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# The Chester Beatty Biblical Papyri.

BY THE REVEREND C. A. PHILLIPS, M.A., BOURNEMOUTH.

It has been a matter of great regret to the Editors of THE EXPOSITORY TIMES, and will be to many of its readers, that my old master and friend, Dr. Rendel Harris, has been unable, owing to failing eyesight, to write this article himself. Nearly forty years ago he taught me to read papyri, and began to guide and enlighten my steps in what were looked upon in those days as the by-paths of New Testament critical study. Only a few days ago he discussed with me the subject of this article. It is a great, though wistful, privilege to have been asked here to take his place.

The discovery and publication of the Chester Beatty Biblical Papyri are not only the most recent of the important finds and events of the last fifty years: they present in a remarkable way a climax, especially with regard to the latest feature and problem which has emerged in the textual study of Gospels, and now known as the 'Cæsarean' text. Sir F. G. Kenyon begins the preface to his Schweich Lectures on *Recent Developments in the Textual Criticism of the Greek Bible*<sup>1</sup> by referring to this find as the 'special occasion' which has made such a review opportune: and throughout the first part of the course on the previous discoveries of the past fifty years, and their contribution to the textual problems, he is constantly, and in an almost dramatic way, pointing on to the coming lecture on these Papyri—'of this more later on' . . . 'the full significance of this will appear, when we have all the evidence before us' . . . 'of this much will have to be said at a later stage in these lectures.'

This group of papyri was, most of it, bought by Mr. Chester Beatty some three years ago from native dealers: some leaves were also acquired by the University of Michigan, and generously passed on to him; a few fragments are known to be in private hands; others may still turn up from time to time. The place of their discovery is not known; but they are supposed to have come from the district of the Fayum, and probably from the ruins of some Christian church or monastery. Under the patient and skilful hands of Dr. Ibscher of Berlin, the leaves of these rough spongy lumps of

papyrus have been separated and mounted on glass, and sent to the British Museum for Dr. Kenyon to study and publish, and we have in these two volumes<sup>2</sup> the benefit of his long and wide experience and scholarship. They comprise portions of twelve distinct manuscripts, of which eleven contain parts of the Greek Bible, and the twelfth a part of the Book of Enoch and a Christian Homily. Nearly all the leaves are more or less imperfect, especially at the sides and lower margins, so that even in the portions included in the following list many of the verses are imperfect, or their exact contents uncertain.

The Old Testament is represented by two portions from Genesis of 44 and 22 leaves, 33 from Numbers and Deuteronomy, 27 from Isaiah, 1 from Jeremiah, 16 from Ezekiel and Esther, 13 from Daniel, 1½ from Ecclesiasticus, and 14 of Enoch and the Christian Homily, mostly of the third century, while the Numbers and Deuteronomy leaves are probably the first half of the second. The New Testament portions include:

30 leaves of the Gospels and Acts, of the third century, perhaps in the first half, containing Mt 20<sup>24-32</sup> 21<sup>13-19</sup> 25<sup>41-26</sup> 6-10. 19-33, Mk 4<sup>36-9</sup> 11<sup>27-33</sup> 12<sup>1-28</sup>, Lk 6<sup>31-41</sup> 45-7<sup>7</sup> 9<sup>26-14</sup> 33, Jn 10<sup>7-11</sup> 57, Ac 4<sup>27-17</sup> 17; ten leaves of the Pauline Epistles, probably third century, containing Ro 5<sup>17-6</sup> 14 8<sup>15-35</sup> 9<sup>32-11</sup> 33, Ph 4<sup>14-23</sup>, Col 1<sup>1-3</sup> 11, and part of beginning and end of 1 Th.; ten leaves of Rev 9<sup>10-17</sup> 2, probably late third century.

In vol. i. Dr. Kenyon gives an account of the general history, contents, and value of the collection, with twelve plates showing a specimen leaf of each of the above MSS: these form in themselves quite a little manual of literary and documentary hands of the second to fifth centuries, of varied skill and caligraphy. The Genesis texts are specially valuable, as the Vatican and Sinaitic MSS are very largely wanting here: they are nearer to that which lies behind the work of Origen. The text of Daniel is the original Septuagint and not the version of Theodotion: it presents no marked differences from the one late copy we possess, except that ch. 5 comes in its chronological order after 8<sup>27</sup>. Some students will be awaiting the publication of the Enoch chapters 97-107 with

<sup>2</sup> *The Chester Beatty Biblical Papyri*. Fasc. I. and II., by F. G. Kenyon (London, 1933).

<sup>1</sup> London, 1933. The writer of this article has made full use of this masterly review with its many arresting and illuminating sentences. Quotations otherwise unacknowledged are taken from it.

perhaps more eagerness than any part of the Old Testament. The Christian Homily has not yet been identified.

In vol. ii. we have the text of the portions of the Gospels and Acts with a special introduction and apparatus collating the readings of the Papyrus with the chief Uncial and 'Caesarean' MSS together occasionally with those of the Old Latin and Syriac versions. Dr. Kenyon has deliberately confined his work to these, that the text might become available without the further delay which an exhaustive study of the latter and of the Patristic quotations, however imperative, would involve.

At least three things stand out from this first study of these Papyri, especially with regard to the Gospels, which are, of course, the chief concern of most of us :

Their witness to the general accuracy of the text, their bibliographical characteristics, their information on the text current in Egypt in the second and third centuries.

I. *Their witness to the general accuracy of the text.*—We have here for the first time, instead of a few scattered fragments, some chapters of S. Matthew and S. John and considerable portions of S. Mark and S. Luke, dating from the third century, probably the earlier half of it, *i.e.* a hundred years or more nearer to their originals than the great Uncials on which Hort and the Revisers based their text; belonging to a New Testament of Origen's days, the days of persecution and isolation of the churches, the days of 'independent development in doctrinal emphasis, in church organization and in religious literature,'<sup>1</sup> the days when the local sacred texts were taking shape, and in which 'their diversity had its roots,' the days of free handling, of inclusion and expansion, as contrasted with those of the fourth and fifth centuries, the days of free communication, of revision, and of standardization. And what is the witness of such a text? Here is Dr. Kenyon's verdict, fully endorsed by Professor Burkitt.<sup>2</sup> 'It shows no marked divergencies of its own from the main tradition, and it contains none of the marked divergencies found in certain of our early witnesses. It is true that it is very imperfect;'<sup>3</sup> but it covers such a substantial portion of the Gospels that it is legitimate to draw general conclusions from it;

<sup>1</sup> Streeter, *Four Gospels*, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Review in *Journal Theol. Studies*, Oct. 1933.

<sup>3</sup> It will have been noted that the story of the Birth, the Cross, and the Resurrection are all wanting. Lk 22-24 especially might have given us many welcome assurances.

and these show, in the early part of the third century, a text of the Gospels and Acts identical in all essentials with that which we have hitherto known on the evidence of later authorities.'

II. *The Bibliographical features.*—These papyri are parts of codices (*i.e.* in the modern book form of leaves and pages) and not rolls, and the Gospels and Acts were bound together in one book. In pagan literature the roll was still universally used in the second century, and the codex but rarely in the third. There had been some previous evidences from other Christian fragments, but no such conclusive proof that in the third, and even the second century,<sup>4</sup> the Christians had their sacred writings in book form, though no doubt the separate rolls were still in use, *i.e.* 'they were accustomed to see the four Gospels in a single book and on a different level of authority from any other narrative of the life of our Lord. This would make it easier to understand how Irenæus, for example, can already argue that the number four is essentially appropriate, and shown by various analogies to be in accordance with God's method of dealing with the world.' We have also here proof, for the first time, that as early as the third century the Pauline Epistles were together in a collected form.

Papyrus sheets could not be made to fold into the ordinary quire of, say, sixteen pages, but were either folded singly to form a quire of two pages or laid one on top of the other so that the whole book consisted of one quire. The former method is that of the Gospel codex here, while the latter is that of the Pauline Epistles. In this collection of the 'Apostle,' the Pastoral Epistles are absent, and Hebrews seems to have come after 2 Corinthians, as it does in the Sahidic version. The Gospels and Acts book consisted of 220 pages, 10 by 8 inches, with a single column of writing  $7\frac{1}{2}$  by  $6\frac{1}{4}$ , containing 39 lines, and each line about 20 syllables or 50 letters.<sup>5</sup> The pages in Luke are the best preserved. The portions of Mark were found lying next to the Acts, and therefore the order of the Gospels was probably that of Matthew, John, Luke, Mark, as found in Codex Bezae, the Freer Gospels, and most of the Old Latin versions.

III. *Their witness to the text current in Egypt in*

<sup>4</sup> The second century codex of Nu, Dt is almost certainly by a Christian, and not Jewish scribe, for the name of Joshua is written  $\iota\eta\varsigma$ , a practice not likely to be followed by any one but a scribe familiar with  $\text{Ἰησοῦς}$  as a sacred name.

<sup>5</sup> Two numbered pages in the Acts, and one at the beginning of 1 Th make these calculations and inferences possible.

the third century.—To appreciate this we need, as we have seen, to go with Dr. Kenyon back to the work of Hort and the Revisers, and to run briefly through some of the studies and discoveries of the past fifty years.

The work of Hort, followed largely by the Revisers, was to establish the two great vellum codices, Vaticanus (B) and Sinaiticus (S), and their few allies (the 'Neutral' text) as the primary witnesses—and in the case of B, an almost direct witness—for the original documents, and to relegate the great mass of Greek MSS (the 'Antiochian' or 'Byzantine' text) on which the Textus Receptus is based to the secondary place. However preferable the latter may be as a Gospel narrative, the former hold the first place as a Gospel witness. And nothing in the study or discovery of the past fifty years has shaken this position. 'The controversy between Hort and Burgon is dead.'<sup>1</sup> Then side by side with these two groups was a third, the 'Western,' representing a text as old or older than that of the great uncials—'a rather miscellaneous band of authorities,' Latin and Syriac, with Codex Bezae (D) and some minuscules, but supported by the quotations of all the chief Antiochian Fathers and writers, east and west, Justin, Marcion, Tatian, Irenæus, Tertullian, Cyprian, Aphraat, and in Egypt Clement, and sometimes even Origen: it is, as is well known, a type of text characterized by numerous omissions and additions and expansions both of incidents and sayings as well as of explanation or of colouring. Hort's verdict was that, however authentic and valuable many of them may be, they were probably no part of the genuine text. These three groups and verdicts were clear cut, and gave a widespread sense of 'comfortable finality.' And the first discovery, that of the old Syriac palimpsest on Mount Sinai by Mrs. Lewis, corroborated Hort in a remarkable way: it supported the great uncials in most of the notable readings, though it had also a strong 'Western' element with the Curetonian.

But all along a small company of scholars have been at work, collating fresh facts and studying some of the older, and especially the versions. Kenyon mentions especially Rendel Harris, F. C. Burkitt, C. H. Turner, A. Souter, Wordsworth, and White in England, Kirsopp Lake (first trained in England), H. C. Hoskier, and J. H. Ropes in America. And the trend of these studies was twofold—to question the impeccability of B, and to look for the original text in the 'Western' rather than in the 'Neutral' family.

Burkitt, *loc. cit.*

Then in 1900 came Lake's work on the minuscule Cod. 1 and its allies, showing that this MS. of, at the earliest, the tenth century, is not only the leader of an important group, but itself one of our best witnesses. Next in 1912 and 1913 appeared two new almost complete Greek Gospels, the Freer (W) from Egypt, and the rough, uncouth Koridethi (Θ) from a monastery in Georgia. The former has a mixed text—of the Received type in Mt and Lk 8<sup>13</sup> to end; 'Neutral' in the first part of Luke, and John 5<sup>12</sup> to the end (the beginning of John is a supplemental quire that has more Latin and Coptic affinities). Mk 1<sup>1</sup>–5<sup>30</sup> is closely allied to the Old Latin, while the rest 'belongs to a different family, the identity of which had not been established at the time of its publication, and of which much will have to be said at a later stage in these lectures.'

In 1914, Hoskier wrote:<sup>2</sup> 'Hitherto we have not known fully the history of textual criticism in Egypt: but every important document, including the new Freer . . . ties the matter more and more down to Egyptian soil.' The Koridethi, with its number of Western readings and Latin affinities was, with 565, attached by Von Soden, wrongly as we shall see, to the Bezan family.

After the War, the next advance was made in 1923 by Lake, following up, with R. P. Blake, his previous study of Cod. 1, by proving that in Mark Θ formed a distinct family with Cod. 1 and its allies, 13 and its allies (the Ferrar group), 565, 700, and 28. As early as 1904 Burkitt in his edition of the Old Syriac<sup>3</sup> had already isolated these MSS as a 'secondary' group which had remarkable affinities with the Old Syriac, and of the 19 examples he gave, 13 were from S. Mark. Meanwhile Blake had been working on the Old Georgian version, and this, especially the Adysh MS., probably the granddaughter through the Armenian of a better Old Syriac than we possess, was found to be an even stronger member of the family: the Palestinian Syriac Lectionary is another.

Then in 1924 appeared Streeter's *Four Gospels*, which made three specially notable additions to this quest. (1) He had observed how frequently a MS. which had elsewhere the Received Text, had an older one in S. Mark. From its very character, containing little that was not found in the other Gospels, S. Mark would be overlooked, or only slightly or less carefully worked over by the reviser or the weary scribe. From this 'we deduce the following Canon of textual criticism:

<sup>1</sup> *Codex B and its Allies*, Pt. i. p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Evang. da Mepharveshe*, ii. pp. 245 ff.

*Research into the pedigree of an MS. should begin with a study of its text of Mark.*<sup>1</sup> (2) He showed that the readings of this new family are found, though to a lesser extent, in the other Gospels; and quoted among other instances one remarkable one, which is clearly right, and B in omitting is clearly wrong,<sup>2</sup> the addition of Jesus before Barabbas in Mt 27<sup>16, 17</sup>. We cannot conceive any reason for the addition, while there is, of course, the obvious one for omission—that frequent cause of error in the textual tradition, ‘the offended sense of the pious.’<sup>3</sup> (3) Then in going on to study closely the numerous quotations of Origen from S. Mark he made ‘a remarkable discovery, which deserves to be noted as an epoch in Biblical criticism.’ He observed that in the first ten books of the Commentary on S. John, Origen used a text of the type of  $\aleph B$ , but in the remaining books, and in the Commentary on S. Matt., he used a MS. of the type of  $\Theta$ . Now the significance of this change lies in the fact that Origen wrote the first part of his commentary on S. John in Alexandria, while the rest of it, and that on S. Matt. at Cæsarea in Palestine, whither he had removed in A.D. 231. The conclusion is obvious: at Alexandria he used MSS of the Neutral type, and probably brought away with him the copy of S. John that he was using; and at Cæsarea he found MSS of the type of  $\Theta$  and Cod. 1. In other words, the text of fam.  $\Theta$  may rightly be called the Cæsarean text. ‘There are from time to time books which mark a definite turning-point in the studies to which they relate. Streeter’s *Four Gospels* is such a work in connexion with the textual criticism of the New Testament. Utilizing the work of others over a period of many years past, and adding thereto valuable contributions of his own, he has made good a definite addition to our knowledge, and established a fresh starting-place for further progress. Henceforward the Cæsarean text has an assured place in textual criticism.’

But a closer study came to blur again this clear-

<sup>1</sup> There is a curious example of this in a fourteenth-century Mt. Athos codex, the exemplar of which had a lacuna in Mk 9<sup>29</sup>-Lk 1<sup>40</sup> filled in from another MS. The text generally is a Received one, but this ‘patch’ is strongly a member of fam. 1 but in Mk only, and not in the Lucan chapter.

<sup>2</sup> See Burkitt, *loc. cit.*; McNeile, *Comm. on S. Matt.*

<sup>3</sup> Origen in his *Commentary on S. Matthew* discusses the reading, and says that it is absent from many MSS; but this surely implies that it was in the text current in Cæsarea. It certainly offended him, that the sacred name should be borne by a robber, and he does not so quote it in the treatise against Celsus.

cut result. Lake, with his colleagues, R. P. Blake and Mrs. New,<sup>4</sup> set to work on an edition of the Cæsarean text of S. Mark. He added to the group that ‘hitherto unidentified part’ of the Freer Gospels, a seventh-century Papyrus fragment containing the very interesting Mk 11<sup>18</sup> (where the Cæsareans, as often, are much divided), and a fuller study of the Georgian evidence: but in one very important point he corrected Streeter’s conclusions from Origen’s quotations. Of the first ten books of the Commentary on S. John on which Streeter had based his observation of Origen’s use of the Neutral text, the first five only were written in Alexandria, and these five contained only scanty and rather equivocal evidence, the quotations, chiefly from ch. 1<sup>2, 3</sup>, being as much or more Cæsarean than Neutral. Accordingly, it was quite as likely that Origen had used a Cæsarean text in Egypt, found the ‘Neutral’ in Cæsarea, and used it for a time, and then reverted to the Cæsarean, which he himself may, perhaps, have introduced. So after all, the ‘Cæsarean’ text may have had its home in Egypt, though its use by Origen, and in a somewhat debased form by Eusebius, will always make the name appropriate.

Thus once more, the clear-cut conclusions of fifty years ago were called in question. Hort’s theories about B had long been felt to need some modification. It remains still our best single MS.: its scribe must have been a singularly ‘austere’ one, both in his selection of exemplars and in his work, as compared with the majority who put first easy comprehension and the avoidance of offence: the MS. may have had a ‘singularly sheltered history,’ but its text has not escaped harmonization and revision. And now, perhaps in its very home, there had arisen this new family, which might be older and of which the Neutral text may be a later revision. However much the controversy between Hort and Burgon was dead, ‘that between Hort and Lake, if we may so put it, is very much alive.’<sup>5</sup>

And just at this moment in this line of discovery and of study, there appear these Papyrus Gospels of the third century ‘from Egyptian soil.’ Again, what is their witness?

1. As might be expected, from a third-century document, they do not support the Received or Byzantine text. 2. They have a decidedly Cæsarean text in Mark, not so much in the longer readings, as in the small, some 323 affinities with the family in those few chapters. Lake’s available evidence of Origen’s use of such a text in Egypt was very slight: the papyrus strongly reinforces.

<sup>4</sup> Now Mrs. Lake.

<sup>5</sup> Burkitt, *loc. cit.*

3. The general character both of the Gospels and Acts is neither markedly Neutral nor Western: <sup>1</sup> it occupies a half-way position between the two. It has (and this is, of course, especially to be noted for the Acts) none of the more peculiar readings of Codex Bezae and the Harclensian Syriac margins: but there is all through, as in the Sahidic versions, a strong *basic* element, partly Western, partly Cæsarean. 'Thus it is evident that in Egypt as in other parts of the world, texts existed in the third century which were not of the B type. B may still represent a tradition which has come down with little contamination from the earliest times; but if so, the stream ran in a narrow channel and did not water, like the Nile, the whole land of Egypt.' 4. It shares many of the divisions of the Cæsarean group,<sup>2</sup> hitherto held to be chiefly due to correction to the Received text, and will, of course, greatly help to determine which of these are earlier. It will also now all along be giving valuable assistance in the work that is yet to be done—the study of the Cæsarean text in the other Gospels, a closer study of the Sahidic versions and the quotations of Origen and Eusebius, and the significance of the occasional strong Latin element in the Cæsarean readings, especially in Eusebius, and in ④ 565 in Mark, an element to which the quotations of Clement of Alexandria has all along borne witness—'on Egyptian soil.'

Here are some of the more important variants <sup>3</sup>:

*With*  $\aleph$ B.—Mk 9<sup>24</sup>, omit 'with tears'; Lk 9<sup>36</sup>,  $\delta$  ἐκλελεγμένος for  $\delta$  ἀγαπητός; ① 1, 22,  $\delta$  ἐκλεκτός; Mk 9<sup>23</sup>, εἰ δύνῃ without πιστευσαι, but the *το* is also omitted; Lk 9<sup>55, 56</sup>—the shorter reading, 'And he turned and rebuked them; and they went to another village.'

In S. Luke's version of the Lord's Prayer, three clauses are omitted in B. P<sup>45</sup> has lost seven lines from Lk 11<sup>2-8</sup>: but there would not be room for all three. ¶

*Against*  $\aleph$ B.—Mk 9<sup>28</sup>—adds 'and fasting'; Lk 10<sup>41</sup>—the shorter reading, 'but one thing is needful' . . . against 'few things are needful (or one).'

*Cæsarean*.—Mk 8<sup>10</sup> [μαγεδ]αν (cf. Mt 15<sup>21</sup>) with 565,700 Eus. and the Old Latin, while the other Cæsareans *exc.* W have μαγδαλα; Mk

<sup>1</sup> Among the papyrus fragments previously discovered Oxyr. 655 had a notable Western reading in Lk 11<sup>52</sup> 'hidden (the key)' for 'taken away'; and the famous Michigan one contained in Ac 19 two of the characteristic Bezan additions.

<sup>2</sup> See Burkitt, *loc. cit.*

<sup>3</sup> P<sup>45</sup> is the official symbol for the Gospel portion of these Papyri.

8<sup>15</sup>—the 'leaven of the Herodians'; Mk 8<sup>35</sup>—omit ἐμοῦ καὶ before τοῦ εὐαγγελίου; Mk 9<sup>2</sup>—addition from Lk 9<sup>29</sup>, see below; Lk 11<sup>33</sup>—omit 'neither under the bushel,' which seems to have been added from Mt 5<sup>15</sup>; Jn 11<sup>33</sup>, ἐταράχθη τῷ πνεύματι ὡς ἐμβριμῆσατο ἑαυτὸν gave offence.

*Western*.—Lk 9<sup>62</sup>—see below; 12<sup>24</sup>—adds τὰ πετεινὰ καὶ before τοὺς κόρακας from Mt., where D and three Old Latins substitute.

*Marcionite*.—Lk 10<sup>21</sup>—om. καὶ τῆς γῆς, found only in the quotations from Marcion's Gospel in Epiphanius and Tertullian. On the other hand, Lk 9<sup>54</sup>—om. 'as Elias did' with  $\aleph$ B 700 Old Syriac, Jn 10<sup>8</sup>—om. '(those who came) before me,' with the Syriac, Latin, and the Received text, both possibly owing to the use made of them by the Marcionite in the depreciation of the Old Testament and the prophets.

Of the *new* readings one of the most remarkable is in Lk 9<sup>50</sup> μὴ κωλύετε· οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶν καθ' ὑμῶν οὐδὲ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν.

And here are some variants that may be of use to the expositor:

Among the new readings there is a rather unique use of the word ὄχυρος in a somewhat ungrammatical expansion in Lk 11<sup>15</sup>, τινες δὲ ἐξ αὐτῶν ἐλάλησαν ὄχυροι λέγοντες . . . where the opponents of Jesus are denouncing His gracious work, as due to devil possession, and those loud confident tones betray that they are *fortifying* their prejudices against their conscience.

In Lk 9<sup>62</sup> we find the same inverted order as in Clement, Cyprian, D, and the Old Latins: οὐδέεις εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω βλέπων καὶ ἐπιβάλλον τὴν χεῖρα αὐτοῦ ἐπ' ἄροτρον. The reading certainly looks as perverse as its form: but is the paradox so certainly wrong? We have not here the case of a half-hearted or distracted disciple; the man has not yet *begun* to follow; and the parable would then be something on the lines of those in ch. 14<sup>28-33</sup>: 'You are trying to start your work with your back to the plough.' If this is so, it is easy to see how readily the text would be altered into what is both an actual common fault in ploughing, and a more common failure in Christian discipleship.

In Mk 9<sup>2</sup> there is an addition (?) from Lk 9<sup>29</sup>, only in the form ἐν τῷ προσεύχεσθαι αὐτούς, 'as they were praying,' with the Freer Gospel and the Ferrar Group and the Arabic Diatessaron, while three other Cæsareans and Origen have it with αὐτόν. I remember an address by Canon Kinloch on Prayer Circles, in which he held that the presence

of that 'inner circle' of the Apostles was intended, not only as a witness but as a spiritual help and support, and in each case, not only in Gethsemane. And so it may have been here on the Holy Mount; and though the flesh was here also too weak to watch and pray all through the night (Lk 9<sup>32</sup>), they did not wholly fail their Master, but, as they prayed, were fellow-workers with Him in making the great decision by which He stedfastly set His face to the Cross, and in the glory which followed.

Jn 11<sup>25</sup> — ἐγώ εἰμι ἡ ἀνάστασις, the words καὶ ἡ ζωὴ are omitted with Cyprian 310, the Sinaitic Syriac, one Old Latin, and one of the Palestinian Lectionaries. The saying is so familiar, and has for all of us such solemn and sacred associations, that it is difficult to appreciate any variation: but it may be worth while to make an effort at detachment, and to listen in to the scene as if for the first time; and then it may appear how much greater and grander the single statement is by itself, and that thus it may have been passed on in the Christian tradition side by side with the longer form. We should then have also at the same time a fresh example of the way in which the aged disciple would add to, and blend with, the Master's actual words, the simple Truth they

suggest, and that long years of meditation and experience had proved. If so, the Papyrus would give us here the whole historic Word, though only in part the genuine S. John.

This last found Gospel affords some valuable assurances, and answers some important questions, but it suggests and asks as many more. As Dr. Kenyon says at the close of his lecture: 'Here for the moment the story which I have been trying to put together of fifty years of textual criticism comes to an end; but it is not an end which gives the winding up of the story. On the contrary, as I have tried to show, it leaves several large marks of interrogation to which the attention of scholars is directed. It is very regrettable that the textual criticism of the New Testament does not appear to appeal to the younger generation of scholars so strongly as it did to their predecessors in the nineteenth century. . . . Yet it is a fascinating subject and one in which much good work remains to be done. It is to be hoped that the discovery of the Chester Beatty Papyri, with its mass of new material, may do something to revive interest in a subject of such profound importance as the authentic texts of the original documents of our Christian religion.'

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## The Message of the Epistles.

### Ephesians.

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It is not necessary to discuss here the critical questions of the true destination and authorship of the writing known as the Epistle to the Ephesians, neither of which can be regarded as beyond controversy.<sup>1</sup> Whoever were the readers for whom it was first designed, its 'message' is for the Church at large; and whether Paul wrote it or not, it represents the mature development of Paul's way of thinking about the Christian religion.

<sup>1</sup> The present writer inclines to accept the Pauline authorship of Ephesians, though not without misgiving, and he is disposed towards the widely accepted view that it was of the nature of a general or circular epistle, for reasons which he has set forth in the *Abingdon Commentary*.

The theme is the glory of Christ in the Church, 'that wonderful and sacred mystery,' in which the unity of a new humanity is revealed as a sign of the ultimate unity of all things in Him. This theme runs through the whole Epistle, which begins with adoration of the eternal purpose of God, and ends with practical counsels for Christians who are called to live within that purpose through all the struggles and temptations of this present world. It falls into two parts, chs. 1-3 and chs. 4-6. The division corresponds to that which is to be observed in other Epistles, between a mainly 'doctrinal' and a mainly 'practical' section. In Galatians and Colossians the first part is largely a controversial exposition of certain points of Christian doctrine,