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And with that our author deals with each of his divisions in little studies of the various faiths founded, not merely on original sources, but built up on excellent authorities and in an admirable spirit. It is a framework into which there fits all kinds of interesting and important themes, and Mr. Parker faces them with courage and success.

Some Outstanding Old Testament Problems.

II. Canonicity and Inspiration.

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Professor Hempel of Göttingen has said in his *Altes Testament und Geschichte* (83) that the provision of a theological basis for the Canon is the great theological task of the future. He is led to this statement by his recognition of the fact that we cannot know anything to be the Word of God to us apart from its self-evidencing quality, whereas not all the Old Testament possesses this quality. The remark and its presupposition bring us to the heart of our problem. Dictionary definitions do not help us; they are too prone to define canonicity in terms of inspiration, and inspiration in terms of canonicity. Historical scholarship alone cannot solve the problem: in fact, it is the historical and psychological study of the Old Testament that has forced the problem upon us. It has revealed the slow and piecemeal growth of the literature by ordinary human means, and has even made the supposed 'landmarks' in the process much less certain than they were. We can no longer simplify the problem by selecting one man, or a small body of men, whose alleged 'inspiration' guarantees the truth of their words, since a large part of the Old Testament cannot be ascribed to 'prophets' at all. Thus, we can no longer be content with the first explicit formulation of canonicity as it is found in Josephus (*Contra Apionem*, i. 37–41). For him, canonicity depends on the inspiration of a succession of prophets who wrote from Moses to Artaxerxes (465 B.C. ff.); from that time there was no inspiration and therefore no canonicity in whatever was written. This theory obviously does not explain the presence in the Canon of such Scriptures as Joel, Esther, Chronicles, Zec 9–14, Ecclesiastes, and Daniel, to say nothing of the Wisdom Literature and the Psalms, and many later passages now incorporated in Old Testament prophecy. But it does usefully remind us of the historical factor, which cannot be ignored in any attempt to understand what canonicity means. There *was* a historical period, however we draw its limits, in which were produced writings of so distinct a quality that they have come to hold a unique place in the Synagogue and the Christian Church.

Another challenging fact is the existence of the O.T. Apocrypha which are found in the Greek and Latin Bibles outside the Protestant Canon, whilst beyond both there is a large number of writings known as the Pseudepigrapha, of which some, *e.g.* the Psalms of Solomon (cf. Swete, *Introduction to the LXX*, 282), seem to have been on the borderline of 'canonicity'. The Protestant Canon is that of the Hebrew Bible, the Roman Catholic Canon that of the Septuagint. The Greek Bible of Hellenistic Judaism was taken over as the Bible of the earliest Christian Church. We cannot justify the exclusion of the Apocrypha from the Protestant Bible, or even its relegation to an appendix (as in Luther's Bible), by any judgment of intrinsic worth. The Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, and 1 Maccabees are fully entitled, on intrinsic grounds, to have a place in the Canon of the Old Testament; the same might be said of the Psalms of Solomon and the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, from amongst the Pseudepigrapha.

The problem is augmented by the modern view of inspiration. As long as a mechanical idea of this could be held, the historical data could be more or less ignored. If God chose to dictate His revelation, whether to Moses or to others, the historical circumstances are negligible, as one of the standard rules of Jewish exegesis relates: 'there is no earlier and later (chronological order) in the Bible' (cited

in Moore, *Judaism* i. 245 *n.*). The most extreme statement of this position is perhaps that given in 4(2) Esdras, 14^{37-48}, when Esdras is 'inspired' by a fiery drink to dictate ninety-four books to a team of five scribes for forty days without ceasing. These books are the twenty-four of the Hebrew Canon, together with the seventy apocalypses reserved for initiates. It need not be said that such a view or any of its variants is impossible for those who have learnt to read the Old Testament historically and with due attention to the psychology of the writers. Their psychology is very different from our own and certainly implies the belief of the prophets that their message came from God in the form of audition or vision. But we can see how the audition or vision was always conditioned by the prophet's own personality and historical environment, and no mechanical method will serve to differentiate the human and the divine factors. The distinction between 'true' and 'false' prophecy was full of difficulty, even in Old Testament times (cf. 1 K 22^{23}, Dt 18^{21}, Jer $23^{16ff.}$).

The problem of canonicity is, therefore, much more complex than is often supposed, and it cannot be said that we have any adequate recent discussion of the subject. English students of a generation back had Ryle's *The Canon of the Old Testament* (1895), Robertson Smith's *The Old Testament in the Jewish Church* (1895), and two books by foreign scholars, namely, *Canon and Text of the Old Testament*, by Frants Buhl, tr. by J. Macpherson (1892), and *The Origin of the Canon of the Old Testament*, by G. Wildeboer, tr. by B. W. Bacon (1895). Amongst subsequent discussions, the following may be mentioned:

B. Duhm, *Die Entstehung des A.T.* (1897, 1909[2]); K. Budde, *E.Bi.*, art. 'Canon,' *cc.* 647–674 (1899); H. L. Strack, *P.R.E.*[3], ix. 741–768 (1901); G. Hölscher, *Kanonisch und Apokryph* (1905); W. Sanday, *E.R.E.*, ii. 562–571 (1909); E. König, *Kanon und Apocryphen* (1917); J. Hänel, *Der Schriftbegriff Jesu* (1919); E. Sellin, *Introduction to the O.T.*, tr. by W. Montgomery, 252–264 (1923); W. M. Christie, 'The Jamnia Period in Jewish History' (*J. Th. S.* xxvi. 347–364) (1925); A. Bertholet, *R.G.G.*[2], i. 974–978, art. 'Bible' (1927); Strack-Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum N.T.*, iv. *Exkurs*, 16 (1928); C. H. Dodd, *The Authority of the Bible* (1928); F. Horst, '*Das A.T. als Heilige Schrift und als Kanon*,' *Theol. Blätter*, 11 Jahrgang Nr. 6, 162–174 (1932); W. O. E. Oesterley & T. H. Robinson, *Introduction to the Books of the O.T.*, 1–10, (1934); O. Eissfeldt, *Einleitung in das A.T.* 614–626 (1934).

An adequate discussion would include (1) a review of the history of the literature, as distinct from its canonization; (2) the development of the idea of canonization and the divisions of the Canon; (3) the relation of the Old Testament Canon to that of the New Testament; (4) the present justification for 'canonicity' (merging into a philosophy of revelation). All that can be done in this article is to indicate cursorily the general trend of recent work on the Canon, in respect of these topics.

(1) It is by no means demonstrable that the three divisions of the Old Testament, namely, the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings, represent three stages of successive canonization, as was formerly suggested. It is quite true that certain elements of the Pentateuch were the first to obtain recognition as authoritative writings, *e.g.* part of Deuteronomy in connexion with Josiah's Reformation (621), and some part of the Priestly Code as Ezra's Lawbook (397 ? rather than 432). But the very fact that these elements were not yet sufficiently sacrosanct to prevent additions and new combinations should warn us against identifying such recognition with canonization. The Pentateuch was certainly a literary unit before the Samaritan schism, but this may have been as late as the Greek period, and the precise date of the schism is itself uncertain (cf. Moore, *Judaism*, i. 25; Lods, *Les Prophètes d'Israël*, 360). Again, we cannot say when the writings of the prophets were assembled into their present form, though this must have been prior to the date at which Ben Sirach wrote (*c.* 180 B.C.). From the evidence of the Prologue to Ecclesiasticus (132) it is clear that there was also a third body of writings in existence. This was certainly not closed in Ben Sirach's time, as we know from the fact that 'Daniel' was subsequently added to it. All we seem justified in saying is that by the time of the New Testament and Josephus (first century A.D.) the 'canon' was virtually complete, even if the case for and against the inclusion of certain books (notably Canticles, Ecclesiastes, Esther) was still open to discussion.

(2) 'It must never be forgotten,' wrote Wildeboer (*op. cit.*, 141), 'that the Canon was a theory, and not an edition of the text': 'the Canon grows up only as men have become conscious that the word of prophecy is silent for ever' (153). These words give us the right point of view from which to study the growth of the Canon and warn us against undue search for 'landmarks' in that growth. In the history of the literature such landmarks are rightly sought and, to some extent, as we have seen, may be found. But the further

stage of a recognition of that literature, as fully authoritative, seems due to the use and wont of the synagogue. As Christie says (*op. cit.*, 356), 'There never seems to have been a formal canonizing of any portion of the Old Testament (any more than of the New) by any judicial authority. The books gradually made their way to universal acceptance in the synagogue and in the Church, and in these disputes on the part of individuals or schools we see the process in operation.'

The Torah, as the divine revelation to Moses (1 Ch $6^{34(49)}$, 2 Ch 23^{18}), was unique, for it belonged to a remote past, and its authority was a postulate for the Judaism of the Greek period. Already, in the Maccabean Revolt, the religion of the Law is the inspiration of the faithful (1 Mac 1^{56}); did they not spread out before the eyes of God a roll of the Law disfigured by Gentile blasphemies (1 Mac 3^{48}: text as in Charles)? But by this time all prophecy had ceased (1 Mac 4^{46}, etc.), and there was every motive to gather up and revere the records of the prophets. Also, Zechariah ($1^{4ff.}$) already shows the beginning of the tendency, and Daniel (9^2) its fuller development. The prophets, however, were regarded as wholly subordinate to, and confirmatory of, the Torah, not as a new revelation, though, as a matter of history, the notion of inspired Scripture actually grew out of the nature of prophecy (Moore, *op. cit.*, i. 238). It should be noted that this second part of the Canon includes the four historical books (Jos., Jg., 1 and 2 S., 1 and 2 K.), with the 'latter' prophets, on the theory that inspired 'prophets' wrote the 'former' books also (*e.g.* Jeremiah the Books of Kings), so that these also belong to the 'inspired period' claimed by Josephus.

The third part of the Canon, namely, the 'Writings', with the Psalms as their foremost book in order and importance, was not closed before the Christian era, as the discussions about the canonicity of Ecclesiastes, Canticles, and Esther, which were continued down to the second Christian century, sufficiently prove. They were doubtless valued in the first instance for private reading; in regard to the Psalms this would naturally follow from the Temple use. The first citation of the Psalms as 'canonical' is found in 1 Mac 7^{17}; cf. Lk 24^{44}.

All the three parts were ultimately regarded as sacred Scripture (the first mention of them, together under their Hebrew names, appears to be by Rabban Gamaliel—cf. Ac 5^{34}, 22^3—in reply to a question of the Sadducees: Strack-Billerbeck, *op. cit.*, 418). But a clear division was drawn between the Torah and the other books (Mishnah, Megillah iii. 1), even though the name Torah could be broadly used of them all (Strack-Billerbeck, *op. cit.*, 420).

We can only conjecture the motives for the formation of the Canon and for the sharper Palestinian definition, as compared with the wider and looser grouping of books (including the Apocrypha) in the Hellenistic collection. Hölscher (*op. cit.*, 41) emphasizes the (later) Pharisaic opposition to the apocalyptic writings, an opposition clearly marked in Talmudism; on this view Daniel won inclusion in the 'Writings' before the opposition began. Dislike of the Septuagint in general (through its Christian use), which led to its replacement by Aquila's version (*c.* 200: Hölscher, *op. cit.*, 24), doubtless reinforced this tendency. Sellin (*op. cit.*, 262) prefers to think of the general differences between Palestinian and Hellenistic Judaism rather than of any special opposition to apocalyptic. It is probably dangerous to insist too much on a single motive in so gradual a process, which really began in ancient times when the first detached oracles were given by a priest or a prophet. From that authority of the spoken word of God there came at length the conception of the authority of its written record, whilst all such records as could claim antiquity in the eyes of an uncritical age and did not conflict with the principles of the undoubted revelation in the Torah of Moses would be likely to be preserved and venerated. The Canon is the result of a historical process, like the literature, though one that follows after a long interval (real or supposed) from the actual creation of that literature.

(3) The Christian theologian must take into account the relation of the Old Testament Canon to that of the New Testament, since the former (in its Greek form, with the Apocrypha included) became the Bible of the Christian Church, and the writings of the New Testament only gradually appropriated the notion of canonicity from those of the Old Testament. The process was much like that by which the Old Testament 'writings' acquired canonicity. The parallel of unconscious growth is instructive. Oral tradition of the sayings and doings of Jesus passed into written record as those who could repeat them at first hand became fewer. The letters of Paul and others, written without any consciousness of their destiny to be part of a New Testament Canon, were copied and circulated in the churches generally. The Book of Acts was written to give information of the beginning of the Church and its expansion through the world, especially through the work of Paul. The Apocalypse reflects the prophetic consciousness of

the Early Church, which continued that of the Old Testament without challenging its unique place. It was probably not until Marcion formed a specifically Christian 'Canon' for the first time, consisting of the Lucan Gospel and the Pauline Epistles (without the Pastorals) that the Church began to collect and define its cardinal literature in any systematic way; the reaction from the claims of Montanism about the same time must have been an important factor in the process. The result was that the Church by about A.D. 200 came to possess a more or less definite body of literature holding a 'canonical' place in its consciousness. Apostolic origin replaced 'prophetic' as the test of this new canonicity. But no Council created the Canon; it was due in part to instinctive selection by hearers and readers in the Christian Church as before in the Synagogue—which means that it was due to the intrinsic quality of the writings.

The Gnostic criticism of the Old Testament compelled the Church to defend it as not simply Jewish, but as Christian in intent and spiritual significance. Thus the Old Testament, which in arrangement and in much of its content was the Bible of Judaism, was transformed by interpretation into a part of the Christian Canon. In this process it was inevitable that a new emphasis fell on the prophets and the psalms, which became for the Church what the Law was for the Synagogue. Historically, the New Testament can be regarded as the natural sequel to the Old Testament, and a fourth part of the Canon, though doctrinally it became the interpretative principle of the rest. This is implied in the names 'Old and New Testaments' which first occur about the end of the second century A.D. (Tertullian).

(4) What, then, is the present justification of the O.T. Canon, *i.e.* of the unique place which the Christian Church has hitherto given to a particular collection of Hebrew and early Jewish literature? This was the problem raised at the beginning of this article, and it is obviously of much more importance than the problems of research into the actual historical growth of the Canon, questions of the date of Deuteronomy, the extent of Ezra's law-book, the *terminus ad quem* for the completion of the Pentateuch in the Samaritan schism, the close of the 'Prophets', and the gradual accretion of the 'Writings'. Scientific research in the history and religion of Israel rightly neglects the canonical limits altogether, for it is concerned only with the literature as such, and values 1 Maccabees as much as the Books of Kings, Ecclesiasticus as much as Proverbs, and the 'Psalms of Solomon' as much as the canonical Psalter. But are we to dismiss the conception of canonicity itself as an episode in the history of the interpretation of the literature? This is the view taken by E. von Dobschütz in his article, 'The Abandonment of the Canonical Idea' (*The American Journal of Theology*, xix. [1915], 416–429). He remarks that 'the idea of canonicity which has dominated theology for centuries has in recent times been modified or even abandoned' (416), and he indicates the stages (from the sixteenth century onwards) by which this attitude has been reached. His conclusion is that 'We must renounce for ever the old notion of canonicity' (429).

Against this view several considerations have weight. We may reject some of the ancient tests and grounds of canonicity, and yet find a true principle within it, which calls for restatement and not rejection. First and foremost, there is the fact frequently indicated in the foregoing article, that the selection of books forming the Canon was itself the result of a series of value-judgments. These value-judgments are historical facts which belong essentially to the whole tradition to which the Christian Church belongs. Could it still remain true to that tradition, if the Scriptures no longer won a similar response, and if they do win it, does not the most essential ground of canonicity still remain? If it be said that such response does not extend to all the books of the Canon (for example, Esther), and does extend beyond it (for example, the Wisdom of Solomon), that simply compels us to what the critical study of 'inspiration' also compels —to be no longer content with an external definition or with superficial phenomena. We can no longer regard a formal list of books as the essential Canon or make the abnormal psychology of the prophet the test of their inspiration. We must look for some deeper idea of both canonicity and inspiration. Such an idea must be based on the life of the people in and through whose experience God is revealed. The Scriptures are the record of that experience and the classical and indispensable record of it. History has constantly shown that the renewal and the maintenance of the experience depend on access to the record of its first manifestations. The *consensus ecclesiae* as to the unique place and value of the Scriptures is not to be dismissed by those who believe in a providential control of history. That *consensus* has been mingled with changing and often erroneous presuppositions, and 'the ministry of illusion' in the present, as in the past, is often discernible in the response of the Church to the Bible. Yet such illusion may be on

the circumference of the central and permanent truth of canonicity.

Such considerations require a whole philosophy of revelation for their adequate statement, to say nothing of their valid defence. They imply that revelation, and therefore the canonicity of the Scriptures which mediate it, cannot be objectified and isolated in any external and material object. Revelation implies that unity of spirit and spirit which comes from the contact of life with life, the life of Israel, the old and the new, with the life of to-day. In that contact there are sacramental means, amongst which (for Protestants in particular) the Bible is foremost (did not Leo call it a *sacramentum*?). The Bible mediates a faith and a life which continue to-day the dynamic quality of the religion of the Bible. In that unity of the *testimonium spiritus sancti internum* the fact of revelation is vindicated, and with it the canonicity of the Scriptures considered as a whole, and with full recognition of its debatable margins. These uncertainties were there, as we have seen, from the beginning, and they remain there as a warning against mechanical conceptions of what canonicity, and, with it, inspiration mean. The Roman Catholic doctrine of the Canon is definite to the last degree. The Canon was defined as exactly as possible by the Council of Trent in 1546, and the acceptance of that definition is a necessary element of the Catholic faith; 'the unique quality of the Sacred Books is a revealed dogma' (*The Catholic Encyclopædia*, iii. 267–279). The Protestant, on the other hand, must base his own recognition of that unique quality on the intrinsic worth and ministry of the books themselves, as witnessed by his own response to their message under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, but this does not make revelation merely subjective, nor does it destroy the conception of canonicity. The authority of the Scriptures needs no testimony from man, because it rests on the testimony of the Holy Spirit Himself, confirming His truth without by the creation of an echoing truth within. The principle is as valid as that of any interpretation of the rationality or beauty of the universe.

Divinest when Thou most art Man.

By the Reverend Shirley Redfern, Hessle, Yorkshire.

It would seem only necessary to explain the life of Jesus, to show how He reacted to the various experiences common to the human lot, to find men, whether they regard themselves as religious or not, speaking in unstinted praise of Him. Without any reservation at all they are quite prepared to admit that His was the greatest life ever lived, and if every one would live as He did, then the world would be a far better place for every one than it is to-day. But this glowing tribute is clouded over with interrogation and doubt, if not indeed negatived altogether. Those who will enthuse in the most generous terms over the character of Christ are equally convinced that it is impossible for it ever to become the universal way of life. They, for example, have tried to live like Him, but in spite of all their efforts they never seem to get any nearer to His ideal. This will perhaps explain better than anything else why there is so little spirit of arrogance in the modern scepticism. Indeed, one can detect an undertone of regret, almost sorrow, that they should be compelled to admit the impossibility of it. The time has gone when men sweep the Christ out of their ken with high-handed disdain. The fact is that Jesus showed Himself to be the complete master of life, and men who have to live in the same world, share the same life, and face up to the same experiences, are anxious to share in the same sovereignty. The experiences of to-day are such that men will not waive aside with frivolous and contemptuous gesture that which they know would be their salvation if other things were equal. It is a comparatively easy type of evangelism which would counsel us to accept the Christ ideal without any query or hesitation, but the plain fact is that men are not prepared to do that. We are living in a questioning age. The Group Movements which have lately come into prominence have shown us quite clearly that a fair proportion of modern unbelief is the result of sincere and honest thought, and as such the question should be approached