merit a passing notice. In the first mentioned, Abgarus, king of Edessa, invites Jesus to visit him, and Jesus replies, declining to do so, but promising to send one of the disciples after his ascension. There are eight letters purporting to be from the philosopher, Seneca, to Paul, and six replies from the apostle. Seneca writes as a Christian, and is very cordial and free. Paul is very cautious and prudent, seeming to fear that his letters might betray him. The *Epistle to the Laodiceans* is quite short, and professes to be the one to which allusion is made, Colossians iv. 16. There is nothing specially objectionable in it, and it imitates the style and sentiments of Paul. The *Epistle of Barnabas* is the most famous of this collection. Clemens Alexandrinus and Origen seem to have regarded it as both genuine and canonical. It is, however, undoubtedly neither (though found in the Sinaitic MS.), as J. E. Ryland, in Kitto, has conclusively shown. It is full of puerile absurdities; for example, speaking of the hyena, it says, "That creature every year changes its kind, and is sometimes male and sometimes female." It teaches baptismal regeneration. The conclusion reminds us of the beginning of the *Didache*, and both are founded upon the favorite Jewish conception of the two ways. It is strongly anti-Judaic, foolishly so, and abounds in the wildest allegorical interpretations.

The only one of the spurious Apocalypses which merits attention is *The Shepherd of Hermas*. This is in three books—I., The Four Visions, in which he is taught by "an old woman," who represents the church; II., The Twelve Commands, given by an angel in the garb of a shepherd; and III., The Ten Similitudes, in which the shepherd is again the instructor. It was probably not written by the Hermas mentioned by Paul, Rom. xvi. 14, but is the composition of a writer of the second century, a brother of Pius, the pastor of the church at Rome. Origen thought it inspired; Clement of Alexandria quotes from it, and Irenaeus speaks of it as scripture; Eusebius places it among the *notha*, or

spurious; Dean Stanley calls it "The Pilgrim's Progress of the Second Century"; but Mosheim pronounces it "a mixture of folly and superstition with piety." It favors immersion and baptismal regeneration; is wholly a moral essay, and has but a minimum of Christianity in it; inculcates repentance, and ignores almost every other important doctrine of the gospel; the least possible is said or made of Christ in it. An incomplete copy of it was found with the Sinaitic codex.

THE MODERN NEW TESTAMENT APOCRYPHA.

In the winter of 1856, the Rev. W. D. Mahan, a minister of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, entertained at his house, in De Witt, Mo., a German scholar, who had spent five years in Rome and was quite familiar with the library of the Vatican. His name was Whydaman. He told Mr. Mahan that he had seen and read in that library Pilate's report of the crucifixion of Jesus. At Mr. Mahan's request, he secured from Father Frulinhusen, "the chief guardian of the Vatican," a certified "word-for-word" copy of the MS. Mr. Mahan published an edition of it. In 1879, the Rev. George Sluter put forth another and better edition, with interesting historical and critical notes.

September, 1883, Mr. Mahan left his home in Central Missouri to go to Rome and Constantinople. He returned in about six weeks and published the next year a volume containing eight additional MSS., found in the libraries of the Vatican and of St. Sophia. They are: "Jonathan's Report of his Interview with the Shepherds of Bethlehem, also, Letter of Melker who was priest of the Bethlehem Synagogue when Jesus was born; Gamaliel's Report of his interview with Joseph and Mary in regard to their child Jesus, also, of his interview with Massalian, and Mary and Martha; Caiaphas' Report of the Sanhedrim, giving his reason for the execution of Jesus of Nazareth; Caiaphas' Second Report in regard to the resurrection of Jesus; Eli's Story of the Magi; Herod Antipater's Defence before the Roman Senate concerning his conduct at Bethlehem; Herod Antipas' Defence before the Roman Senate concerning his execution of John the Baptist and other charges; The Hillel Letters regarding God's Providences to the Jews."

As may be supposed, the book was received with great interest. It was eagerly bought and read. The editor wrote me that he was making twenty dollars a day from its sale. It circulated from Canada to Texas. The Wesleyan Publishing House, of Syracuse, N. Y., made arrangements for issuing an edition of the work. Ministers of the gospel regarded it as very valuable confirmatory evidence of the New Testament history. Some wondered that the industrious and curious students of Europe had not discovered these treasures before and given them to the world. A few of the more intelligent and critical shook their heads.

Of course, it was a mere bubble and was soon pricked. It was shown that these MSS., purporting to have been written by the contemporaries of Christ, were full of anachronisms, proving that their composition could not have been earlier than the thirteenth century; for example, passages in the Bible were referred to by chapter and verse. The editor was known to be grossly ignorant of even elementary English knowledge. It was found that some forty pages of *Eli's Story of the Magi* were taken verbatim from Gen. Lew. Wallace's *Ben Hur*. It was shown that Mr. Mahan had published a "Hebrew History of Baptism," which he had taken in whole and in part from a Methodist writer. It was finally proved, to the satisfaction of most persons, that the editor had never visited Rome or Constantinople, but had manufactured his MSS. somewhere on this side of the Atlantic. Mr. Mahan was arraigned by his Presbytery and deposed from the ministry.

This brief survey ought to convince us all that the Protestant church has wisely sifted the wheat from a great quantity of chaff, and rightly holds that the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament and the twenty-seven of the New Testament are the only infallible rule of faith and practice.

J. A. QUARLES.

Lexington, Va.