

The Journal
of
Theological Studies

JULY, 1909

THE INFLUENCE OF ST JEROME ON THE
CANON OF THE WESTERN CHURCH. I.

IN some previous articles I have tried to analyse the position of the several reformed bodies in relation to the Canon of the Holy Scriptures. I propose now to continue the study of the subject by a similar examination of the very important influence upon the theory of the Canon, and on the practice of the Latin Church in regard to it, exercised by St Jerome.

But first it will be well to recapitulate the conclusions already reached in the previous articles.

As we have seen, the continental reformers, when they set aside the authority of the Church, fell back upon that of the Bible, and in so doing they had recourse to a criterion for the authority of the contents of the Bible not hitherto applied, and in fact quite uncertain and unworkable. It was determined by subjective considerations, and ultimately rested on the personal inspiration of every godly man who chose to read the Bible. Controversial necessities and the inherent weakness of the position eventually led the reformers, other than the extreme Lutherans, more or less to modify their estimate of these personal grounds and to revert to historical and traditional evidence to support the authority of the Holy Scriptures. In this way Karlstadt, the first of the reformers to write a treatise on the Canon, fell back upon the arguments of Jerome and Augustine as the best material for the settlement of the question. These he confronted with each other, and so tried to reach a workable theory and a stable conclusion. The same course was adopted by several of the later apologists for the Reformation: and in regard to the New Testament the result was the general acceptance of the traditional

Canon; the extreme Lutherans being the only section who continued like their master to treat certain books with despite as of doubtful authority.

In respect of the Old Testament the case was different. The two great doctors of the later fourth century, Jerome and Augustine, had adopted different views as to the Canon; and although the view of St Augustine eventually prevailed, that of St Jerome was widely adopted and continued to be held during the middle ages, and in some respects affected the Canon as received by the Latin Church. It was to Jerome's theory, as contrasted with that of Augustine, that the reformed Churches adhered, and they quoted him freely in defence of their conclusions.

The essential distinction between Jerome and Augustine was that the former in regard to the Old Testament claimed that the Jews, who had compiled and preserved it, were the best judges of what it should be, and he accordingly argued persistently that nothing but what was found in the current Jewish Canon of the Old Testament should be received as canonical; while Augustine took the view that the Church from the beginning had had a separate tradition of its own, and that the Bible of Christ and His disciples was not the Bible as the Jews accepted it in the first century, but the Bible as it had been accepted by them when the Septuagint version was made, containing several books not in the current Jewish Bible. With Augustine the real mark of authenticity and canonicity in a book was the fact that it had been accepted by the Church, and decided by the Church to be authoritative. He knew of no other Canon than the Canon so determined.

On this critical issue, as I have said, the reformers sided with Jerome. This was the case with the English Church, in one of whose articles the enumeration of the books of the Old Testament as received by the Jews is followed by the statement: 'The other books, as Jerome saith, the Church doth read for example of life and instruction of manners, but yet doth not apply them to establish any doctrine'; after which follows the list of the so-called Apocrypha. It will be seen that no attempt is here made to justify the displacement of the Christian Canon by the neo-Jewish, save a reference to an *obiter dictum* of Jerome's, whose theory of the Canon is indirectly adopted. In the subsequent controversial works of English divines, and notably in Cosin's

work on the Canon, the justification of the change is based very largely on Jerome's arguments, and in fact things entirely unjustifiable are said of the Tridentine decision by which the Christian Canon was reaffirmed as authoritative, and the continuity of the Church's teaching on the subject—save in some particulars due to mistake—was emphasized; while the English Church was led away into the wilderness by the specious arguments of those who ought to have known better, but had been committed to Jerome's theory by the successive English Bibles from Coverdale's onwards.

The teaching of St Jerome is also responsible for some illogical features in the modern Canon of the Roman Church; and inasmuch as the real purport and importance of this teaching have been more or less overlooked by those who have devoted so much pains to Jerome's *text*, I desire here to analyse his theory of the Canon, a subject obviously of great importance.

Eusebius Hieronymus was born of Christian parents (*Praef. in Job*) at Stridon near Aquileia, on the frontier of Dalmatia and Pannonia, about the year 346. When about 18 he went to school in Rome where, under the teaching of Aelius Donatus (*c. Ruf. i 16*), he acquired that wide knowledge of Latin authors and that skill in the use of the Latin tongue in which he became so pre-eminent. He tells us, 'dum essem Romae puer et liberalibus studiis erudirer solebam cum ceteris eiusdem aetatis et propositi diebus dominicis sepulchra Apostolorum et Martyrum circuire, crebro cryptas ingredi, quae in terrarum profunda defossae ex utraque parte ingredientium per parietes haberent corpora sepulorum' (*Com. in Ezech. 90*). When about 20 years old he was baptized in Rome. Having finished his schooling, he went with his friend Bonosus to Gaul, then famous for its culture, and thence returned to his home and settled at Aquileia. His tempestuous temper made him many enemies, and consequently in about 372 he set out for the east and made his way through Asia Minor to Antioch. Here his life became increasingly austere, and eventually in about 374 he adopted the life of a hermit in Syria. He now devoted himself more especially to the study of the Holy Scriptures, and began his Hebrew lessons, his masters being two Jews. 'Quo labore,' he says, 'quo pretio Baraninam nocturnum habui praeceptorem. Timebat enim Iudaeos et mihi alterum exhibebat Nicodemum' (*Ep. lxxxiv 3*). He also devoted

himself to Greek, of which language, according to Rufinus, he was till then almost wholly ignorant. At this time also he wrote the Life of Paul the Hermit and several extant letters, the most important of which is one to Damasus, written probably in 375, describing the feud of the three bishops at Antioch. Two years later he abandoned the eremitic life, for which his fiery temperament was in fact ill-suited. Returning to Antioch he was ordained priest in 379, and in the following year he went to Constantinople, where he consorted with St Gregory of Nazianzus and St Gregory of Nyssa; where also he translated the Chronicle of Eusebius, continuing it down to the death of Valentinian I. From Constantinople he went to Rome, apparently at the invitation of Damasus, to give the benefit of his learning to the fathers of the Council of 382, and to assist Damasus himself with his advice (*Ep.* cxxiii 10 'cum in chartis ecclesiasticis iuvarem Damasum').

It was on his arrival in Rome that Damasus asked him to revise the Latin Gospels by collation with the Greek; and this was the first work of biblical revision which he undertook. The letter of Damasus containing his instructions is not extant; but from Jerome's address to the pope on presenting his new version of the Gospels, we learn that his purpose was not to produce a new translation, but only to correct the Old Latin. He says: 'Novum opus facere me cogis ex veteri, ut post exemplaria Scripturarum toto orbe dispersa quasi quidam arbiter sedeam: et quia inter se variant, quae sint illa quae cum Graeca consentiant veritate decernam.' He points out the difficulty and danger of the process, but consoles himself 'quod et tu qui summus sacerdos es, fieri iubes'; and he continues:—

'Si enim Latinis exemplaribus fides est adhibenda, respondeant quibus: tot sunt paene quot codices. Sin autem veritas est quaerenda de pluribus, cur non ad Graecam originem revertentes ea quae vel a vitiosis interpretibus male edita, vel a praesumptoribus imperitis emendata perversius, vel a librariis dormitantibus aut addita sunt aut mutata, corrigimus? . . . De novo nunc loquor Testamento; quod Graecum esse non dubium est, excepto apostolo Matthaeo, qui primus in Iudaea Evangelium Christi Hebraeis literis edidit. Hoc certe cum in nostro sermone discordat, et diversos rivulorum tramites ducit, uno de fonte quaerendum est. Praetermitto eos codices, quos a Luciano et Hesychio nuncupatos, paucorum hominum adserit perversa contentio: quibus utique nec in veteri Instrumento post septuaginta interpretes emendare quid licuit, nec in Novo profuit emendasse . . . Igitur haec

praesens praefatiuncula pollicetur quattuor tantum Evangelia quorum ordo iste est, Matthaëus, Marcus, Lucas, Iohannes, codicum Graecorum emendata collatione sed veterum ; quae ne multum a lectionis Latinae consuetudine discreparent, ita calamo temperavimus, ut his tantum quae sensum videbantur mutare correctis, reliqua manere pateremur ut fuerant.'

From this address, which was prefixed to the four Gospels, and apparently has them alone in view, it has been reasonably concluded that the Gospels were the only books of the New Testament which Jerome revised at this time. This is not quite certain however ; for in *de Vir. Illust.* 135 and elsewhere, for instance in *Ep.* xxvii 3, he seems to imply that he had at the same time corrected the whole of the New Testament.

There can be no doubt that Jerome was by far the most learned person at the Council of 382, and that it was from him that Damasus derived the list of the books of the Bible which was issued by the Council, and is the first official list from a Western source of which we have any record. This list has been called in question by several writers ; but its genuineness was affirmed by Thiel, F. Maassen, and Zahn, and was finally established by Mr C. H. Turner in the first volume of this JOURNAL.¹

The decree of the Council is headed 'Incipit Concilium Urbis Romae sub Damaso papa de explanatione fidei' ; while the paragraph especially interesting to us is as follows :—'ITEM DICTUM EST. Nunc vero de scripturis divinis agendum est, quid uniuersalis catholica recipiat ecclesia et quid vitare debeat.' Then follows a list of the books of the Old Testament, to which we shall revert presently. After this the decree continues :—

'Item ordo scripturarum novi et aeterni testamenti quem sancta et catholica suscipit ecclesia. Evangeliorum secundum Matheum liber I, secundum Marcum liber unus, secundum Lucam liber unus, secundum Iohannem liber unus. Epistulae Pauli [apostoli] numero XIII ; ad Romanos una, ad Corinthios duas, ad Ephesios I, ad Thessalonicenses II, ad Galatas I, ad Philippenses I, ad Colosenses I, ad Timotheum II, ad Titum I, ad Filimonem I, ad Hebreos I. Item Apocalypsis Iohannis liber I, et Actus Apostolorum liber I. Item epistulae canonicae numero VII ; Petri apostoli epistulae duas, Iacobi apostoli epistula una, Iohannis apostoli epistula una, alterius Iohannis presbyteri epistulae duae, Iudae zelotis apostoli epistula I. Explicit canon Novi Testamenti.'

¹ *Journal of Theological Studies* i. 1903, pp. 554-599.

It will be seen that this Canon is in point of contents precisely that afterwards sanctioned by the Councils of Carthage, Florence, Trent, and the Vatican, and accepted by the various reformed bodies, except the strict Lutherans. What is more to the point, since it fixes the real authorship of the list, is that in two phrases its language, as Mr Turner pointed out, is that used by Jerome himself. In the *de Viris Illustribus* the ninth biography is devoted to the Apostle John, and we find in it:—

‘Scripsit autem et unam epistulam, cuius exordium est *Quod fuit ab initio, quod audivimus et vidimus oculis nostris, quod perspeximus et manus nostrae temptaverunt de verbo vitae*, quae ab universis ecclesiasticis et eruditis viris probatur. Reliquae autem duae, quarum principium est *Senior electae dominae et natis eius* et sequentis *Senior Gajo carissimo quem ego diligo in veritate*, Iohannis presbyteri adseruntur, cuius et hodie alterum sepulcrum apud Ephesum ostenditur, et nonnulli putant duas memorias eiusdem evangelistae esse.’

The similarity of the language between Jerome and the Council in regard to the second and third Epistles of St John is remarkable. To the same source, as Mr Turner says, may perhaps be referred the phrase used in describing the book of Jeremiah which, in the list of Damasus, reads ‘Cum Cinoth id est Lamentationibus suis’, which recurs word for word in the *Prologus Galeatus* of Jerome.

The four Gospels were not the only books translated by Jerome on the occasion of this visit to Rome. He also, as we shall presently see, revised the old translation of the Psalms by means of the Septuagint.

Damasus died at the end of 384, and Jerome, whom some had regarded as his possible successor, but whose ungoverned temper made him quite unsuited to such a position, soon found himself involved in quarrels, the result of his violent language, and he determined to leave the city. He took his departure for the east in August 385.

With some companions who were devoted to him, he first called at Cyprus to pay a visit to another famous student, Epiphanius, and then went on to Antioch. After visiting the various places of interest in Palestine and Egypt, and spending some time among the anchorites of the Egyptian desert, he returned again to Palestine and settled down near Bethlehem, where he spent the remaining thirty-two years of his life.

It must be remembered that at this time he was a devoted disciple and follower of his great predecessor in biblical criticism, Origen; and no doubt one great attraction for him in his new home was that he could there easily consult at his leisure the library of Pamphilus at Caesarea, and especially the great hexaplaric and tetraplaric MSS which Origen had compiled. He now, in fact, devoted himself to the work of translating into Latin the hexaplaric text of Origen, marking his MS, as his archetype was marked by Origen, with asterisks and obeli. To this I shall revert presently. He also more completely revised the Latin New Testament by the help of the Greek.

With regard to this translation, we have some important statements made by Jerome, which do not seem to me to have been sufficiently appreciated. It seems quite plain that, as in the case of the Old Testament, so in the New, his great guides and lights at this time were Origen and Eusebius, and that his translation approximated as nearly as might be to a reproduction of the text of the New Testament favoured by those two fathers.

Thus in his commentary on the Galatians he says:—

‘Legitur in quibusdam codicibus: *Quis vos fascinavit, NON CREDERE VERITATI?* Sed hoc, quia in exemplaribus Adamantii non habetur, omisimus’ (*in Gal.* iii 1: Vallarsi, vii 418 c).

Again, in his commentary on St Matthew xxiv 36, he says:—

‘In quibusdam Latinis codicibus additum est *NEQUE FILIUS, cum in Graecis et maxime Adamantii et Pierii exemplaribus hoc non habeatur adscriptum: sed quia in nonnullis legitur, disserendum videtur*’ (vii 199 A).

Jerome’s translation of the New Testament therefore has a great many claims to represent one of the very oldest and most reputable recensions of the Greek. It was highly approved of by an excellent judge, St Augustine, and it will be well to repeat what St Augustine said in reference to it. After animadverting upon Jerome’s new translation of the Old Testament from the Hebrew, he continues:—

‘Proinde non parvas Deo gratias agimus de opere tuo, quo Evangelium ex Graeco interpretatus es: quia paene in omnibus nulla offensus est, cum Scripturam Graecam contulerimus’ (ap. S. Jer. *Ep.* civ 6).

While Jerome nowhere, so far as I know, breaks with the Church’s tradition in regard to the actual validity and canonicity

of the New Testament books, and admits them all into his Canon, he speaks, as did Erasmus and Calvin in later times, with great plainness of the antilegomena and of their authorship and origin.

In *Ep. lxxiii ad Evangelum presbyterum* (§ 4) he mentions 'Epistula ad Hebraeos quam omnes Graeci recipiunt et nonnulli Latinorum'. In his letter to Paulinus (*Ep. liii* 8) he says:— 'Paulus apostolus ad septem ecclesias scribit, octava enim ad Hebraeos a plerisque extra numerum ponitur.' Again, a few lines lower down:—

'Iacobus Petrus Iohannes Iudas apostoli septem epistulas ediderunt tam mysticas quam succinctas, et breves pariter et longas, breves in verbis, longas in sententiis: ut rarus sit qui non in earum lectione caecutiatur. Apocalypsis Iohannis tot habet sacramenta quot verba: parum dixi pro merito voluminis: laus omnis inferior est.'

In the *de Viris Illustribus* (A. D. 392) he is more explicit about some of these books and less explicit about others. Of the Epistle to the Hebrews he says in chapter 5:—

'Epistola autem quae fertur ad Hebraeos non eius [sc. Paul's] creditur propter stili sermonisque dissonantiam, sed vel Barnabae iuxta Tertullianum, vel Lucae evangelistae iuxta quosdam, vel Clementis Romanae postea Ecclesiae episcopi: quem aiunt sententias Pauli proprio ordinasse et ornasse sermone, vel certe—quia Paulus scribebat ad Hebraeos et propter invidiam sui apud eos nominis titulum in principio salutationis amputaverat, scripserat autem ut Hebraeus Hebraice, id est, suo eloquio disertissime—ea quae eloquenter scripta fuerant in Hebraeo eloquentius vertisse in Graecum, et hanc esse causam, quod a caeteris Pauli epistolis discrepare videatur.'

Here he merely disputes the authorship, and has nothing to say against the canonicity of the Epistle, and the language is altogether different from what immediately follows about another Epistle, then still accepted by some: 'Legunt quidem et *ad Laodicenses*, sed ab omnibus exploditur.'

With regard to the authorship of the Epistle of St James, he says in the second chapter:—

'Iacobus, qui appellatur frater Domini, cognomento Iustus—ut nonnulli existimant, Ioseph ex alia uxore, ut autem mihi videtur, Mariae sororis Matris Domini, cuius Iohannes in libro suo meminit, filius—post passionem Domini, statim ab Apostolis Hierosolymorum episcopus ordinatus, unam tantum scripsit epistolam, quae de septem Catholicis

est ; quae et ipsa ab alio quodam sub nomine eius edita adseritur, licet paulatim tempore procedente obtinuerit auctoritatem.'

As to the Epistle of St Jude, in c. 4 of the same work :—

'Iudas frater Iacobi parvam, quae de septem Catholicis est, epistolam reliquit. Et quia de libro Enoch, qui apocryphus est, in ea adsumit testimonium, a plerisque reicitur : tamen auctoritatem vetustate iam et usu meruit et inter sanctas Scripturas computatur.'

This last clause is assuredly ambiguous and doubtful in its phraseology.

Of St Peter's Epistles, in c. 1 : 'Scripsit duas epistolas, quae Catholicae nominantur ; quarum secunda a plerisque eius esse negatur, propter stili cum priore dissonantiam.' He then refers to certain other works associated with the name of St Peter, and treats them as distinctly apocryphal and therefore by implication affirms the canonicity of both the epistles just named. His words are : 'Libri autem, e quibus unus Actorum eius inscribitur, alius Evangelii, tertius Praedicationis, quartus Apocalypsis, quintus Iudicii, inter apocryphas scripturas repudiantur.'

We will now turn to Jerome's translations of the Old Testament. His first venture was made during his second visit to Rome, where, as we have seen, he went to assist at the Council of 382, and remained till 385. It was then that he issued a revision of the Latin Psalter, based on the Septuagint ; and to this he refers in the first sentence of the preface to the Psalms addressed to Paula and Eustochium : 'Psalterium Romae dudum positus emendaram, et iuxta Septuaginta interpretes, licet cursim, magna illud ex parte correxeram' (Vallarsi, x 105).' He further tells us that it was adopted by the Roman Church : 'psalterium . . . certe emendatissimum iuxta LXX interpretes nostro labore dudum Roma suscepit' (c. *Rufin.* ii 30) ; and it is still in use in St Peter's and at St Mark's in Venice and in the archdiocese of Milan (Martène *de Ant. Eccl. Rit.* iv 3 § 3 ; Swete *Introduction* p. 99).

It would be interesting to know what text of the Septuagint Psalter Jerome used in his revision. It is not improbable that it was the text then current in Constantinople, where he had recently spent two years as the disciple of St Gregory of Nazianzus, 'praeceptor meus' (*de Vir. Illust.* 117).

In addition to this translation Jerome, as we have seen, probably advised Damasus and supplied him with materials for the

statement on the Canon issued among the acts of the Council of 382. I have abstracted above that part of the decree which deals with the New Testament Canon, and I will now do the same for the Old Testament. The list of Old Testament books is preceded by the title 'Incipit ordo veteris testamenti', and then continues:—

'Genesis liber unus, Exodus liber unus, Leviticus liber unus, Numeri liber unus, Deuteronomium liber unus, Iesu Nave liber unus, Iudicum liber unus, Ruth liber unus, Regum libri quattuor, Paralypomenon libri II, Psalmi CL liber I, Salamonis libri III, Proverbia liber I, Ecclesiastes liber I, Cantica Cantīcorum liber I. Item Sapiētia liber I, Ecclesiasticus liber I. Item ordo prophetarum, Esaiae liber unus, Hieremiae cum Cinoth id est Lamentationibus suis liber unus, Ezechiel liber I, Danihel liber I, Oseae liber I, Amos liber I, Micheae liber I, Iohel liber I, Abdiae liber I, Ionae liber I, Naum liber I, Ambacum liber I, Sophoniae liber I, Aggei liber I, Zachariae liber I, Malacihel liber I. Item ordo historiarum, Iob liber I, Tobiae liber I, Esdrae libri II, Hester liber I, Iudit liber I, Machabeorum libri duo.'

Here, as will be noted, there is no departure from the Septuagint Canon, and no attempt, such as there was in Jerome's later days, to substitute the Hebrew Canon for the Greek.

Jerome's theory in regard to Old Testament translation at this time may be gathered from his preface to the Vulgate Gospels above referred to. He says:—

'Neque vero ego de veteri disputo Testamento, quod a septuaginta senioribus in graecam linguam versum tertio gradu ad nos usque pervenit. Non quaero quid Aquila, quid Symmachus sapiant, quare Theodotion inter novos et veteres medius incedat: sit illa vera interpretatio quam apostoli probaverunt.'

On his migration to Palestine in 385 Jerome, as we have seen, applied himself to a revision of the Latin Old Testament by the help of the Septuagint: from which we may conclude that at this time he looked entirely to the Septuagint and not to the Hebrew as the authoritative *fons* of the Old Testament text. A few passages from his writings on this point will make the matter perfectly plain.

In the Preface to the Book of Job he says: 'Utraque editio, et Septuaginta iuxta Graecos et mea iuxta Hebraeos, in Latinum meo labore translata est.' And in the Preface to the books of Solomon he says: 'Si cui sane Septuaginta interpretum magis

editio placet, habet eam a nobis olim emendatam.' Again, in *c. Rufin.* ii 24: 'Egone contra Septuaginta interpretes aliquid sum locutus, quos ante annos plurimos diligentissime emendatos meae linguae studiosis dedi, quos quotidie in conventu fratrum edissero, quorum psalmos iugi meditatione decanto?' and in *c. Rufin.* iii 25: 'Septuaginta editionem diligentissime emendatam ante annos plurimos meae linguae hominibus dedi.' Again, in *Ep. lxxi ad Lucinium* he says (§ 5): 'Septuaginta interpretum editionem et te habere non dubito, et ante annos plurimos diligentissime emendatam studiosis tradidi.'

But the influence of Jerome's Hebrew knowledge and of the study of the *Hexapla* of Origen was already giving a hebraizing bias to his work on the Septuagint text. For it seems plain, although the fact has not been sufficiently emphasized, that his next translations were made not from the *κοινή* or primitive text of the Septuagint, but from the Hexaplaric text. So in *Ep. cvi 2 ad Sunniam et Fretelam*, written in about 403, he speaks of 'aliam Septuaginta interpretum quae in *Ἑξαπλοῖς* codicibus reperitur, et a nobis in Latinum sermonem fideliter versa est, et Hierosolymae atque in Orientis ecclesiis decantatur'; and further down, 'ea autem quae habetur in *Ἑξαπλοῖς* et quam nos vertimus, ipsa est quae in eruditorum libris incorrupta et immaculata Septuaginta interpretum translatio reservatur.' Again, in *Tit.* iii 9 he says: 'Nobis curae fuit omnes veteris legis libros, quos vir doctus Adamantius in Hexapla digesserat, de Caesariensi bibliotheca descriptos, ex ipsis authenticis emendare; in quibus et ipsa Hebraea propriis sunt characteribus verba descripta, et Graecis litteris tramite expressa vicino.'

It is also clear that in this translation Jerome applied the Hexaplaric marks to his own text. For in the preface to his Hebrew Job, speaking of his translation of this book from the Greek, he says:—

'Apud Latinos, ante eam translationem quam sub asteriscis et obelis nuper edidimus, septingenti ferme aut octingenti versus desunt: ut decurtatus et laceratus corrosusque liber foeditatem sui publice legentibus praebeat.'

And in the preface to his translation of the same book from the Greek (*Vallarsi*, x 47) he says:

'Ac beatum Iob, qui adhuc apud Latinos iacebat in stercore et vermicibus scatebat errorum, integrum immaculatumque gaudete . . . Ego in

lingua nostra (audacter loquor) feci eum habere quae amiserat. Igitur et vos et unumquemque lectorem solita praefatione commoneo, et in principiis librorum eadem semper annectens, rogo ut ubicumque praecedentes virgulas ÷ videritis, sciatis ea quae subiecta sunt in Hebraeis voluminibus non haberi. Porro, ubi stellae ✱ fulserit, ex Hebraeo in nostro sermone addita sunt.'

And again, in the preface to his version of the Psalms made from the Septuagint, he says (x 107):—

'Notet sibi unusquisque vel iacentem lineam vel signa radiantia, id est vel obelos ÷ vel asteriscos ✱. Et ubicumque viderit virgulam praecedentem ÷, ab ea usque ad duo puncta : quae impressimus, sciat in Septuaginta translatoribus plus haberi. Ubi autem stellae ✱ similitudinem perspexerit, de Hebraeis voluminibus additum noverit aequae usque ad duo puncta, iuxta Theodotionis dumtaxat editionem, qui simplicitate sermonis a Septuaginta interpretibus non discordat.'

In *Ep.* cxii 19, written to St Augustine, we have :—

'Quod autem in aliis quaeris epistolis, cur prior mea in libris Canonicis interpretatio asteriscos habeat et virgulas praenotatas, et postea aliam translationem absque his signis ediderim ; pace tua dixerim, videris mihi non intellegere quod quaesisti. Illa enim interpretatio Septuaginta Interpretum est ; et ubicumque virgulae, id est, obeli sunt, significatur quod Septuaginta plus dixerint, quam habetur in Hebraeo, ubi autem asterisci, id est, stellulae praelucentes, ex Theodotionis editione ab Origene additum est. Et ibi Graeca transtulimus : hic de ipso Hebraico, quod intellegebamus, expressimus, sensuum potius veritatem quam verborum ordinem interdum conservantes. Et miror quomodo Septuaginta interpretum libros legas, non puros ut ab eis editi sunt, sed ab Origene emendatos sive corruptos per obelos et asteriscos, et Christiani hominis interpretatiunculam non sequaris : praesertim cum ea quae addita sunt ex hominis Iudaei atque blasphemi post passionem Christi editione transtulerit. Vis amator esse verus Septuaginta interpretum ? Non legas ea quae sub asteriscis sunt, immo rade de voluminibus, ut veterum te fautorem probes. Quod si feceris, omnes Ecclesiarum Bibliothecas damnare cogeris. Vix enim unus aut alter invenietur liber, qui ista non habeat. . . . Ego enim non tam vetera abolere conatus sum, quae linguae meae hominibus emendata de Graeco in Latinum transtuli, quam ea testimonia quae a Iudaeis pretermittuntur vel corrupta proferre in medium, ut scirent nostri quid Hebraica veritas contineret.'

In *Ep.* cxxxiv, also written to Augustine, he says : 'Praeceptis tuis parere non possumus, maxime in editione Septuaginta quae asteriscis veribusque distincta est ; pleraque enim prioris laboris

fraude cuiusdam amisimus.' This last most plainly implies that his translation extended to the whole Bible, and not merely to the books which are still extant, and it explains why the rest are lost. In a letter to Jerome (*Ep.* 117 among Jerome's letters § 34), St Augustine, who had hitherto seen only the translation of Job from the LXX, says, 'Mittas obsecro interpretationem tuam de Septuaginta, quam te edidisse nesciebam'; which also implies that the translation was not a mere fragment. But, as Vallarsi shewed in the preface to his tenth volume, the matter is made perfectly clear by Cassiodorus, who tells us that he rediscovered the portions to which Jerome referred as having been lost, and incorporated them in his own edition:—

'Tertia divisio est inter alias codice grandiore, littera clariore conscripto, qui habet quaterniones xcv, in quo Septuaginta interpretum translatio Veteris Testamenti in libris quadraginta quattuor continetur. Cui subiuncti sunt Novi Testamenti libri viginti sex, suntque simul libri septuaginta: in illo palmarum numero fortasse praesagiati, quas in mansione Elim invenit populus Hebraeorum. Hic textus multorum translatione variatus... patris Hieronymi diligenti cura emendatus compositusque relictus est' (*de Div. Inst.* § 13).

And below Cassiodorus adds, 'ex his codicibus quos Hieronymus in editione Septuaginta interpretum emendavit' (*ib.* 15).

Presently a great change came over Jerome's theories in respect of the Canon of the Old Testament. Whether it was that his quarrel with the followers of Origen, of whom he had himself once been a devoted champion, affected his theory, or that his intercourse with Jews in Palestine, from whom he learnt his Hebrew, influenced him, it is plain that he abandoned as far as he could the traditional Canon of the Church in favour of that of the Jews, and began a new translation of the Old Testament directly from the Hebrew, which he called 'the primitive verity'. We cannot date the change with precision, but it must have begun as far back as 390 or 391, since in 392 he published the *de Viris Illustribus*, in which (cc. 134, 135) he refers to the Psalter and the Prophets 'quos nos de Hebraeo in Latinum vertimus', and uses the phrase 'Vetus [Testamentum] iuxta Hebraicum transtuli'. This latter reads as if the whole translation was then complete. It is certain, however, that this was not so, but that some of the books were not translated till later. He did not

lingua nostra (audacter loquor) feci eum habere quae amiserat. Igitur et vos et unumquemque lectorem solita praefatione commoneo, et in principiis librorum eadem semper annectens, rogo ut ubicumque praecedentes virgulas ÷ videritis, sciatis ea quae subiecta sunt in Hebraeis voluminibus non haberi. Porro, ubi stellae ✕ fulserit, ex Hebraeo in nostro sermone addita sunt.'

And again, in the preface to his version of the Psalms made from the Septuagint, he says (x 107):—

'Notet sibi unusquisque vel iacentem lineam vel signa radiantia, id est vel obelos ÷ vel asteriscos ✕. Et ubicumque viderit virgulam praecedentem ÷, ab ea usque ad duo puncta : quae impressimus, sciat in Septuaginta translatoribus plus haberi. Ubi autem stellae ✕ similitudinem perspexerit, de Hebraeis voluminibus additum noverit aequae usque ad duo puncta, iuxta Theodotionis dumtaxat editionem, qui simplicitate sermonis a Septuaginta interpretibus non discordat.'

In *Ep.* cxii 19, written to St Augustine, we have:—

'Quod autem in aliis quaeris epistolis, cur prior mea in libris Canonicis interpretatio asteriscos habeat et virgulas praenotatas, et postea aliam translationem absque his signis ediderim; pace tua dixerim, videris mihi non intellegere quod quaesisti. Illa enim interpretatio Septuaginta Interpretum est; et ubicumque virgulae, id est, obeli sunt, significatur quod Septuaginta plus dixerint, quam habetur in Hebraeo, ubi autem asterisci, id est, stellulae praelucentes, ex Theodotionis editione ab Origene additum est. Et ibi Graeca transtulimus: hic de ipso Hebraico, quod intellegebamus, expressimus, sensuum potius veritatem quam verborum ordinem interdum conservantes. Et miror quomodo Septuaginta interpretum libros legas, non puros ut ab eis editi sunt, sed ab Origene emendatos sive corruptos per obelos et asteriscos, et Christiani hominis interpretatiunculam non sequaris: praesertim cum ea quae addita sunt ex hominis Iudaei atque blasphemi post passionem Christi editione transtulerit. Vis amator esse verus Septuaginta interpretum? Non legas ea quae sub asteriscis sunt, immo rade de voluminibus, ut veterum te fautorem probes. Quod si feceris, omnes Ecclesiarum Bibliothecas damnare cogeris. Vix enim unus aut alter invenietur liber, qui ista non habeat. . . . Ego enim non tam vetera abolere conatus sum, quae linguae meae hominibus emendata de Graeco in Latinum transtuli, quam ea testimonia quae a Iudaeis pretermittuntur vel corrupta proferre in medium, ut scirent nostri quid Hebraica veritas contineret.'

In *Ep.* cxxxiv, also written to Augustine, he says: 'Praeceptis tuis parere non possumus, maxime in editione Septuaginta quae asteriscis veribusque distincta est; pleraque enim prioris laboris

work at the task methodically; he seems rather to have translated various books as he was asked for them by his friends. He began, as would appear from the *Prologus Galeatus*, with the Books of Kings, which among the Jews were contained in two volumes known as *Samuel* and *Malachim*. In *Ep. ad Pammachium* xlix 4, written in 393, he mentions that he has also translated the sixteen Prophets 'in Latinum de Hebraeo sermone', and of Job 'transtuli nuper Iob in linguam nostram'; and he bids his correspondent compare the new version with the old ones: 'Lege eundem Graecum et Latinum; et veterem editionem nostrae translationi compara; et liquido pervidebis quantum distet inter veritatem et mendacium.'

During the following two years, apparently, he published the Books of Chronicles, Solomon, and Esdras with Nehemiah; and in the preface to the last, addressed to Domnio and Rogatianus, he says:—

'Ut privata lectione contenti librum non efferatis in publicum, nec fastidiosis ingeratis cibos, vitetisque eorum supercilium qui iudicare tantum de aliis et ipsi facere nihil noverunt. Si qui autem fratrum sunt, quibus nostra non displicent, his tribuatis exemplar, admonentes ut Hebraea nomina, quorum grandis in hoc volumine copia est, distincte et per intervalla transcribant.'

In *Ep. lxxi ad Lucinium*, written in 398, he says (§ 5): 'Canonem Hebraicae veritatis excepto Octateucho, quem nunc in manibus habeo, pueris tuis et notariis dedi describendum.' It thus appears—and the fact is singular—that the last part of the Bible which he translated from the Hebrew was that which the Jews esteemed the most. He apparently did this last part of his work at the request of Desiderius of Aquitaine, whom he calls a presbyter. He does not say in the above-quoted passage that he had then finished the Octateuch, and it would appear that it was only the books of Genesis and Exodus which were then complete, while the rest were only gradually finished afterwards; and it was not until the year 404 that they were finally completed. This appears from the preface to the books of Joshua, Judges, and Ruth, where he says:—

'Tandem finito Pentateucho Moysi, velut grandi foenore liberati, ad Iesum filium Nave manum mittimus, quem Hebraei Iosue ben Nun, id est Iosue filium Nun vocant; et ad Iudicum librum, quem Sophtim appellant; ad Ruth quoque et Esther, quos iisdem nominibus efferunt . . .

Caeterum post sanctae Paulae dormitionem, cuius vita virtutis exemplum est, et hos libros, quos Eustochio virgini Christi negare non potui, decrevimus, *dum spiritus hos regit artus*, prophetarum explanationi incumbere.'

In her epitaph the death of Paula is dated 'Honorio Aug. vi et Aristaeneto Coss.': that is, in 404.

Jerome's conversion to the conclusion that the 'Hebrew verity' was the ultimate and unadulterated source of the Bible was complete. No doubt he admits that the Septuagint is the official text of the Old Testament: 'Et tamen iure Septuaginta editio obtinuit in ecclesiis, vel quia prima est et ante Christi facta adventum, vel quia ab Apostolis (in quibus tamen ab Hebraico non discrepat) usurpata' (*Ep. lvii ad Pammach. § 11*). But elsewhere he says plainly: 'cum inter discordia Veteris Testamenti Latina exemplaria fluctuarem, ad Hebraicam veritatem, de cuius fonte gustaveram, recursum habui.' Again, in the *Prologus Galeatus* (to the Books of Kings), after enumerating the several books of the Hebrew Canon, he continues:—

'Hic prologus Scripturarum quasi galeatum principium omnibus libris quos de Hebraeo vertimus in Latinum convenire potest, ut scire valeamus, quidquid extra hos est inter apocrypha esse ponendum. Igitur Sapientia, quae vulgo Salomonis inscribitur, et Iesu filii Syrach liber, et Iudith, et Tobias, et Pastor, non sunt in Canone. Machabaeorum primum librum Hebraicum reperi. Secundus Graecus est; quod ex ipsa quoque phrasi probari potest. Quae cum ita se habeant, obsecro te, lector, ne laborem meum reprehensionem aestimes antiquorum . . . Quamquam mihi omnino conscius non sim, mutasse me quippiam de Hebraica veritate. Certe si incredulus es, lege Graecos codices et Latinos, et confer cum his opusculis; et ubicumque inter se videris discrepare, interroga quemlibet Hebraeorum cui magis accomodare debeas fidem; et si nostra firmaverit, puto quod eum non aestimes coniectorem, ut in eodem loco mecum similiter divinarit.'

Again elsewhere Jerome says, in the preface to Job, 'Haec autem translatio nullum de veteribus sequitur interpretem: sed ex ipso Hebraico Arabicoque sermone, et interdum Syro, nunc verba, nunc sensus, nunc simul utrumque resonabit'; and once more, 'De Hebraeo transferens magis me Septuaginta interpretum consuetudini coaptavi, in his dumtaxat quae non multum ab Hebraicis discrepabant. Interdum Aquilae quoque et Symmachi et Theodotionis recordatus sum, ut nec novitate nimia

lectoris studium deterrerem, nec rursus contra conscientiam meam fonte veritatis omissis opinionum riuulos consecrarem' (*Praef. ad Comm. in Ecclesiasten*: Vallarsi, iii 381).

And he appealed not only to the Hebrew text, but also to the Hebrew Canon. In the preface to the books of Solomon he says:—

'Fertur et Panaretos Iesu filii Sirach liber, et alius pseudepigraphus, qui Sapientia Salomonis inscribitur. Quorum priorem Hebraicum reperi, non Ecclesiasticum, ut apud Latinos, sed Parabolas praenotatum, cui iuncti erant Ecclesiastes et Canticum canticorum: ut similitudinem Salomonis, non solum librorum numero, sed etiam materiarum genere coaequaret. Secundus apud Hebraeos nusquam est, quin et ipse stilus Graecam eloquentiam redolet: et nonnulli scriptorum veterum hunc esse Iudaei Philonis affirmant. Sicut ergo Iudith, et Tobi, et Macchabaeorum libros legit quidem Ecclesia, sed inter canonicas Scripturas non recipit; sic et haec duo volumina legat ad aedificationem plebis, non ad auctoritatem ecclesiasticorum dogmatum confirmandam.'

Jerome's new attitude must have disturbed the minds of churchmen, and their view is partially expressed by St Augustine. It was a serious matter to discard the Bible of our Lord and the Apostles for the Bible of the later Rabbins. Jerome is styled a Doctor of the Church; but for all that, he had no more authority than any other individual to displace the voice of the Church and substitute for it his own opinion. He set a bad example, which was followed fatefully, eleven hundred years later, by reformers who freely appealed to his name in setting up their new rule of faith in place of the Bible recognized by the Church.

In a future article I hope to shew how deep and widespread was Jerome's pernicious influence on the views held of the Canon in the middle ages, and on the practice of the Latin Church, as well as on the Reformers.

H. H. HOWORTH.