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A table of contents for *The Expositor* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expositor-series-1.php

THE USE OF TESTIMONIES IN THE EARLY
CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

INTRODUCTION.

Existence of Books of Testimonies Suspected.

THE existence in the early Church of collections of testimonies, extracted from the Old Testament for use against the Jews, has for a long time been a matter of suspicion. It was in the highest degree probable that such collections should arise, and their value for controversial purposes was so obvious that they would readily pass into the form of written books, and be subject to the correction, amplification, or excision of editors in such a way as to constitute in themselves a cycle of patristic literature, the main lines of whose development can easily be traced and the variations of whose development from one period of Church life to another can often be detected. They arose out of the exigency of controversy, and therefore covered the wide ground of canonical Jewish literature; but they were, at the same time, subject, to the exigency of the controversialist, who, travelling from place to place, could not carry a whole library with him. It was, therefore, *a priori*, probable that they would be little books of wide range. The parallel which suggests itself to one's mind is that of the little handbook known as the Soldier's Pocket Bible, which was carried by the Ironsides of Cromwell, and was composed of a series of Biblical extracts, chiefly from the Old Testament, defining the duty of the Puritan soldier in the various circumstances in which he found himself, and

arranged under the headings of questions appropriate to the situation.

As we have said, these collections have been suspected to exist by a number of students of early Patristic literature, though, as we hope to show, they have not, all of them, adequately realized the antiquity of the first forms in which Testimonies were circulated. It will be proper to draw attention to the way in which these suspicions have been expressed.

For example, the late Dr. Hatch, in his *Essays on Biblical Greek*, wrote as follows :¹

It may naturally be supposed that a race which laid stress on moral progress, whose religious services had variable elements of both prayer and praise, and which was carrying on an *active propaganda*, would have, among other books, *manuals* of morals, of devotion and of *controversy*. It may also be supposed, if we take into consideration the contemporary habit of making collections of *excerpta*, and the special authority which the Jews attached to their sacred books, that some of their manuals would consist of extracts from the Old Testament. The existence of composite quotations in the New Testament and in some of the early Fathers suggests the hypothesis that we have in these relics of such manuals.

Manuals of controversy, such as Dr. Hatch imagines to be the apparatus of a Jewish missionary in early times, might perhaps be described as *Testimonia pro Judaeis*, and, if such existed, there is nothing to forbid their having been produced by the Hellenists of the prae-Christian period, as well as by those of a later date. What we are concerned with, however, is not *Testimonies on behalf of the Jews*, whose force would not be very great except with those who were already well on the way to conviction of the truth of Judaism ; but *Testimonies against Jews*, of the nature of a series of *Argumenta ad hominem*, where the man was identified with his own religion and then refuted from it. And it is only neces-

¹ Hatch : *l.c.* p. 203, quoted [and italicized] by me in *EXPOSITOR* for September, 1905.

sary to say here of the very illuminating sentence quoted from Dr. Hatch, that if such collections of Testimonies on behalf of the Jews existed in early times, before the diffusion of Christianity, then there must have been, *a fortiori*, similar collections produced in later times, when the Christian religion was being actively pushed by the Church in the Synagogue. It is, of course, possible also that those phenomena on which Hatch's observations turned, such as the early existence of composite quotations from the Septuagint, may belong to the class of Testimonies *against* the Jews, and not to Testimonies *on behalf of* them. In which case the error in not recognizing their character would be due to the want of a right sense of the antiquity of this form of Christian propaganda.

In his recent work on the *Character and Authorship of the Fourth Gospel*, Dr. Drummond has expressed the same suspicion, though with a modest apology for wandering into the region of conjecture. He is pointing out ¹ the difficulties into which the successive translators of the Old Testament into Greek were driven by the necessarily controversial use which was to be made of their translations. "It may have become," says he, "a matter of common knowledge among those who cared for the Scriptures, that certain passages required emendation. The Christians would naturally turn their attention to Messianic quotations; and it is conceivable that there may have grown up, whether in writing or not, an anthology of passages useful in controversy, which differed more or less from the current Greek translation. This is, of course, only conjecture; but I think it affords a possible explanation of the phenomenon of the Johannine quotations."

This also is an illuminating statement; it recognizes that collections of Messianic passages may have antedated

¹ Drummond, *l.c.* p. 365.

the Fourth Gospel, and that they may have been written collections, made by Christians. If the hypothesis is a correct one, then we are very near indeed to the suggestion that *Testimonies against the Jews* are amongst the earliest deposits of the Christian literature.

Early Collections of Testimonies against the Jews are still Extant.

When we begin to explore into the region of Christian literature for evidences as to the formal use of Old Testament prophecies in controversies with the Jews, we find the confirmation required, not only in the case of composite quotations, such as those to which Dr. Hatch refers, or Messianic prophecies such as Dr. Drummond speaks of, but in the survival of a number of early Christian books, which are hardly more than strings of Anti-Jewish texts with editorial connexions and arrangements. We are not limited to a search in the pages of early Christian polemicists, such as Justin or Irenæus, though, as we shall show presently, there is abundance of fragmentary matter in their writings which can best be explained by the use of a book of Testimonies, and, indeed, in such a case as that of Justin, whose largest and most important work is a debate, real or imaginary, with a Jewish Rabbi, it would be strange indeed if Justin did not use the method of Testimonies, while the rest of the Church used them freely. It is not, however, a question of isolating quotations and reconstructing the books from which they were taken. There are a number of such books actually extant, which, when read side by side, show, from their common matter and method, and from their curious and minute agreements, that they constitute the very cycle of literature which we have been speaking of under the name of *Testimonies*; that is, they are definite books of polemic, closely connected one with

the others, and bearing marks of derivation from a common original.

In the case of a writer who uses Testimonies freely we may find ourselves in a difficulty as to whether he should be classed with Patristic writers, like Justin, who use Testimonies, but only in the course of an argument, or whether he should be grouped with Cyprian and others, to whom the Testimonies are the argument itself and not mere incidents in the course of it. But this is only a question of degree. All writers who can be convicted of the use of a Testimony book will be in evidence for the reconstruction of that book, in one or other of the phases of its evolution.

We have already alluded to the case of Cyprian, and from the distinction drawn above, if it could be maintained, between those who quote and those who merely edit or transcribe such books, we should be led to say that there are, from that point of view, two Cyprians; one who uses a book of Testimonies like Justin, for incidental polemic, and the other who makes, on his own account, an edition of the book with expansions and changes from his own editorial hand. The first may conveniently be neglected, at all events for the present. The second is one of our prime authorities.

Cyprian's Testimonies contain an earlier collection of Testimonies against the Jews.

A reference to the complete works of Cyprian will show a work in three books, addressed to a certain Quirinus, and headed with the title *Testimonia*. Of these the third book is concerned with Christian ethics and is clearly a later addition to the other two. But the first two books have a common preface in which Cyprian explains to Quirinus that he has put together two little tracts, one to show that the Jews, according to prophecy, have lost the Divine

favour and that the Christians have stepped into their place ; and the other to show that Christ was and is, what the Scripture foretold Him to be. And the direct attack upon the Jews in the first book, followed by the appeal to them which is involved in the prophecies (from the Old Testament) of the second book, is sufficient to permit us to re-write the title of Cyprian's book from the simple form *Testimonia* into the form *Testimonia adversus Judaeos* ; or, at all events, to regard the longer title as latent in the shorter.

We shall have to refer constantly to these two books in the course of our investigation, both to the actual quotations made, and to the heads under which they are grouped. No one will doubt that we have rightly described the books if he will read the capitulations, beginning with the statement that

The Jews have gravely offended God,
and concluding with the affirmation that

The Gentiles who believe are more than the Jews,
and that

The Jews can only obtain forgiveness by admission to the Christian Church.

There can be no doubt that in Cyprian's writings we have preserved a book of Testimonies against the Jews.

Tertullian against the Jews is a mass of Quotations, probably from an early Book of Testimonies.

A somewhat similar case will be the tract ascribed to Tertullian, which goes under the name of *Tertullian adversus Judaeos*. We shall be able, quite easily, to show the book of Testimonies underlying this tract of Tertullian ; the matter is, however, somewhat complicated by critical questions which have arisen as to the unity of the authorship of the work. It is, however, generally conceded that

the first eight chapters are from Tertullian's hand, and that the remainder is largely made up out of his other writings (possibly by the expansion of a later and less-skilled hand).

The book opens out for us a vista in another direction. We are told in the preface that it arose out of an unsatisfactory and inconclusive public debate between a Christian (Tertullian himself ?) and a Jewish proselyte ; and that it was an attempt to clear up the matters in dispute between them. Now there is a whole region of Christian literature, most of it unhappily lost, which was made up of dialogues between real or imaginary Christian and Jewish debaters ; and we may take it for granted that many of the proof-texts which we find in the book of Testimonies will appear also in such dialogues as those of Jason and Papiscus, Simon and Theophilus, Aquila and Timothy ; and that these works and similar ones, when extant, will be in evidence for the restoration which we are trying to make. In reality, however, they constitute a cycle of their own, and should be treated separately.

The case of Tertullian against the Jews does not properly belong with them, as it is not cast in the form of a dialogue, and follows closely the lines of the collectors of *Testimonia*. And it will be sufficient here to state that it will be found very useful in determining the contents and defining the antiquity of the early *Testimonia*.

Gregory of Nyssa is credited with a Book of Testimonies against the Jews.

A third and most important collection is one which passes under the name of Gregory of Nyssa, and which was published by Zacagni in his *Collectanea Sacra*. Whether the ascription of authorship is rightly made may be a difficult matter to decide. For, as soon as we have agreed that the

excerpts which make up the collection are conventional and traditional, we have very little to test the authorship by ; in so far as they are excerpts, we have Gregory of Nyssa as an editor and not as an author. In that case only the headings will tell us of the authorship ; we have not, as in Cyprian's case, the guidance or confirmation which comes from the fact of the collection being in Old Latin. But, on the other hand, if the matter be traditional and the parallels can be found all over the first three centuries, there is no reason why the ascription to Gregory of Nyssa should be false. What possible motive can be assigned for such an ascription of authorship, except that the book was found amongst his writings ; and if it was thus found, it is not impossible that it may have had his editorial care, just as did the Cyprianic collection ? However, it does not really matter whose collection it is, and we can cite it as Gregory of Nyssa without any prejudice to the question of ultimate authorship. We shall find many features in the work which are certainly of high antiquity and can be paralleled from the fathers of the first three centuries.

Hippolytus and Others.

A fourth work to which we may refer is a *Demonstration against the Jews* (*Ἀποδεικτικὴ πρὸς Ἰουδαίους*) which is current under the name of Hippolytus, and was published by Lagarde amongst the works of that father. A fifth work would be the tract against the Jews in the writings of Cyprian. And many other early Patristic writers will be found to be more or less occupied in a similar use of material collected from the Old Testament.

Bar Ṣalibi Against the Jews.

And last of all we come to the treatise of Bar Ṣalibi *Against the Jews*, to which we referred in a recent issue of

the *EXPOSITOR*,¹ which, though late in date, contains many relics of the earlier controversies, and probably whole sections, slightly disguised in their transference into Syriac, of the lost book that we are in quest of. We have no need to apologize for Bar Şalibi's late date, relatively to such writers as Tertullian, Cyprian or Hippolytus. It is recognized that the writings of Bar Şalibi contain a great deal of early matter. We have not only had to thank him for his share in the vindication of the Diatessaron of Tatian and of Ephrem's commentary upon it, but we have also had his evidence for the reality of the Gaius with whom Hippolytus disputed (though Lightfoot made Gaius into a shadow of Hippolytus himself) and for a number of valuable extracts from the lost book against Gaius, to say nothing of the proof which he furnished that the celebrated Canon of Muratori was a fragment from that very book. Bar Şalibi must have had an excellent library of early fathers at his disposal, and it is very likely that more will yet be found of lost Christian authors in his pages.

This new tract, then, of Bar Şalibi can easily be proved to belong to the same cycle as the other books of which we have been speaking. We will now show how the conjecture of the critics, and the evidence of the extant literature as to the existence of early books of Testimonies can be confirmed by the internal evidence of the books referred to, including, of course, Bar Şalibi himself.

Evidence for Books of Testimonies.

Probably the best way to arrange the internal evidence which the extant books of Testimonies and the early Christian writers furnish for the construction of a lost original document or documents, would be to arrange the matter under some such scheme as the following :

¹ *EXPOSITOR* (N.S.), xii. 161.

Peculiar Texts.

(a) We should carefully note the recurrence of those various readings which appear to be unique in such collections and such arguments as we have been alluding to.

Recurrent Sequences.

(b) We should carefully study the sequence of the passages which are adduced in the same collections and arguments. We shall find that sequences recur, just as readings do.

Erroneous Authorship.

(c) We shall also find that there is a recurrence of erroneous ascriptions of authorship, by which a wrong title is assigned to a passage taken from the Old Testament.

Editor's Prefaces, Comments and Questions.

(d) We shall find a recurrence of introductory or explanatory clauses which betray the hand of an editor or collector, and of which not a few belong to the very first strata of the deposited testimonies.

Matter for the use of the Controversionalist.

(e) We shall find that these explanatory and introductory clauses are often of the nature of direct challenges such as would be made in a debate, or would be considered as applicable to the person or persons for whom the book is intended.

Now let us give some instances that will come under these various heads, without attempting to follow a strict logical order ; and we shall readily illustrate the arguments that must have been involved in the conventional oral or written statements which the early Christians made to the Jews with whom they were contending ; and it will soon become as clear as daylight that the major part of the testimonies in question were not limited to oral circulation, but that they were extant in book form.

Suppose, for example, we were reading the following passage in Irenaeus¹ relating to certain prophecies about our Lord :

Qui autem dicunt, adventu ejus quemadmodum cervus claudus saliet, et plana erit lingua mutorum et aperientur oculi caecorum, et aures surdorum audient, et manus dissolutae, et genua debilia firmabuntur; et, resurgenti qui in monumento sunt mortui, et ipse infirmitates nostras accipiet et languores portabit, eas quae ab eo curationes fiebant annuntiaverunt :

and if we were to place side by side with this the following passage from Justin's *First Apology* :²

Ὅτι δὲ καὶ θεραπεύσειν πάσας νόσους καὶ νεκροὺς ἀνεγερῆν ὁ ἡμέτερος Χριστὸς προεφητεύθη, ἀκούσατε τῶν λελεγμένων. ἔστι δὲ ταῦτα. Τῇ παρουσίᾳ αὐτοῦ ἀλείται χωλὸς ὡς ἔλαφος καὶ τρανὴ ἔσται γλῶσσα μογιάλων τυφλοὶ ἀναβλέψουσι καὶ λεπροὶ καθαρισθήσονται καὶ νεκροὶ ἀναστήσονται καὶ περιπατήσουσιν'

we should at once see that both Justin and Irenaeus have added an introductory formula to the quotation which they make from Isaiah xxxv, and this introductory formula, "at his advent," ought to have been italicized in Irenaeus as a part of the quotation; in other words, it is not, in either case, an immediate quotation from Isaiah, but a quotation from a book containing testimonies of Isaiah and others. For no one will for a moment assume that Irenaeus went to Justin's writings in search of the introductory formula. He found it attached to his prophecies, as Justin did. The words had been substituted for the introductory "then" in "then shall the lame man leap, etc.," as if a question had been asked and answered with regard to the time implied by the prophet. The answer itself is due to the previous sentence (Isa. xxxv. 4), "Your God will come . . . He will come and save you."

¹ Lib. iv. 55. 2: ed. Mass. 273.

² 1 Ap. 48.

Moreover we have with the quotation a decided suggestion that the prophecies quoted were grouped under heads, and we can come near to the restoration of one such formula. For when Irenaeus introduces the matter, he does it by a statement that "those who say thus and thus. . . . announced the cures which were done by him (sc. Christ)." And Justin says, "Now that he was to heal diseases and to raise the dead may be seen from the following prophecies." Looking back to Irenaeus' quotation we see that he also has the raising of the dead along with the cures, though he does not use the same proof-text ; and on turning to another chapter of the Apology of Justin, (c. 54), we find the complaint made that when the heathen "learnt that it was foretold that he should *heal diseases and raise the dead*, they dragged in Asklepius," to explain the facts. Here again we catch the refrain of the introductory formula, "That it was foretold of Christ that He should heal diseases, etc."

Last of all, we notice that the quotation of Irenaeus is a series of extracts or testimonies. It is a composite quotation. He begins with Isaiah xxxv. 5, 6, goes on with Isaiah xxvi. 19, and concludes with Isaiah liii. 4 ; this is just what we should expect from a collection of Testimonies. And we conclude, therefore, that both Irenaeus and Justin had access to such a collection and probably it was a part of their Christian education to know such a book.

Now let us try a somewhat similar passage from Irenaeus of which we have the Greek preserved. In the third volume of the Oxyrhyncus papyri, Grenfell and Hunt gave a series of seven fragments from an unknown Christian writer, with the interesting statement that the fragments might be as old as the second century. These fragments were promptly identified by Dr. Armitage Robinson as containing portions of the lost Greek text of Irenaeus, and with the aid of the extant Latin he restored very skilfully

the order and completed the contents of the passages involved in the torn fragments of papyrus. Amongst his restorations one passage corresponding to the Latin of Irenaeus, Bk. iii. c. 9, ran as follows : a few letters in each line being the key to the passage :

. οδ και τὸ ἀ-	i.e., of whose star
στρον Βαλαάμ μὲν οὖ] τῶις ἐ	Balaam prophesied
προφήτευσεν Ἀνατε]λ[εῖ δ	as follows: There
στρον ἐξ Ἰακώβ . . .]	shall rise a star.
	out of Jacob, etc.

To this restoration I took exception on two grounds : (1) that the Clermont and Vossian copies of Irenaeus read in the Latin, not Balaam, but *Isaiah* ; (2) that the same mistake of crediting Isaiah with a passage from Numbers was made in the following passage of Justin (i. *Apol.* c. 32).

καὶ Ἡσαίας δὲ ἄλλος προφήτης τὰ αὐτὰ δι' ἄλλων ῥήσεων προφητεύων, οὕτως εἶπεν Ἀνατελεῖ ἄστρον ἐξ Ἰακώβ καὶ ἄνθος ἀναβήσεται ἀπὸ τῆς ρίζης Ἰεσσαί, κτλ.

From this passage we see how the error of placing the name of Isaiah on a prophecy of Balaam arose ; for Justin shows us the passage of Isaiah following the one from Numbers, and the error lies in the covering of two passages with a single reference. It is clear, then, that Justin's mistake was made in a collection of Testimonies from the prophets, and that the same collection, or one that closely agreed with it, was in the hands of Irenaeus. We have thus confirmed our results in a previous case, and can proceed with confidence, assuming not only the existence, but also the extreme antiquity of the collections referred to.

We have now illustrated the recurrence of quotations in a given sequence and the displacement of the names of prophets quoted, to which we referred above as furnishing the internal tests for the use of Testimony books.

As the field of criticism, which is thus opened up, is very wide, and the suspicion arises in our minds that there is matter of the same kind in the New Testament itself, it will be worth our while to give a few illustrations more, by which we may confirm the external and internal evidence for the lost books and tracts of which we are speaking. There is a remarkable reading, apparently from the Greek Psalter, which has perplexed the souls of many critics who have set themselves to find either the authority for the reading or an explanation of its genesis. I refer to the famous passage in which the early Fathers speak of Christ under the terms, "The Lord reigned from the tree," a passage which has in recent times provoked an ingenious (but, I am afraid, impossible) Rabbinic explanation by Mr. Hart in the pages of the EXPOSITOR.

Of the antiquity of the text there can be no doubt; it is certainly earlier than Justin, and it would not require a very acute imagination to suggest that it was involved in the argument of St. Peter with the Jewish rulers in Acts v. 30, 31, where we are told that—

"Ye slew Him and nailed Him to the tree ;
Him hath God exalted a Prince and a Saviour."

But whether it is involved in the text of Acts or not, it is well known that it is one of the passages which Justin accused the men of the Synagogue of having erased from the Biblical text; that is, it was an obvious *argumentum ad Judaeum*. We make the suggestion that the passage never occurred in any MSS. of the LXX., but that Justin took it from a book of Testimonies. He introduces it as being from the 95th Psalm¹; which suggests either a reference to the Psalter or to a book of extracts which introduced a sentence something in the following manner:

¹ Justin, *Dial.* 72.

David in the 95th Psalm : " Say among the heathen, the Lord reigned from the tree."

According to Justin the last three words had been removed from the LXX. by the Jews. Is this a mere guess on Justin's part ? Let us see if we can get any light on the matter.

The next writer who quotes the passage is, I think, Tertullian *Against the Jews* (c. 10) ; we have already alluded to this tract as containing many of the earliest testimonies employed by the Christians of the first two centuries. He introduces it, along with many other references to the Cross and Passion, as follows :

" Age dum, si legisti penes Prophetam in psalmis, *Deus regnavit a ligno* : expecto quid intelligas," etc.

This is thoroughly in the manner of the controversialist, and suggests the use of a conventional method. The debater asks his opponent what he makes of this text. Can we find confirmation for the suggestion that we are dealing with formal matter definitely arranged ? I think we can.

The passage quoted from Justin is only one out of a number of texts which he says the Jews have altered. Curiously they all belong to the same category, viz., prophecies of the Cross and Passion. The one which precedes this one that we are discussing is the well known statement that the Jews have removed (though it is still to be found in some copies) a passage in which Jeremiah said, " Come let us put wood on His bread," the wood being assumed to be the Cross. Now this is quoted in the Testimonies of Gregory of Nyssa in the following form :

Ἱερεμίας. Ἐγὼ δὲ ὡς ἄρνιον ἄκακον ἀγόμενον τοῦ θύεσθαι, οὐκ ἔγνω.

καὶ πάλιν. Δεῦτε καὶ ἐμβαλῶμεν ξύλον εἰς τὸν ἄρτον αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐκτρέψωμεν αὐτὸν ἀπὸ τῶν ζώντων καὶ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ οὐ μὴ μνησθῆ ἔτι.

If with this we compare the quotation of the same passage by Bar Şalibi (p. 33), we have as follows :

And Jeremiah : And I was like an innocent lamb that is led to the slaughter, and I did not know what was over me.¹ And come let us corrupt (?) wood on his bread.²

Here two separate collections of Testimonies make the very same sequence of supposed passages from Jeremiah, and it is clear that they reflect a primitive arrangement and ascription of the peculiar words. But this ascription is Justin's, and it seems to be probable that Justin was using his Testimony-book, and not his copy of the Septuagint, when he talked about "the wood and the bread." If this is likely for one of the passages which the Jews are said to have altered, then, since they all deal with the subject of the Cross, they probably were all taken from a book of prophecies which had been fulfilled, arranged under various heads. In that case, Justin's reference to the Jews as destroying or removing texts is gratuitous. And that it is so is clear in the case of "the wood and the bread" from the fact that all copies of Jeremiah have the disputed reading in Jeremiah xi. 19. If Justin had looked at any Greek copy of Jeremiah, he would have found it ; but he looked instead at the Testimony-book, and assumed that it was absent from Jeremiah (unless in a few cases it had escaped correction).

The development of pertinent questions in connexion with prophetic quotations is a subject that covers a great deal of ground. It is clear that many of these questions

¹ A reference to p. 23, where the passage is quoted again, suggests that this should read, "And I did not know : and against me [they devised devices] and said, Come, let us corrupt his bread on the wood." That is, some words have dropped on p. 33, and a slight transposition has been made on p. 23, the existence of a common original for the two quotations is sufficiently evident.

² Both of the passages are in Cyprian, *Test.* ii. 15, and the second of the two passages is in Cyprian, *Test.* ii. 20.

belong to the very earliest form of the Testimony-book. For example, when we read in Irenaeus (lib. iv. c. 10) as follows :

Jam' autem et manifestaverat [sc. Moyses] ejus adventum dicens : *Non deerit princeps in Juda, neque dux ex femoribus ejus, quoadusque veniat cui repositum est, et ipse est spes gentium ; alligans ad vitem pullum et ad helicem pullum asinae. Lavabit in vino stolam et in sanguine uvae pallium suum ; laetifici oculi ejus a vino et candidi dentes ejus quam lac.* Inquirant enim hi qui omnia scrutari dicuntur, id tempus in quo defecit princeps et dux ex Juda :

we have one of the greatest of the Messianic proof texts, accompanied by a question as to when the ruler failed from the line of Judah. Suppose now we turn to Justin's *First Apology* (c. 32) ; here we are told as follows :

Μωύσης !μὲν οὖν, πρῶτος τῶν προφητῶν γενόμενος εἶπεν αὐτολέξει οὕτως. Οὐκ ἐκλείψει ἄρχων ἐξ Ἰούδα οὐδὲ ἡγούμενος ἐκ τῶν μηρῶν αὐτοῦ ἕως ἂν ἔλθῃ ᾧ ἀποκεῖται καὶ αὐτὸς ἔσται προσδοκία ἐθνῶν, δεσμεύων πρὸς ἀμπελον τὸν πῶλον αὐτοῦ, πλύνων ἐν αἵματι σταφυλῆς τὴν στολὴν αὐτοῦ. Ὑμέτερον οὖν ἔστιν ἀκριβῶς ἐξετάσαι καὶ μαθεῖν, μέχρι τινὸς ἦν ἄρχων καὶ βασιλεὺς ἐν Ἰουδαίῳ ἴδιος αὐτῶν.

Here we have substantially the same quotation, followed by a similar inquiry ; the connexion between the two statements is further established by the curious coincidence that both writers refer the quotation to Moses, and not to Jacob.¹

The coincidences are such that we are entitled to say that the early Testimony-book referred the prophecy of Jacob to Moses, and accompanied it by a pertinent query. And many similar conjunctions can be noted. Perhaps the most important of them from a theological point of view may be found in the treatment to which a certain

¹ So in Justin, i. *Apol.* c. 54, the Messianic prophecy is again referred to Moses. But in *Dial.* 54 he explains that the passages are recorded by Moses, but prophesied by Jacob: ὑπὸ Μωυσέως ἀνιστορημένον καὶ ὑπὸ τοῦ πατριάρχου Ἰακώβ προπεφητευμένον.

verse from the 110th Psalm was subjected, and the questions that were asked in connexion with it. When one reads the history of the great Council of Nicaea for the first time, the feeling of impressiveness which is provoked by the historical scene and by the greatness of its theme of debate is tempered by astonishment at the inadequacy of many of the arguments which are brought forward, and with the utmost seriousness considered, with a view to the determination of the proper language in which to clothe the doctrine of the Sonship of Jesus Christ. With a subject for discourse such as for sacredness and high solemnity has never been equalled in the history of human thought, and with a congress of intellects involving at least two or three religious teachers whose capacity far outreaches the average human span, it is surprising that the issue of the great contest should turn so much on misinterpreted texts and overstrained similitudes. It almost seems as if the combatants were giants and children by turns, or as if they held briefs to reproduce not only the loftiest thoughts of the teachers of the Church in earlier ages, but also their weakest suggestions along with the chatter of the baths and of the bakers' shops. What are we to make of Athanasius when he uses, to determine the language of the Church's symbol of Faith, a verse from the 110th Psalm, in which we read in the Greek version :

πρὸ ἑωσφόρου γενένηκά σε.

(Before the day-star I begat thee.)

It seems almost inconceivable that so much can have been made of a misinterpreted and mistranslated text. Yet no one seems to have questioned that the passage was germane to the discussion : the only question was as to the extent to which the Church was committed by its assumed oracle. No one questioned the accuracy of the Septuagint read-

ing, nor its applicability to either the Homocousion or the Homoiousion doctrine.

When, however, we succeed, however imperfectly, in transferring ourselves into the fourth century so as to be able to look both up stream and down stream at the flowing doctrine of the Church, we can see that the very fact of the influence of the passage quoted proves that it was not quoted for the first time at the Council of Nicaea. It was a well known interpretation before the days of Athanasius, Eusebius and Arius. We can easily show that from the very earliest time this text had suffered violence, and violent men had perverted its meaning; but the most ill-proportioned things may often be set in surroundings where they can acquire a certain amount of dignity, and perhaps it was not wholly inept that the orthodox brained Arius (or tried to) with a missile taken from the armoury of the primitive Christians against the Jews. We will now show that this is the origin of the passage in question.

Bar Şalibi in his Testimonies ¹ quotes as follows :

David said : Before the day-star I begat thee. And before the Sun is his name and before the moon. Now explain to us, when was Israel born before the day-star, etc.

Here the controversialist has put together two passages in order to prove the pre-existence of the Son and his eternity. At the same time he refutes the objector who says that this and similar things are said of Israel. The passages combined are from the 110th Psalm and from the 71st Psalm ; the objection met is that some other person or persons than the Messiah are referred to. Now turn to Justin, *Dialogue with Trypho*, c. 63, c. 76 and c. 83, and you will find him harping on the same text and meeting a similar objection. "Your Rabbis," says Justin, "have dared to refer the Psalm (cx.) to Hezekiah and not

¹ p. 28.

to Christ." It follows that it was a controversial passage in Justin's day : you can hear the two disputants at their work. The Rabbis of whom Justin was speaking were replying to Messianic and Christian interpretations. In another passage (c. 76) Justin combines the two passages from the Psalms as follows :

*καὶ Δαβὶδ δὲ πρὸ ἡλίου καὶ σελήνης
ἐκ γαστρὸς γεννηθῆσθαι αὐτὸν κατὰ
τὴν τοῦ πατρὸς βουλήν ἐκήρυξε*

where it is easy to see the combined fragments of—

Before the day-star I begat thee from the womb ;
Before the sun and before the moon His name shall abide.

The same blending of passages is found in c. 45, where Justin speaks of Christ as being " before the day-star and the moon."

But if we want further confirmation that the two passages belong to a combination in a book of Testimonies, here it is in a very primitive form from Gregory of Nyssa : ¹

ἢ δῆλον πρὸς ὃν εἶπεν, ἐκ γαστρὸς πρὸ ἑωσφῆρου ἐγεννησά σε· καὶ, πρὸ τοῦ ἡλίου τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ καὶ πρὸ τῆς σελήνης.

And here we have the primitive question "Of whom speaketh the prophet this ?" in a form which at once explains why later editors proved that it was not Hezekiah, nor the ideal Israel. It looks as if the form in Gregory of Nyssa were very near to the original.²

However, we have shown that the force of Athanasius' argument lay in the fact that he was quoting from the old Book of Testimonies ; for we not only find his proof-text in Justin and elsewhere, but in two extant books of such prophetic evidence. And it will be seen that the collection of Bar Ṣalibi has much ancient material incorporated in it.

¹ Zacagni, p. 292.

² Cyprian, *Test.* i. 17, has merely Ps. cix. Ante luciferum genui te. Juravit Dominus, etc.

Perhaps enough has now been said to demonstrate the existence of the lost book whose influence the critics have been suspecting.

As soon as we have accumulated enough evidence to enable us to definitely state the existence of the primitive Testimony-book, we can go to use the recovered book for the criticism of the early Patristic documents, and of the books of the New Testament. We will first give a specimen of the way in which the book can be traced in a sub-apostolic writer. Suppose, for example, that we were studying the so-called second epistle of Clement to the Corinthians. We find that as soon as the prologue is over, the second chapter plunges abruptly into a quotation from the beginning of Isaiah liv., "Rejoice, barren woman, that dost not bear," a passage with which we are familiar from its use in the Epistle to the Galatians. He proceeds to explain the application of the passage to the Church and the Synagogue, and continues thus: "In saying that the children of the desolate are more than of her that hath the husband, he was speaking to prove that our people seemed desolate and forsaken of God, whereas now we have believed and have become more than those who seemed to know God." Now turn to Justin's *First Apology*, c. 53, and you will find him making a similar statement from the same passage: "We know," he says, "that the Christians from among the Gentiles are more and truer than the Jews and the Samaritans." "It was prophesied that believers from among the Gentiles should be more in number than those who come from among the Jews and Samaritans. For it was said as follows: Rejoice, thou barren woman, etc. . . . And that the converts from the Gentiles should be truer and trustier, we will declare by quoting the words of Isaiah the prophet." Then he proceeds to quote, not Isaiah, but Jeremiah (Jer. ix. 26), to the effect that Israel is uncircum-

cised in heart, the Gentiles are ceremonially uncircumcised." The same argument from prophecy appears in c. 31, where he tells us that it was foretold that the messengers of the Gospel should be sent to every race of men, and that the Gentiles should believe rather than the Jews. Now here we have all the features of the use of the Testimony-book. And when we turn to the Testimonies of Cyprian we find as follows :

Quod Ecclesia quae prius sterilis fuerat plures filios habitura esset ex gentibus, quam quot synagoga ante habuisset.

This heading is followed by another :

Quod gentes magis in Christum crediturae essent.

Here we have the very points made by Justin and Ps.-Clement ; the Gentiles more, truer and trustier ; and the first proof-text is—

Apud Esaiam prophetam : Laetare, sterilis, etc.

It is needless to say more ; the evidence is conclusive that the early book of Testimonies contained a section on the numerical and ethical superiority of Gentile Christians to Jews (or is it Judaeo-Christians ?). And from the way in which the supposed Clement plunges at once into the use of the book, we may be sure that it was familiar to him, and that it was not wholly unknown to his hearers.

The question that comes next is the possibility of our finding traces of the Testimony-book in the pages of the New Testament. The subject is suggested by the previous one which we were discussing from Ps.-Clement, where a passage is quoted which we also find used as a testimony in the Epistle to the Galatians (iv. 17). It is also suggested by the fact that we find an occasional failure of the references to the Old Testament on the side of authorship, as when Mark refers to Isaiah a prophecy of Malachi ; and Matthew refers to Jeremiah a well-known passage about the potter's

field ; besides these and similar errors we have curious features in the quotations of the Fourth Gospel which suggest composite quotation. We should also examine the sequence of the prophecies quoted in the New Testament in order to see whether they agree with the sequences in the Testimony-book, and we must try in such cases to find out which of the books has borrowed from the other.

For example, when Peter (1 Ep. ii. 6-8) says :

“ Behold I lay in Zion an elect corner-stone, etc.” ;

“ He that believeth on Him shall not be confounded ” ;

“ The stone which the builders [rejected is become the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence ” ;

we have a sequence of quotations from

Isa. xxviii. 16, Ps. cxviii. 22, Isa. viii. 14, the connexion between them being the word “ Stone ” as applied to Christ.

If we turn to Romans ix. 32, 33, we have the statement that

“ They stumbled at the stumbling stone, as it is written : Behold I lay in Sion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence, and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded ” ;

where the sequence is Isaiah viii. 14, Isaiah xxviii. 16, the two passages being neatly incorporated into an apparently single reference. The suggestion arises that the Testimony-book had made the conjunction ; and in that case the headline must have been a statement that Christ is the stumbling stone, or something that would lead up to that. The anti-Judaic character of the quotation does not need to be stated. Did the Testimony-books use this figure and the corresponding quotations ? The answer is that it would take a whole chapter to illustrate the way in which the earliest of the fathers harp upon the statement that Christ is called the Stone in the Scriptures. When we turn to Cyprian’s *Testimonia* (ii. 16) we find a section headed—

Quod idem et lapis dictus sit

followed by a section (ii. 17)—

Quod deinde idem lapis mons fieret et impleret totam terram.

The first section begins with the first passage from Isaiah as in 1 Peter, and goes on to Psalm cxvii. ; but does not incorporate the second passage of Isaiah. The same references with the same omission will be found in Greg. Nyss., p. 312. The inference is that the treatment in Cyprian is conventional, and goes back to an early original. The verification of this is in Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho*, where Justin returns again and again to the statement that Christ is the Stone of the Old Testament, e.g. :

c. 34. "I am going to show you from all the Scriptures that Christ is King and Lord and Priest and God and angel and man and general and stone, and the child that is born, and that he comes first to suffer (*παθὴρὸς*) and then returns, etc."

Amongst the proofs which Justin brings will be found agreements with Cyprian that Christ is the stone which Jacob anointed at Bethel, etc. But, as I have said, it would make a long chapter to trace the doctrine that Christ is the Stone.¹ The history of the doctrine begins with the Lord's own use of the passage from the Psalm as an anti-Judaic testimony and was carried on and marvellously developed for two hundred years. It was certainly a leading point in the Testimony-book.

We ought also to examine whether there are in the New Testament traces of the matter and manner of the controversialist, as we find him in our study of Anti-Judaism elsewhere. A simple instance will show what we mean.

In Acts xxvi. 23, Paul's speech before Agrippa contains the following statement ; first, that he says nothing outside of what the prophets and Moses have said ; second, he

¹ For Justin, *Dial.*, see further 70, 76, 86, 100.

indicates in the following curious expression the matters to be discussed :

εἰ παθητός ὁ Χριστός, εἰ πρῶτος ἐξ ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν φῶς ἔμelli καταγγέλλει τῷ τε λαῷ καὶ τοῖς ἔθνεσιν.

No one, as far as I know, has succeeded in translating this sentence.¹ It is clearly interrogative : "Does the Messiah suffer, and does he first rise from the dead, etc." The words are headlines of testimonies, awkwardly incorporated in the text, and are betrayed as such by the previous references to the prophets and Moses, who are to answer the questions. And a reference to the previous quotation which we took from Justin, as to the things which he was going to prove from the Scriptures (in particular that Christ was the Stone) will show that he also proposed to demonstrate that Christ was *παθητός*. It is the same term as in the Acts, and means that the Messiah must suffer (*ἔδει παθεῖν*).²

We suggest, therefore, that this passage of the Acts shows the influence of the Testimony-book. But now we are on the edge of some large and difficult questions, for the treatment of which our present space will not suffice ; and we must be content to leave the matter for ampler investigation by others, in the hope that the newly published text of Bar Şalibi will assist us in the solution of the intricate and interesting questions which have been raised briefly in these pages.

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¹ The R.V. margin comes nearest to it, with the suggestion "Whether" for *εἰ*.

² Not "is capable of suffering," as in R.V. margin.