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*THE OLDEST WRITTEN GOSPEL.*

IN reviewing Professor Harnack's study of "Luke the Physician," we found that the best part of a very notable book was the comparison of the sections which are common to Luke and Mark, and the analysis of the relation between those two writers. In this detailed comparison the Author<sup>1</sup> could not confine himself to considerations of words (that vice of the nineteenth century) : he was obliged constantly to take things and facts of real life into consideration. The problem before him was to determine what were the principles on which Luke had dealt with the narrative of his authority, Mark. His task, which would have been impossible if the authority whom he used had perished, was facilitated by the fact that the same original document which Luke employed in those sections lies now before us as the Gospel of Mark ; and it is possible to see exactly what changes Luke introduced, and to determine what reasons and principles guided him in making certain modifications in the narrative of Mark. As a whole, the result of the author's examination was that Luke reproduces the facts accurately, that he to a certain degree changes the words in the interests of literary style, but that even these verbal changes are generally confined to single words or short phrases ; and that there is a notable absence of all attempt to introduce new meaning into Mark's narrative or to intrude into the record ideas belonging to the age when Luke was writing. Luke improves the language of Mark, where he follows him ; but represents his meaning with impartial and remarkable fidelity. Where he desires in his Gospel to give more information than Mark gives,

<sup>1</sup> As before, in order to avoid frequent repetition of the personal name we shall refer to Professor Harnack as the Author.

he does it in distinct sections, based evidently on other authorities, written or oral. We may add that the fair presumption is that he represents those other authorities with the same perfect fidelity as he shows in the case of Mark.

We found ourselves compelled to differ from the Author chiefly in two respects. In the first place, there were other parts of his book in which he seemed to be too much under the influence of purely verbal methods, a kind of reasoning of which we entertain a profound distrust, and one which has led to many errors in many departments of literature ; purely literary considerations of language and style may often afford valuable suggestions and start new trains of thought, but they have never produced any results that can be relied on permanently, unless they are constantly guided and tested and controlled by more objective and real methods. The plan of his new book, which forms the subject of the present article, leaves little or no room for this fault.

In the second place, the Author seemed to us occasionally to have not quite freed himself from certain prepossessions and assumptions which ruled the hard and unilluminative criticism of the later nineteenth century. That that criticism was needed as a protest against older dogmatism and previous assumptions, I should be the last to deny, and have always freely admitted ; but it was only on the destructive side that it was sound ; its attempts at reconstruction were valueless and misleading, because the negative presumptions from which it started vitiated all its positive inferences. We shall have to dissent on this ground from some opinions expressed in the Author's latest books.

In the Author's new book, *Sayings and Speeches of Jesus*,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Sprüche und Reden Jesu, die zweite Quelle des Matthäus und des Lukas* : Leipzig, Hinrichs, 1907. *Beiträge zur Einleitung in das Neue Testament, II. Heft.*

forming the second part of his *Contributions to the Introduction to the New Testament*, the method of detailed comparison, which ruled in the best portion of his *Luke the Physician*, is carried out even more completely, and forms the basis of the whole study. Hence I find myself in cordial agreement with the method and the results to a much greater degree than in the previous case. The main result, that the lost common Source of Luke and Matthew was a work earlier than Mark, appears to me to be firmly established, and to lead straight to conclusions of the highest importance; although those conclusions are not in perfect harmony with all the Author's opinions, they seem to spring inevitably from his main line of argument.

That the first, and in many respects the most important, authority on which Matthew as well as Luke relied was the Gospel of Mark, practically in the form in which we possess it, is now generally admitted. In studying the relation of Luke to this Source, the Author did not require to take into account Matthew's version of the same Source, because Luke was wholly independent of Matthew, and the Source still lies before us. But in the case of the second common Source of Luke and Matthew, the problem is a far more complicated and difficult one. The Source has been lost, and it is only through the comparison of Luke and Matthew that we can recover an outline of its contents and character, and to a certain extent reconstruct the lost original document. This original is for brevity's sake referred to as Q; and on pp. 88-102 the Author prints all of it that he believes to be recoverable with certainty or high probability. As he says himself, it is necessary to fall back occasionally on conjecture and hypothesis, as the evidence does not justify perfect confidence.

In the course of this article we shall diverge slightly from the Author's custom, and shall use the symbol Q to denote

the restored form of the lost Source, as given by him, pp. 88-102, while we shall refer to the Source in its complete and original form (which was indubitably much longer than the Author's restoration), by some circumlocution, such as "the lost common Source" or "the Collection of Sayings" (a name used by the Author, but not in our view an adequate name, though it rests perhaps on ancient authority).

The original of Q was written in Aramaic; but both Luke and Matthew used the same Greek translation, and therefore throughout the Author's work Q denotes a certain Greek book, and not the older Aramaic original. The question is mentioned whether Luke or Matthew may occasionally have gone behind the Greek form Q and consulted the Aramaic original for some details; but the Author is confident that such a procedure, if it ever happened, was extremely rare, and that generally Q alone may safely be assumed as the single and final source of a certain large portion of Luke and Matthew, about one-sixth of the former and two-elevenths of the latter. Perhaps Aramaic scholars might differ from the Author on this question: it is understood that at least one well-known English scholar, who has taken a very different view, still adheres to his own opinion. But at least there can be no doubt that a Greek translation did exist, and was used by both Luke and Matthew, whether or not they controlled it by consulting the Aramaic in addition. And the Author seems also to have established his theory of Q to the extent that his restoration can be relied on as giving a fair amount of the original document in a trustworthy form, and as permitting certain positive inferences, but not any negative inferences.

Incidentally, in this study of the two largest Sources which Luke and Matthew made use of, one must be strongly

impressed with the utter impossibility of recovering from any single author alone the authorities which he transcribed. Let any one take Luke's Gospel by itself, or Matthew's Gospel by itself, and examine verse by verse the parts that come from Q and from Mark respectively. He must conclude that the problem of analyzing either the Third or the First Gospel separately and distinguishing the Q-parts, the Mark-parts, and the parts taken neither from Q nor from Mark, would have been quite insoluble without extraneous help.

And, more than this, if Mark were lost, while both Luke and Matthew were preserved, it would of course be easy to distinguish the common Matthaëo-Lukan parts from the parts peculiar to each; but it would be utterly impossible to analyze that common Matthaëo-Lukan Gospel into its two parts, the Marcan and the non-Marcan. Only the existence of Mark makes it possible to tell what is Marcan and what is non-Marcan. Yet take Q by itself, and read it apart from Mark, and the least observant scholar must be struck by the difference of character, style, language, and point of view.

Further, if one took Luke's Gospel by itself, and proceeded according to some definite peculiarity, such as, for example, the name of the Holy City, starting from the principle that the passages in which the Hebrew form Jerusalem was used were founded on a different original Source from those parts in which the Greek form Hierosolyma was used, how misleading and absurd would be the results of such an hypothesis! So in the Acts, the old "critical" (or rather uncritical) idea that the use of the names Paul and Saul indicated two different Sources has probably been abandoned by even the most unenlightened and unprogressive of the modern scholars. It has long been proved conclusively that Luke had a definite purpose

in distinguishing the names Paul and Saul, and employed sometimes the one, sometimes the other, for the sake of historical effect. So, also, he had a clear purpose of his own in distinguishing the names Jerusalem and Hierosolyma, and he actually alters Mark's Hierosolyma into Jerusalem, in order to carry out his own peculiar purpose.<sup>1</sup>

The futility of various other similar criteria might be shown, if it were worth while to do so; but we pass on, only pausing for a moment to ask whether in the analysis of the Pentateuch too much has not been made of the distinction between the two names of God, Elohim and Jehovah or Yahwe. Even admitting (as we do) that different older Sources lie behind the extant form of the Pentateuch, is it not possible that there may be some purpose guiding the choice of the final compiler or author in his use of the two names? I always bear in mind the warning words which Robertson Smith often emphatically used in conversation, that, while the diverse Sources of the Pentateuch could on the whole and in the rough be distinguished, it must always be utterly impossible to attain certainty about the precise points and lines of cleavage in the existing text.

A general outline of this pre-Lukan and pre-Matthæan book Q, then, can be recovered from the agreement of the non-Marcan parts of Luke and Matthew; but, of course, there remain two important questions to be determined before we can regard the resultant group of literary fragments as a full and trustworthy representative of that old book.

In the first place, did Luke and Matthew take the whole of that book Q and incorporate it in their respective Gospels? Were there not parts of Q which Luke alone or

<sup>1</sup> EXPOSITOR, Feb. 1907, p. 111 f.

Matthew alone extracted, and for which therefore we have only one authority? It seems to us probable,<sup>1</sup> and even practically certain, that there was a good deal which only one of them incorporated in his Gospel: Luke treats Q with great freedom, and puts in different parts of his Gospel scraps of it which Matthew places side by side as continuous exposition. Such freedom seems quite irreconcilable with the idea that they agreed in utilizing the whole of Q. This part of Q (which we believe to have been considerable) is for the most part hopelessly lost to us. We may conjecture that certain paragraphs or sentences of Matthew alone or of Luke alone were taken from Q; and in such cases arguments from language or style or thought might be fairly brought in to support the conjecture. But such conjectures can never be ranked on the same level as the agreement of Matthew and Luke; and they probably do not apply to any very large part of the book. Yet the attempt ought to be made, and will certainly be often made, to specify and collect those parts of the lost Sources that were used only by one Evangelist. The Author expressly recognizes that this is a work which awaits and will reward patient investigation (pp. 2, 121).

Further, are there not passages in which Q coincided in subject with Mark, and the latter seemed to Luke and Matthew to be preferable—not necessarily as divergent, but as more complete or better expressed? Was it the case—as it would be if the Author's restoration of Q were even approximately complete—that Q never, or hardly ever, covered a part of the same ground as Mark? There seems an overwhelming probability that two such books must have agreed oftener than appears in the Author's restoration. It is clear that they covered the same ground as regards the relations of Jesus with John the Baptist and

<sup>1</sup> The Author holds this opinion.

as regards the Temptation, but covered it in very different ways. In the case of the Temptation, for example, Mark restricts himself to a brief sentence ; and both Luke and Matthew here follow Q. There is no inconsistency or disagreement between Mark and Q ; but the latter is far more detailed and complete. Were there not many cases in which the sharp and clear narrative of Mark was preferred by the two later Synoptics ? This seems to us inevitably to have been the case ; and all these parts of Q are still more hopelessly lost than the part described (or assumed) in our previous paragraph.

The loss of this part has resulted in imparting to the Author's Q an appearance of being almost wholly confined to Sayings and Speeches of Jesus. This appearance we must consider to be untrue. It is clear even from the agreement of Luke and Matthew that Q was not wholly free from narrative : the parts relating to John the Baptist and the Temptation and the Centurion of Capernaum contain some narrative ; the sections in the Author's Q, 3, 18, 22, 29, 30, 54, and others, must obviously have been accompanied by some narrative, however brief. In many others it is inconceivable that a first-hand authority (as the Author considers the writer of Q to have been) could give such a disjointed and disconnected scrap as that which can be got from the agreement of Matthew and Luke.

We must consider that there was more narrative in the lost original document than appears now in Q, and that sections 1, 2, 13, 14 of the Author's restoration give a truer conception of its character than most of the other sections. It was not a mere collection of sayings, but a narrative, noted down by a person whose interest lay mainly in the sayings and the teaching of Jesus, and who made the narrative subsidiary to the speeches.

These conclusions, to which we seem to be involuntarily

driven by the facts, are not at all inconsistent with the Author's views ; but they certainly modify in some degree the picture which he draws of Q. The opinion which on the whole he is disposed to hold is that Q is the work of the Apostle Matthew, and that it is the collection of Logia which Matthew, as Papias says, composed. The Author fully concedes that Papias understood this collection of Logia to be simply the First Gospel (p. 172) ; but he tends to the view that Papias in this matter misunderstood his authority, that Matthew merely gathered together a collection of sayings, and that both Luke and the writer of the First Gospel made use of the collection.

Here we meet one of the Author's presumptions and prepossessions, which we cannot sympathize with. He speaks of the type of a Gospel having been fixed by Mark ;<sup>1</sup> and holds that, after the type was thus fixed, no other type of Gospel story could be composed. In every respect, and from every point of view, we must differ *toto caelo* from this assumption and from all the vast consequences that follow from it. The type of the Gospel was fixed by the facts, and not by the accident of Mark's composing a Gospel. This type dominated the whole situation, and guided the thought and word of the Apostles from the moment when they began to understand the facts, i.e. from the first Pentecost. In this type of the Gospel, the death of Christ was the essential and critical factor ; and on this factor the whole narrative turns. That was the case with the speeches of Peter and of Stephen at the very beginning—and, as we take it, with every exposition of Christian truth thereafter, except when from time to time a "new theology" arose and lingered for a short time, only to pass away, often finding its grave in the mind in which it originated.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 174.

But the Author is obliged, by his assumption as to Mark's having fixed the type of the Gospel, to hold that the speeches of Peter and Stephen are merely the free compositions of Luke, expressing his later ideas of what they ought to have said. So he is in consistency bound to hold, and so he does hold, even in his latest expression in *Lukas der Artzt*. But, holding as we do that the facts determined the type of the Gospel and imposed it on the minds of all the Apostles, we are confident that Luke's report of those early speeches is historical and trustworthy; and we are utterly sceptical as to the possibility that Mark, or any other man, could have fixed immutably and permanently the type of all subsequent Gospels.

But, it will be objected, here in Q is a Gospel which is utterly different from the established type, which never mentions the death of Christ or bases the efficacy of Christ's teaching on His death—a Gospel which the Author, mainly on the ground of this character, shows to be earlier than Mark's Gospel, but not very much earlier.

This is an important argument, which needs and will reward careful consideration. It involves two points, (1) Is it true that Q took no notice of the death of Christ? (2) If that was the case, when was Q written?

It is, of course, correct procedure on the Author's part to restrict the scope of Q in the first instance to the parts which can be restored with approximate certainty from the agreement of Matthew and Luke, and to set aside rigorously all that does not rest on this assured basis—though even thus there are some places where, as he says, it is impossible to avoid conjectural work entirely. But in deducing from this restoration the character of the lost Source, one must remember that this restored Q is incomplete, and one must draw no inferences of a purely negative character, i.e., one must never infer that there was in the

lost Source no mention of any particular event or group of events merely on the negative evidence that in the restored Q no mention occurs of the event or group of events. To justify such an inference it is necessary to show that Q is positively inconsistent with the supposition that the event or group of events was known to the writer of the lost Source.

Accordingly, to prove that the death of Christ was not mentioned in that lost common Source of Matthew and Luke, it is not sufficient reason to find that there is in Q (as determined by their agreement) no mention of Christ's death. It would, as far as this reason goes, be quite possible that Q (which on the narrative side is scanty and confessedly poorer than Mark) was in the conclusion so distinctly inferior to Mark that the latter (combined to some extent with other Sources) was preferred by both Matthew and Luke; it might even be possible to speculate whether Q was not used by one of the two alone in some parts.

But there is stronger ground for the Author's view: the teaching of Q is inconsistent with the idea that the writer of the lost Source regarded the death of Jesus as the fundamental fact in the Gospel. One acquires the impression throughout that Jesus was to him the great Teacher, not that He was the Redeemer by His death: Jesus was to him the Son of God, the King who reveals the Kingdom of Heaven. In the Teaching of Jesus, the Kingdom of God stood out prominently, and its nature, with the conditions of entering it, were emphatically stated: the sons of the Kingdom, who had the right of birth, i.e. the Jews, were to be rejected, and the Gentiles from all the world were to find a home with Abraham and Isaac in the Kingdom of God (sections 42, 13, 30); it was not a Kingdom of this world, it was a process of development and growth in the mind of the individual (section 40): hence,

to speak against the Holy Spirit (which works this process in the mind of man) is the fatal and unpardonable sin (section 34*b*, 29) : in this it is already implied, as is said in Luke xvii. 21, that "the Kingdom of God is within you." The way of salvation, i.e. the Kingdom of God, does not lie outside of, or apart from, common life, but in the ordinary life of man (i.e., it is the spirit in which that life is lived); and every man has the opportunity of being justified by the spirit of wisdom (section 15, 12). The revelation by the Son is the only and necessary way by which man can attain to the knowledge of God (section 25); this way of salvation is a difficult path with a single narrow entrance (section 41); it was unknown to many prophets, though now shown publicly to those who saw and heard Him (section 26); it is hidden from the wise and the educated, but revealed to infants (section 25); the Kingdom of God has come near those cities whither the true teachers and Apostles go (section 22, 16); there is need for many workers in this harvesting of the world (section 18).

In this Teaching there lies implicit the Gospel of Christ, but the foundation on which alone (according to the universal Christian Gospel from Peter and Stephen onwards) the Kingdom of Heaven can be built up, is wanting, for there is no allusion to the death of Christ, which gives the needed driving force and the power.

The question then is, when could such Teaching as this be written down in a book? The Author replies that it was written down shortly before Mark's Gospel, but after Peter and Stephen and Paul had been preaching the Gospel of the death of Christ. The type of the Christian Gospel had not then been fixed by Mark; and, in the Author's view, apparently, the Gospel might be anything that any writer pleased until Mark had shown what a Gospel ought

to be, after which no writer could do anything except follow the type as fixed by Mark. He wastes no thought on the influence and the Gospel of Paul. He apparently believes that the other Twelve Apostles preached anything they found good in the way of teaching from the beginning down till Mark's publication ; no one perceived what was the meaning and power of Christ's death until Mark's Gospel fixed the type.

The Author's theory mistakes literature for life, and regards the chance of Mark's publication as determining the course of subsequent Christianity. He forgets that Mark was only an accidental agent ; he forgets that Mark wrote only what the development of Christian teaching forced him to write ; he forgets that the Gospel existed before Mark and independent of Mark. He thinks, even, that Mark, if he had known Q, would have given a different character to his own Gospel.

As to the date when this collection of Sayings was gathered together, the Author expresses a definite opinion. He considers that the book of Sayings and Speeches was composed before the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, and before the Gospel of Mark. Otherwise he leaves the question of date an open one, except that he will not allow it to be much earlier than Mark. This he infers from the fact that the Gospel of Mark is wholly independent of and unconnected with the collection of Sayings ; he argues that if this collection had been long in circulation before Mark wrote, it would be unintelligible that Mark should not have known it and used it (p. 172). This reasoning seems inconclusive and unconvincing. It involves one big assumption, viz., that Mark desired to make his work supersede that older book. Now, if we follow the authority of Papias that Mark wrote the "Gospel according to Peter," there seems not the slightest reason to think that

he would desire to supersede the older narrative, or to intermingle with Peter's narrative the account given by another (whether Matthew or any one else), or that he would feel himself bound to introduce speeches and sayings from another Source into the narrative as he gathered it from Peter. It is perfectly natural and probable that he may have known the old book of "Sayings and Speeches," and yet composed a narrative according to Peter.

Only one explanation can be suggested which would make the Author's date for Q conceivable ; and that is that the writer of the lost Source in the first part of his work described the mind and belief of the disciples as they were while Christ was still living, and then in the last part described the change that was produced in them after the death of Christ had revealed to them the real truth. But such an artificial explanation cannot for a moment be entertained. The Author does not even think it worthy of notice, but tacitly rejects it and insists on the simplicity of the lost Source. This explanation is utterly inconsistent with the possibilities of the situation. It supposes a straining after dramatic effect which cannot be reconciled either with the character of early Christianity or with the habits and established canons of ancient literature.

We conclude, then, that the date assigned by the Author is impossible in itself and inconsistent with his own views. The lost Source cannot be placed either between Mark and Luke, or a little before Mark. It cannot be placed later than the time when the disciples began, at the first Pentecost, to understand the true nature of the Gospel, and Peter began to declare it publicly, establishing it on the firm foundation of the sacrifice of Christ's death.

A date between the death of Christ and the first Pentecost is equally impossible ; and is not likely even to be suggested by any one. In that period of gloom and despair,

who would sit down to compose a Gospel in the tone of Q ?

There is only one possibility. The lost common Source of Luke and Matthew (to which, as the Author says, Luke attached even higher value than he did to Mark) was written while Christ was still living. It gives us the view which one of His disciples entertained of Him and His teaching during His life-time, and may be regarded as authoritative for the view of the disciples generally. This extremely early date was what gave the lost Source the high value that it had in the estimation of Matthew and Luke, and yet justified the freedom with which they handled it and modified it by addition and explanation (for the Author's comparison of the passages as they appear in Luke and Matthew shows that the lost Common Source was very freely treated by them). On the one hand, it was a document practically contemporary with the facts, and it registered the impression made on eye-witnesses by the words and acts of Christ. On the other hand, it was written before those words and acts had begun to be properly understood by even the most intelligent eye-witnesses. So, for example, John says (ii. 22) that "when He was risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this unto them," and they then comprehended the reference to His death which at the time they had not understood.

The same tone is observable frequently in the Synoptic Gospels ; so, for example, in Matthew xvi. 21 f. : "From that time began Jesus to show unto His disciples how that He must . . . suffer many things . . . and be killed and the third day be raised up. And Peter . . . began to rebuke Him, saying, Be it far from Thee, Lord ; this shall never be unto Thee. But He turned and said unto Peter, Get thee behind Me, Satan ; thou art a stumbling-block

unto Me : for thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men."

This is found also in Mark ; but Luke omitted the reference to Peter, apparently disliking the harshness of the language.

Then there immediately follows in Matthew a passage strongly reminiscent of Q as restored by the Author ; compare xvi. 24 with Q, section 46, and xvi. 25 with Q, section 57. In fact, xvi. 24, 25, are almost a repetition of x. 38, 39, but the former belongs to the Marcan portion of Luke and Matthew, the latter belongs to Q.

Luke ix. 44 f. : " While all were marvelling at all the things which He did, He said unto His disciples, Let these words sink into your ears ; for the Son of Man shall be delivered up into the hands of men. But they understood not this saying, and it was concealed from them, that they should not perceive it : and they were afraid to ask Him about this saying." This also is common to Mark ix. 31, 32, and Matthew xvii. 23, but the latter gives only the words of Jesus, without remarking on the ignorance of the disciples.

Luke ix. 54-56 mentions the rebuke to James and John on the way towards Jerusalem for their suggestion, which was so incongruous with the spirit of Christ and the occasion. This is Lukan only.

Luke xviii. 31-34 : " He took unto Him the twelve and said unto them, Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and all the things that are written by the prophets shall be accomplished unto the Son of man. For He shall be delivered up . . . and the third day He shall rise again. And they understood none of these things ; and this saying was hid from them, and they perceived not the things that were said." Matthew xx. 17-19 and Mark x. 32-34 mention that Jesus revealed the coming facts to the twelve disciples, but do not remark on their failure to understand.

The Author, if we do not misunderstand him, takes a different view of the passages such as these : he regards them apparently as being of distinctly later origin, barely of apostolic period, but rather representing the reflections and moralizing of a later generation with regard to the simpler ideas entertained in an earlier time, by earlier minds, before the later views about the death of Christ and its meaning had established themselves : such has been the Author's view always.

We would not affirm that the writers of the canonical Gospels never added such reflexions ; but that tone and attitude of mind seems to us to have originated in the period immediately following the Crucifixion, and to be the inevitable accompaniment or expression of the gradual realization by the disciples of their new knowledge that the death of Christ was a necessary and fundamental part of His Gospel. In our view, the utmost that can be attributed to any of the evangelists is that he gave more sharp and emphatic form to those reflexions ; we cannot allow that he created them.

The Author shows repeatedly, both as regards the Markan parts and as regards Q, that while Luke sometimes gave more emphatic expression to the ideas of his Sources, he did not add anything of consequence to them on his own authority. In fact, as we previously pointed out,<sup>1</sup> the Author's results from his detailed examination of Luke, sentence by sentence and paragraph by paragraph, stand in the most marked contrast with his general reflexions upon Luke's character as a historian. In both the Author's volumes Luke bears the detailed test even better than Matthew ; the Author declares that while Matthew on the whole preserves the actual words of the Sources more exactly than Luke, he in certain rare cases adds something

<sup>1</sup> EXPOSITOR, Jan. 1907, pp. 107, 113.

of his own to them, whereas he finds no case where Luke adds to the Source any expression betraying the spirit and ideas of the later time when he was composing his Gospel. But while the Author's detailed test gives this result, he strongly condemns in general Luke's incapacity, inaccuracy, and untrustworthiness as a historian.

There seems no other supposition but this which would satisfactorily explain the character of Q. On this view everything in it becomes clear. According to this view Jesus stands forth in his lifetime as the great Teacher, because in that way alone He had as yet become known even to the most faithful and devoted of His followers. The way of salvation was the way of right wisdom : knowledge was what Jesus revealed, viz., the knowledge of God the Father. But Jesus alone could impart this knowledge. As He said, " I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes. . . . All things have been delivered unto Me of My Father ; and no one knoweth the Father save the Son and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him."<sup>1</sup>

The two sentences which immediately follow this passage in Matthew are regarded by the Author as probably truly words of Jesus, taken, however, not from Q but rather from some other trustworthy Source and placed wrongly in this situation by Matthew. The passage is the familiar and frequently quoted one, Matthew xi. 28-30 : " Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of Me ; for I am meek and lowly in heart ; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden

<sup>1</sup> Matthew xi. 25-27 ; Luke x. 21-22. The Author regards the omitted part of the last sentence as an interpolation : see especially pp. 204-6.

is light." The Author sees and explains admirably the close relationship of thought and meaning between these two passages. The knowledge of God in the one case is the intellectual aspect of that which in the other case is called in its moral aspect the yoke or burden of duty ; and Jesus describes Himself as at once the conveyer of the instruction and the imposer of the yoke, "take My yoke upon you and learn of Me." This is merely an enforcement in the imperative mood of the truth stated as a fact in the preceding verses. Thus the whole passage runs continuously in perfect sequence.

But the failure in Luke of any parallel to Matthew xi. 28-30 seems to constitute a serious argument that Luke did not find in the lost Common Source those last three verses, for it is not easy to understand how he should have omitted an expression which is so harmonious with the tone and spirit of his Gospel. It is, of course, always an uncertain argument to found any inference on the fact that some saying or event of the vast number out of which a selection had to be made was omitted by Luke : he certainly omitted much that we should have been glad to have, and which we miss. Selection was necessary, and no two persons will select in exactly the same way : one will mourn the omission of something which the other suffered to be crowded out. But there is probably no case where a deliberate omission by Luke seems so strange as this does here ; and hence we must perhaps agree with the Author that Matthew took these three verses from some other Source and placed them here on account of their intrinsic suitability.

We cannot, however, agree with him when he seeks to strengthen this argument by the consideration that the verses common to Luke and Matthew are a statement in the indicative, while the addition peculiar to Matthew is an invitation in the imperative, and that there is too much

change between the situation in the two parts. This reasoning is founded on the assumption, which the Author makes throughout, that what is early in the Gospels is necessarily simpler and more single in tone than what is later. Jesus was a complex character, and His Teaching had many sides ; and we ought to find traces of this complexity in the very earliest faithful presentation of Him. But this is a point which is too important for us to enter upon at present.

The Author rightly finds a corroboration of his opinion that Matthew xi. 28-30 is truly a word of Jesus in 2 Corinthians x. 1 : " I entreat you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, I who in your presence am lowly among you." <sup>1</sup> We should also be disposed to think that the expressions used in Acts xv. 10-11, 28, rose to the mind of Peter and the Apostles from recollection of the Saying contained in this passage of Matthew. <sup>2</sup> Peter in his speech to the Council said, " Why tempt ye God that ye should put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear ? But we believe that we should be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus in like manner as they." And the Decree of the Council ordained, " it seemed good . . . to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things." Here the yoke and burden of the Jewish Law is contrasted with the saving grace of Jesus ; and the Author points out that the yoke and burden which is meant in the passage of Q just quoted is that which the

<sup>1</sup> Meekness and lowliness are placed by Paul side by side as important elements in the Christian character in Ephesians iv. 1, 2 : " I beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called, with all lowliness and meekness " : and also in Colossians iii. 12. The juxtaposition of *πραῦς* and *ταπεινός* (*πραύτης* and *ταπεινοφροσύνη*) was therefore familiar to Paul, and strongly suggests that he knew this Saying (whether from the Collection of Sayings or from oral information).

<sup>2</sup> Whether from their own recollection of the words which they had heard, or from their knowledge of the book of the Sayings ; but the former is, of course, much the more likely supposition.

Pharisees imposed.<sup>1</sup> That the Author is right becomes evident where this passage is combined with Matthew xxiii. 4 (identical in force with Luke xi. 46), which is part of Q, section 33, "the Pharisees bind heavy burdens . . . and lay them on men's shoulders." The heavy burden was the teaching of the Pharisees and of the Law; but the Teaching of Jesus imposed a light burden and an easy yoke.

But it is hardly necessary to go searching with the Author for arguments and external proofs that the words of Matthew xi. 28-30 were in real truth spoken by Jesus, and not invented by a later fancy. The practically universal consent of all subsequent thought has recognized those verses as among the most characteristic, the most exquisite, and the most perfectly adapted to the needs of mankind, that have been preserved to us in the Gospels. No proof can be so strong as that consent, *Securus indicat orbis terrarum*. There was no second Christ to speak those words.

Nor need we restrict their intention so narrowly as the Author seems to do. They are far wider in application than he allows—as wide as the burden of every trial and every sorrow that men know—but they certainly include, as he says, the contrast between the burden of Pharisaic law and the freedom of Christ's teaching; they anticipate the controversy between Paul and the Judaizing party; and they lead up to the Epistle to the Galatians. And what a difference in temper and spirit is there between the Saying of Jesus and the Epistle of Paul, great as the latter is: the difference between Divine word and human.

In conclusion, it is perhaps right to refer to an argument which will weigh with many minds against the date which we assign for the composition of the lost Common Source

<sup>1</sup> The Author does not mention this analogy; and on his view of the late date and spurious character of the Decree, he would explain it in a very different way.

of Luke and Matthew. It is a wide-spread assumption that the earliest Christians did not commit to writing any record of the life or the words of the Saviour ; and that it was only at a later date, after at least the first Epistles of Paul had been written, and when the disciples had ceased to expect the immediate Coming of the Lord and the end of the world, that they began to think of composing accounts of the events and teaching in which their Faith originated. If you ask for reasons to support this assumption, there are none that seem to possess even the slightest value : it is a pure prepossession, which has lasted from the time when everybody believed that the art of writing was a late invention and that the custom of writing spread gradually and slowly, but was in ancient times (as in mediæval) rare and unusual. This is a prejudice which has been decisively disproved by recent discovery. The art of writing is very old. The knowledge of writing was far more generally diffused in the east Mediterranean lands in ancient times than it was in mediæval Europe.

Protestantism first supplied the driving force to popularize reading and writing among the mass of the people in modern times, and from the Protestant countries the custom spread ; but still it is only in a few countries that the familiar use of writing in everyday life is so widely diffused as it was in the most civilized regions of the Mediterranean world about the time of Christ. The whole burden of proof lies with those who maintain that the earliest Christians committed no record to writing, for that view is quite out of harmony with the facts and tone of society in that period and region. In the first chapter of the *Letters to the Seven Churches* the reasons for my view are stated more fully, though even there they are merely given in outline.

We find in the Author here and there signs of the same old evil which has long been blocking progress—the hard,

unsympathetic, self-satisfied, unresponsive and contemptuous attitude in cases where the East perplexes the West, where the first century eludes the comprehension of the nineteenth. In all such cases the nineteenth century way of thought, its refuge from the duty of learning to understand what lay outside of it and beyond its narrow view, was to condemn as "legend" what it could not understand. The word "legend" was used in an unintelligent and irrational way. The late-nineteenth-century scholar did not begin by properly conceiving what is the nature of "legend." He started with a certain fixed standard of instinctive and unreasoning dislike: whatever he could not comprehend, he condemned as "legend." The honest and scientific method in such cases would have been to say simply, "this I do not understand"; it would have been human and pardonable to add, "since I do not understand it, I am suspicious of it." That the four Gospels, of which even the earliest is long posterior to the events it records and was not written by an eye-witness, are free from "legend" I personally do not maintain; but that much which has been called legend is of an altogether different character and has nothing about it of the nature of legend, I feel firmly convinced. That the domain ascribed to "legend" in the Gospels by modern scholars has been much diminished in recent years is patent to all. It is much to be desired that those who use the term "legend" in this connexion should begin by understanding and defining clearly what legend is. Even admitting that some statement or narrative in a Gospel is not trustworthy, it does not follow that this statement is legend: it may have originated in some other way. The Author is not free even now from this loose and unscientific way of labelling what he dislikes as "legend." But this topic is too big to discuss at the end of an article.

W. M. RAMSAY.