

# GOSPEL ORIGINS

A Study in the Synoptic Problem

Part I

BY THE REV.

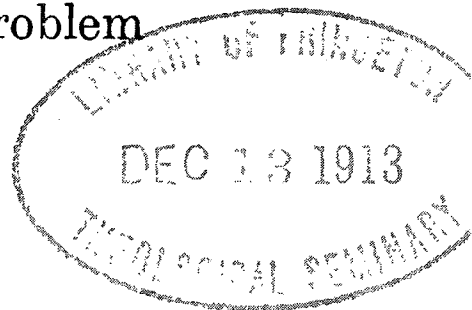
WILLIAM WEST HOLDSWORTH, M.A.

TUTOR IN NEW TESTAMENT LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

HANDSWORTH COLLEGE

AUTHOR OF 'THE CHRIST OF THE GOSPELS

'THE LIFE OF FAITH,' ETC.



NEW YORK

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

1913

SWEETGOSPELHARMONY.COM

20 21 22-1104

**I DEDICATE THIS WORK  
TO THOSE BEST TEACHERS  
MY STUDENTS  
OF THE EAST AND OF THE WEST.**

Ἐπειδὴ περ πολλοὶ ἐπεχείρησαν ἀνατάξασθαι διήγησιν  
περὶ τῶν πεπληροφορημένων ἐν ἡμῖν πραγμάτων, καθὼς  
παρέδωσαν ἡμῖν οἱ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς αὐτόπται καὶ ὑπηρεταί  
γενόμενοι τοῦ λόγου, ἔδοξε καμοῖ, παρηκολουθηκότι  
ἄνωθεν πᾶσιν ἀκριβῶς, καθεξῆς σοὶ γράψαι, κράτιστε  
Θεόφιλε, ἵνα ἐπιγνῶς περὶ ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων τὴν  
ἀσφάλειαν.

ST. LUKE.

## PREFACE

THE chapters which make up this little book are so many studies in the Synoptic Problem. The author makes no claim to originality in dealing with this question. He has made full use of the minute research and laborious work of those who have preceded him ; but he has tried to carry their work on to a further stage in endeavouring to define more closely than they have done the sources used by the three evangelists. In doing so he has given the fullest consideration to the many different theories advanced by modern scholars, and in consequence, though it cannot be claimed that this work is a ' Handbook ' on the subject with which it deals, yet the hope is cherished that students will be able, in following the line of thought advanced, to bring into view the several positions taken up by those who have attempted a solution.

The line followed in treating this subject was first suggested by the distinction made by Dr. Arthur Wright between the three editions of the Markan narrative which appear in the three Gospels as we know them, and Dr. Wright's well-known titles for these editions—proto-Mark, deutero-Mark, and trito-Mark—have been freely used in the pages which follow. The author, however, has ventured to differ from Dr. Wright in an important particular, in that he applies this differentiation not to an oral tradition, but to *documents*, and a study of the Gospels, extending



now over many years, from this point of view, has led him to the conclusion that it offers the most likely solution of the difficult but fascinating problem. Should this conclusion be finally reached by others, the fullest acknowledgment will be due to the distinguished scholar whose *Synopsis* will long remain an indispensable text-book for students of the Gospels.

But the recognition of a deutero-Mark in the first Gospel, and an attempt to separate this element, has led the author to a second conclusion, and this is that the Logia of St. Matthew are not lost, as so many have thought, but actually exist, sandwiched between distinctly Markan sections, in the Gospel which bears St. Matthew's name. This led to an attempt to define the source of the sayings thus compiled by St. Matthew, a source generally indicated by the formula 'Q.' Finally, when, in the case of the third Gospel, the Markan section, or proto-Mark was removed, together with the sections taken from Q thus defined, the remainder appeared to possess so many common features that it seemed possible to bring the whole of it under one designation, and to ascribe it to a single authorship. It is hoped that it may be seen that outstanding features of the three Gospels may be fairly accounted for in this way, and that the sources from which the three evangelists derived their material afford a sufficient guarantee for the deeds and words of Jesus as these appear in the three Gospels.

In the hope that the book may be read by others than students, critical details have been eliminated from the main chapters. They appear, however, in additional notes attached to the several chapters, and it is hoped that in considering the theory here advanced judgment will be

suspended until these last have been examined. Instead of crowding the pages with references to other works on the subject, it has been thought best to give a list of the works which have been freely used by the present author. His indebtedness to his many teachers is hereby fully acknowledged, and if he may venture to mention one name it shall be that of the scholar whose work in this department, as in others, has been both stimulus and example to a host of students unknown to him. The praise of Dr. Sanday is in all the Churches.

In conclusion, the author would express his great indebtedness to his friends, the Rev. J. A. Vanes, B.A., and Mr. F. Richards, M.A., for their most helpful suggestions made during the preparation of the work.

W. W. HOLDSWORTH.

HANDSWORTH COLLEGE,

*January 1, 1913.*

# CONTENTS

## CHAPTER I

	PAGE
APOSTOLIC PREACHING AND GOSPEL ORIGINS . . .	1

The Synoptic Problem arises out of a study of prominent features of the first three Gospels.

These correspond so closely as to suggest a common origin.

Yet they also vary in a way which indicates a variety of sources.

Their production was governed by conditions existing in the Church of the first century.

They arose from the preaching of the first Apostles.

Both narrative and discourses must have appeared early in documentary form.

Each Gospel reveals a 'tendency' of its own.

This tendency illustrated from the three records of our Lord's teaching on the subject of divorce.

Such differences call for explanation. Theories which have been advanced.

Differences will be best accounted for if we succeed in going behind the canonical Gospels and defining their sources.

### ADDITIONAL NOTE

Oral tradition as a basis for the Synoptic Gospels.

The oral theory of the origin of the Gospels.

The theory, though attractive, is not consistent, and fails to convince.

Reasons advanced for its failure.

## CHAPTER II

THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS--THE HISTORY OF CRITICISM .	20
--	----

The history of criticism.

'Harmonies' of the Gospels.

The sections of Ammonius and the canons of Eusebius.

Tatian's Diatessaron.

Augustine's account of Gospel relations.	
Theories advanced by German scholars.	
Summary of results.	
Criticism in England.	
Dr. Stanton. The Gospels as historical documents.	
The Oxford Studies in the Synoptic Problem.	
Theories advanced by American scholars.	

### CHAPTER III

THE SAYINGS OF JESUS . . . . .	37
A source consisting of Logia. 'Q.'	
Collections of 'Sayings.'	
Patristic references to the Logia of St. Matthew.	
The meaning of the word <i>logia</i> .	
'Sayings' in the Epistles of the New Testament, and in other writings.	
Recently discovered sayings from Oxyrhynchus.	
The Logia of the first Gospel and those of the third.	
The exact connotation of 'Q.'	

### CHAPTER IV

THE FIRST GOSPEL . . . . .	62
Zahn's theory of the dependence of Mark upon Matthew.	
The priority of Mark: in what sense may this be accepted.	
Three main divisions in the first Gospel.	
1. The Nativity section. Its chief characteristics.	
2. The Logian section. Five 'blocks' of sayings.	
3. The Markan section.	
Narrative sections usually assigned to Q are really Markan.	
The Markan section is prior to canonical Mark, and differs again from the corresponding section in Luke.	
A suggested history of the first Gospel.	

### ADDITIONAL NOTES

1. Harnack's rearrangement of the Logian document in the first Gospel. Other reconstructions of Q.
2. An analysis of St. Matthew's five collections of the sayings of Jesus.
3. Messianic proof-texts in the first Gospel.

CHAPTER V

	PAGE
<b>THE SECOND GOSPEL . . . . .</b>	<b>104</b>
The first and third Gospels reproduce Markan narrative.	
But they often differ from canonical Mark.	
The theory of an Ur-Markus or original Mark.	
Mark is homogeneous, and does not exhibit any dependence upon Q.	
The ' Little Apocalypse ' in the second Gospel.	
The absence of doublets from Mark.	
The history of St. Mark.	
Three editions of Markan narrative.	
Vivid details indicate a later edition, not an earlier.	
The secondary character of canonical Mark is further indicated by its Pauline characteristics and such details as the use of the word <i>εὐαγγέλιον</i> .	
St. Mark's use of names.	
The Latinisms of the second Gospel.	
The date of the composition of the second Gospel.	

ADDITIONAL NOTES

1. Analysis of the second Gospel, with notes.
2. The sayings of Jesus in the second Gospel.

CHAPTER VI

<b>THE LUKAN SOURCES . . . . .</b>	<b>145</b>
The Preface to the third Gospel.	
The Markan source. How it came into the hands of St. Luke.	
His treatment of this source. St. Luke's omissions.	
The Logian document.	
Additional sections :—	
1. The Nativity story.	
2. The travel document.	
3. The history of the Passion and of the Resurrection.	
Features common to these three and indicating a single source.	

ADDITIONAL NOTES.

1. Analysis of the third Gospel.
2. St. Luke's ' special source.' Analysis, with notes.
3. The sayings of Jesus in St. Luke's Gospel.

## CHAPTER VII

	PAGE
THE JUSTIFICATION OF HISTORICAL CRITICISM . . . .	187

The Christian religion is subjective in the experience of the believer,  
but it is, at the same time, objective in the facts of history.

Three questions prominently before the Church to-day—

1. The question of miracles cannot be discussed apart from  
historical criticism of the Gospels. The position taken up  
by the Rev. J. M. Thompson.
2. The apocalyptic element in the Gospels must be considered  
in the light of Gospel sources.
3. The Person of our Lord appears more distinctly in so far as  
we discover the human element in the composition of the  
Gospels.

Losses and gains in the critical method. The triple and the  
double tradition.

The unity of the Spirit in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

INDEX . . . . .	211
-----------------	-----

# GOSPEL ORIGINS

## CHAPTER I

### APOSTOLIC PREACHING AND GOSPEL ORIGINS

THE four Gospels of the Christian Canon are usually divided into two classes. The fourth Gospel is not only independent of the other three : it differs in the personages that appear in its pages, in the incidents recorded, and in treatment. The Person of our Lord is set before us from a point of view other than that which appears in the Synoptic Gospels, and both His words and His works are given us not merely with a different interpretation from that which we have in the other Gospels, but in an entirely different setting. This Gospel is therefore rightly placed in a class by itself. But the remaining three are closely connected. They exhibit a similar method of compilation. They deal with the same facts in the history of Jesus, and the words in which these are recorded correspond so closely that it is impossible to consider that they are independent one of another. They give us a common view of our Lord, and for that reason they have received the name of the Synoptic Gospels. The correspondence between them is so close that the question of a common origin is suggested as soon as we begin to compare them. That correspondence, however, is not complete. Together with points of closest similarity marked divergences appear, and these last are so many and so distinct that any attempt to refer the Gospels to a single source is certain to break down.

Now the historical value, and the moral authority of any writing, is always dependent upon the character of its author, and the position which he occupies with reference to that which he describes or records. No writing in the world demands a clear presentation of authorship so much as do the Gospels upon which we rely for our conception of the Person of Christ, the central fact of the Christian religion. But directly we ask how did these all-important books come to be written, we are confronted with the difficulty that we have no contemporary writings which might have been expected to suggest to us those facts of authorship which we need to establish the tremendous claim which the writings make upon the judgment and the faith of men. We are driven then to the books themselves. But here, as we have already indicated, we find that though the main facts of authorship may be considered to be fairly established, the mutual relations of the matter which they use are far from clear. Sources are indicated; some of these are distinctly seen; others are obscure. The lines upon which we pursue our quest cross and recross, until the question of the sources of the three Gospels has become one of the most difficult of all the problems which confront the student of the New Testament.

In approaching the study of the Synoptic Gospels it is necessary to clear the mind of certain natural but misleading prepossessions. The writers, or editors, of these Gospels were men who worked under conditions belonging to their own age, and when we ask what these were, we are carried back to the latter half of the first century of the Christian era. Now in the governing idea of the Church of that time, as well as in its organisation and method of work, we may detect elements which were bound to influence any scheme of drawing up a narrative of the work and teaching of Jesus. We may go further and say that certain features of the life and outlook of



the Church of the first century would even militate against the production of anything in the nature of 'history,' as we conceive it. Possessed, as its members were, with the expectation of the immediate return of their Lord, they would never dream that they were writing for all time, nor would they, like the Church of a later day, be troubled with the question whether this or that writing should be considered to be 'canonical.' To them 'the Scriptures' would mean what we call the Old Testament,' and the idea that they were creating what would rank as of equal authority with this, would never be entertained by them. They wrote, we may be sure, 'as the occasion demanded,' and that occasion might often be caused by some need which was distinctly personal or local.

Again, there was no special organic unity between the different centres of the Christian community. 'Churches' in those days had a distinctly local limitation. There was one in Rome, and another in Kenchraea, and several in the region known as 'Galatia.' The Church might even be found existing among the slaves who formed 'the household' of an individual. Among these scattered congregations there moved a number of men variously described as Apostles, Prophets (or Preachers) and Teachers. Their function was that of 'confirming' or 'building up' the individual Churches they visited. They did so, for the most part, by relating and explaining what Jesus had said or had done. Their qualification was found in some direct and immediate personal contact with the Lord. Their position was 'charismatic'—that is, it rested upon some gracious manifestation conferred upon them—and it was therefore privileged. St. Paul rested his claim to apostleship largely upon the fact that he had seen the Lord Jesus, and in such descriptions of his spoken ministry as are suggested to us in the course of his writing he seems to have dealt with the accepted facts of our

Lord's life. Writing to the Galatians he speaks of himself as having so described the death of Jesus that it was as if the Crucified had been depicted before their very eyes. His teaching of the Resurrection also had been clear and definite. It was in accordance with information which he had himself received from members of the apostolic band, doubtless on the occasion when he had 'interviewed' Peter and James, the brother of the Lord, in Jerusalem (Gal. i. 18), but he claims that he was indebted more to personal revelation than to instruction from the other apostles. Such references to the oral teaching of the apostles lead to the inference that it did not lack that insistence upon guaranteed fact concerning the life and death of Jesus, which appears also in the recorded preaching of St. Peter in the Acts of the Apostles. We may accept that he also 'in the synagogues proclaimed Jesus, that He is the Son of God' (Acts ix. 20). We are expressly told that such teaching was given not on any definite and consecutive plan. It would conform to the method ascribed to both St. Peter and his 'Interpreter,' St. Mark, the one in his preaching and the other as recording the preaching. For Eusebius quotes Papias in the following words: 'Mark having become the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately everything that he remembered, without, however, recording in order what was either said or done by Christ. For neither did he hear the Lord nor did he follow Him; but afterwards attended Peter, who adapted his instructions to the needs of his hearers, but not as making a connected narrative of the Lord's discourses.'<sup>1</sup> This statement of Papias will come before us again, but it is mentioned here in support of the general statement that the early teaching of the Church out of which arose the documents to be considered was occasional rather than continuous, disconnected rather than systematic, and topical rather than historical. It

<sup>1</sup> Eusebius, *Hist.* iii. 39.

was also conditioned by local circumstances. The needs of his hearers could not be considered apart from their environment. That which would be of interest to people in Caesarea might be comparatively unimportant to those who lived in Rome, so that we shall be prepared for a considerable amount of variation in the telling of the story.

This view of the circumstances in which the earliest apostolic teaching was given is of importance in judging whether the basis of the Gospel record was oral or not. The advocates of this theory presuppose a fixed form of narrative repeated frequently and without variation in the selection of incidents, the order of their narration, and the language employed, so as to lead to the 'stereotyping' which they need to account for the marked resemblance of the three Gospels. We may well ask where and how this fixed oral tradition came into being if the earliest teaching lacked continuity, and depended upon the varying needs of groups of Christians separated in locality and to some extent in habit of thought and interest.

We are told in the *Didache*, an important Church manual composed about the end of the first century, and dealing with the teaching of the twelve apostles, that the 'apostle' moved on from place to place, and that he was not to remain more than two days in one place (*Did.* xi. 5). It is obvious that this would create another set of circumstances which would affect the question of Gospel origins. How would the severed ἐκκλησίαι be instructed during the intervals between one apostolical visitation and another? Who would continue to them the recital of what Jesus did and said, when the missionary had moved on to some other Church? And what authority would such a later recital possess? Their need would be met in the most obvious manner by committing to writing the authoritative statements made by those who had been eye-witnesses of our Lord, and these documents might be

read by the local officers the bishops and deacons, as described in the Didache. That this is what actually took place is distinctly stated by Clement of Alexandria, who says that 'When Peter had publicly preached the word in Rome, and declared the Gospel by the Spirit, those who were present, being many, urged Mark, as one who had followed him for a long time and remembered what he said, to record what he stated; and that he having made his Gospel gave it to those who made the request of him' (*Hypotyp.* vi.). This is supported by a similar statement in Eusebius (*Hist.* ii. 15), who says that Peter's hearers were not content with the unwritten teaching of the Gospel, but 'with all sorts of entreaties they besought Mark, a follower of Peter, that he would leave with them a written monument of the doctrine which had been orally communicated to them. Nor did they cease until they had prevailed with the man, and thus become the occasion of the written Gospel which bears the name of Mark.' We may be sure that the request made in Rome, as Clement tells us, was one which would be made in other places. Harnack quotes from Eusebius a statement to the effect that the four daughters of Philip 'transmitted stories of the old days,' a statement which accords with the reference to the same women in the Acts of the Apostles as being women 'who did prophesy.' Such references will be most easily understood if we take them to indicate that these women possessed written records of 'the old days,' and that their ministry was found in reading and expounding these to the local Church in Caesarea, in continuation of the practice of reading passages from the Old Testament in the Synagogues of the Jews. The early existence of such records may then be taken for granted. Inasmuch as their subject-matter would be the same, they would exhibit a marked resemblance to one another, but inasmuch as they would arise to meet local necessities there would also be equally marked differences.

The language in which they would be written would be that type of Greek which formed the spoken language of the common people ; for it is probable that the demand for such literature arose as soon as the Church began to appeal to those members of the community who are described in the Acts of the Apostles as consisting of ' devout persons ' (οἱ σεβόμενοι). These formed what has been called ' the seed-bed of Christianity.' They consisted of those Gentiles who were attracted by the teaching of the Jews and were in sympathy with their religion. Such a one was Cornelius, and we may well imagine that after St. Peter had delivered in his house the address recorded in the 'Acts of the Apostles, this would be written down by his interpreter, St. Mark, probably associated very early with St. Peter, and that it would be written not in Aramaic, but in such a language as would make it accessible to those for whom it was written.

Probably even before this there existed a number of those pointed apophthegms spoken by our Lord to which the name of ' Sayings ' (λόγια) would at once be given. This name would suggest itself because the very form of the sayings would suggest the oracular statements to which the name had long before been given. Such sayings would be received with peculiar reverence in the early Church. What could have been more precious than the very words of the Master Himself ? In their earliest form they would doubtless appear in Aramaic, but as soon as 'Christianity began to appeal to Gentiles the need of having these also in Greek would be felt, and more than one collection of them would be made by the devout. If we may accept the year A.D. 80 as being approximately the date of the composition of the third Gospel, it is clear that even then there were in existence many writings of which St. Luke had cognisance (Luke i. 1-4). It will later on be shown that the sayings used by St. Luke differed so markedly from those which appear in the first Gospel,

that it is most likely that he did not take them from the first Gospel, but from some one of other collections, and if there was any great multiplication of these the need would be felt of making such a compilation of them as might be considered authoritative. We shall be able to account in this way for the tradition, to which reference must presently be made, that St. Matthew compiled the sayings of our Lord, and the fact of a collection made on such authority would account for the disappearance of others which did not possess such a guarantee.

As soon as we begin to read the three earlier Gospels, we find that there is a considerable amount of repetition. Incidents mentioned in one are repeated, often word for word, in another. In many cases expressions which are unusual,<sup>1</sup> words which are rare in writings related in time to these Gospels, occur in all three. Not only so, but so far as the narrative portion of these Gospels is concerned, the general order of events is, speaking generally, the same in each. We find also that with the possible exception of the second Gospel the works are composite. In the first Gospel and in the third it is possible to distinguish certain sections as narrative and others as consisting of discourses. The difference between the seventh chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel and the eighth, or between the sixth and seventh of St. Luke's, is unmistakable. If we turn our attention for the moment to the narrative sections of these two Gospels we observe a close correspondence between them and what we have in the second Gospel, while in this last we find that the element of discourse, in the form in which it appears in the others, is

<sup>1</sup> The following unusual words are taken from Dr. Gould's Commentary on Mark:—

<i>πρωτοκαθεδρίας</i>	<i>Matt. xxiii. 6.</i>	<i>Luke xi. 43.</i>	<i>Mark xii. 39.</i>
<i>ἐκολόβωσε</i>	<i>Mark xiii. 20.</i>	<i>Matt. xxiv. 22.</i>	
<i>τέρατα</i>	<i>Mark xiii. 22.</i>	<i>Matt. xxiv. 25.</i>	
<i>ἀγρυπνεῖτε</i>	<i>Mark xiii. 33.</i>	<i>Luke xxi. 36.</i>	
<i>ἐμβάπτω</i>	<i>Mark xiv. 20.</i>	<i>Matt. xxvi. 33.</i>	
<i>τρύβλιον</i>			

lacking. It has therefore become an accepted axiom with scholars that the narrative portion of both the first and the third Gospels is Markan. But it is not wholly Markan. There are considerable sections, especially in the third Gospel, which are distinctly narrative, but which do not appear either in Matthew or in Mark. They seem to be derived from quite another source. The composite character of Matthew and Luke is therefore accepted as readily as the derivation of their narrative portions from St. Mark.

We may here refer to the point of view of the several evangelists, or as it is nowadays called, the 'tendency,' and this must always be carefully borne in mind. It is one of the most important conditions governing the form of the several Gospels. In the first Gospel we find abundant references which indicate a distinctly Jewish tendency. The genealogy with which the Gospel opens begins with Abraham, while St. Luke, writing with Gentile sympathies, carries the genealogy up to Adam. Other features of the first Gospel indicating the same tendency, are the prominence given to Christ's teaching concerning the Messianic kingdom, the frequent use of Old Testament writings to prove the Messiahship of Jesus, references to Jerusalem as 'the holy city,' and the like. The second Gospel, on the other hand, is not so much concerned with the Messiahship of Jesus as with such a presentation of His Person as will prove Him to be the Son of God. St. Mark is at pains to explain Jewish words and customs, thus proving that he wrote with non-Jewish readers in view. The frequency with which he uses Latin words and military terms would seem to indicate—what indeed tradition declares—that he wrote for those who dwelt in Rome, and that soldiers were immediately interested in his writing (Clement of Alexandria, *Adumbr. in Pet. Ep. i.*). St. Luke, on the other hand, reveals all through the third Gospel the unmistakable marks of one who was closely

associated with St. Paul, and who reproduces not only the characteristic phraseology of that apostle, but also his world-wide view and strongly Gentile sympathies. We shall also see, in his markedly sympathetic references to women, a tendency which plays an important part in enabling us to determine at least one of his sources.

Now the study of 'tendency' will carry us a long way in accounting for divergences between one gospel and another where they relate the same incident or record the same teaching, but it does not carry us all the way. There are differences in the common record which are not accounted for by the principle of selection or expression in this individual or in that, and an excellent illustration of this is afforded by the several accounts of our Lord's teaching on the subject of divorce. In Mark x. 2-12 we have the incident which gave rise to our Lord's pronouncement on the subject. We are told that it arose from an attempt made by the Pharisees to get our Lord to compromise Himself by a declaration which would contravene the Mosaic directions. This appears again in the Markan section of the first Gospel which is given in Matthew xix., but in this last we find a considerable amount of variation from the account given in Mark, and the differences between the two accounts are precisely those which would occur when the same person repeated what he had written in a former edition. There is a difference in the order of the several statements on the subject, and the account in the second Gospel is considerably abbreviated. If we consider that the second Gospel is prior to the first, we are bound to accept what seems most unlikely, namely, that the evangelist of the first Gospel made considerable additions to the Markan narrative in transcribing from that source. The third Gospel, on the other hand, does not record the Markan section at all, and if that Gospel was based upon canonical Mark we shall ask why St. Luke decided to omit it. It cannot be because he thought



' the teaching inappropriate to his particular line of thought in composing his Gospel, for he has included the same teaching in a passage which he derived from the Logia, where he gives our Lord's words without any of those qualifications which we have in the first Gospel. Nor can we suppose that for the sake of abbreviation he could omit the whole passage. A better explanation of the facts is that this section was not in the Markan edition used by St. Luke.

But in addition to this section in the Markan narrative we have our Lord's words given again in the Sermon on the Mount in the first Gospel and in the Travel Document in the third. Here the words are given in the form of a Logion. That is, there is no attempt to connect the utterance with any incident in the history. It is cast in epigrammatic form. It possesses all the characteristics of a true Logion.<sup>1</sup> But when we come to consider the Lukan version in comparison with that given in the first Gospel, we see at once that it is difficult to believe that the two evangelists derived the saying from Q or any other common document. We are bound to admit that here the sources were different. The two passages should be placed in parallel columns :

It was said also whosoever shall put away his wife let him give her a writ of divorcement : but I say unto you, that every one that putteth away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, maketh her an adulteress; and whosoever shall marry her when she is put away committeth adultery.	Every one that putteth away his wife and marrieth another committeth adultery, and he that marrieth one that is put away from a husband committeth adultery.
---	--

Luke xvi. 18.

Matt. v. 31-32.

It is difficult to believe that the considerable difference

<sup>1</sup> See p. 41.

between the two statements can be explained on the ground of editorial alterations. As we shall see, St. Luke treats his Logian source with such respect that he makes such alterations less frequently in this part of his Gospel than he does in any other. We are shut up to the conclusion that the sayings were taken from different sources, and the emphasis in the Lukan account upon the man's action in the matter would seem to indicate a woman's point of view. There is also the significant addition in the Matthaean version of the clause 'saving for the cause of fornication.' Why did St. Luke omit this clause if he used the same source as St. Matthew did? We may be sure that it was not in the saying as he found it in his collection of Logia. Indeed, the fact that it appears in the first Gospel seems to indicate that it must be considered to be inserted by St. Matthew as an interpretation of the spirit of our Lord's teaching on the subject, and as a concession made to the Jewish Christian Church for which he wrote. That Church would find it difficult to break away all at once from the Mosaic statute on the subject, and the qualifying clause would be added 'for the hardness of their hearts.' It is to be noticed that it appears only in the first Gospel, and that it is inserted in the Markan section of this Gospel as well as in the Sermon on the Mount. The use of the word *πορνεία* again is significant and points in the same direction. It is not 'fornication' as an act common to the two sexes which is indicated as the one exception. *πορνεία* describes rather the professional harlotry of women. So that the exception is made in the interests of men just as was the case in the Mosaic law given in Deuteronomy xxiv. 1.

The above study of the facts before us in the record show that, while tendency may account for the character of those points in which the first Gospel reveals an addition to what we have in the second, it does not account for the omission by St. Luke of a section which certainly belongs to the

Markan narrative, nor does it account for the difference between the teaching of our Lord on the subject which he derived from his second source and that given by St. Matthew, and apparently derived from a similar source. The only complete explanation of the facts will be found when we accept the theory that the Markan source used by the first and third evangelists was not identical with canonical Mark, and that the collection of 'Sayings' used by St. Luke differed from that which was used by St. Matthew. When we further discover that this theory accounts for a large number of other differences between one Gospel and another, we may feel a considerable amount of confidence in applying the theory to the general question of Gospel sources.

There are of course other explanations of the facts with which we have to deal, and these must be fully weighed by the student of the Gospels. One of the most recent of these is given by Dr. Sanday in a work to which frequent reference will be made in subsequent chapters. Dr. Sanday describes the several evangelists as being historians rather than mere transcribers of other matter that came before them, and as exercising a certain amount of freedom in selecting from their material that which seemed to be of importance from their several points of view. 'They were faithful and yet independent ; not wilfully capricious, but content to tell their story sometimes in the words of their predecessors, sometimes in their own. Their method in transcribing would to a large extent be formed by the conditions under which they worked, and consequently the evangelist, in reproducing what belonged to his source, would trust largely to his memory. This will perhaps explain the fact that, while there is a considerable amount of agreement where Markan matter appears in the first and third Gospels, there is also a great amount of divergence.'<sup>1</sup> Now it is possible that this may be the

<sup>1</sup> *Oxford Studies in the Synoptic Problem.*

explanation of the facts under consideration ; but while it might account for merely verbal divergences, it fails altogether to account for the omission in one Gospel of a whole incident, or for the inclusion in another of a considerable block of matter. For example, the omission by St. Luke of the story of the cure of the Syrophenician's daughter could not be accounted for in this way. It is impossible to believe that if St. Luke had come upon that story in his source he could ever have forgotten it. Some other explanation of the fact has therefore to be discovered. Some of these are discussed in another chapter, but it is possible that most, if not all, of these divergences from the Markan tradition may be due to the simple fact that they were not included in the editions of Mark used by the editors of the first and third Gospels. This theory will be fully discussed later on, but in considering the conditions under which the different evangelists prepared their work, we must not lose sight of the possibility that the copies from which they worked were not identical. Dr. Sanday would account for 'by far the greater number of the coincidences of Matthew-Luke against Mark as being due to the use by Matthew-Luke of a recension of the text of Mark different from that from which all the extant MSS. of the Gospel are descended.' Again, we would urge that while this is possible, other explanations of the facts should first be tested before we draw such a conclusion. It involves, for instance, what seems a very unlikely thing to happen, viz. that 'this recension was perpetuated in just these two copies, but after giving birth to them it came to an abrupt end': this statement is actually made by Dr. Sanday in his Essay in the *Oxford Studies in the Synoptic Problem*.

Rejecting then the theory that divergences from the second Gospel are to be explained by the supposition that the evangelist failed to carry in his memory the whole of the section he was transcribing, and rejecting also that

they are to be explained on the ground of a recension of the text, we find another attempt made to account for them on the ground that they are due to editorial alterations. For example, it is well known that the word *εὐθύς* occurs with extraordinary frequency in the second Gospel, appearing no less than forty-two times. In Matthew it occurs only six times, and in Luke in a single passage taken from the Logia document and not from Mark. Now while the marked absence of the word from the third Gospel may be due to St. Luke's dislike of the word, yet when we find that the editor of the first Gospel also rejects it in thirty-six passages, we are led to think that the explanation must be sought elsewhere than in the direction of editorial alteration. For it is most unlikely that two editors, one of them a Jew and the other a Gentile, working separately with very different constituencies before them, would agree in omitting this word so often. But if canonical Mark differs from other Markan narrative in this that it was later than they, then we can see that everything that tended to make an incident more vivid would appear in the later edition though it was not found in the earlier.

Few will care to deny a considerable amount of editorial alteration in the dealing of these editors with their material. While in the main they were faithful to the sources which they used, they nevertheless allowed themselves considerable freedom in substituting words which seemed more suitable to them, and in recasting phrases which appeared to them to be imperfectly expressed. But to press this principle so far as to hold that it explains the many cases in which Matthew and Luke agree against Mark seems to be a mistake. A far more likely line of investigation is that in which an attempt is made to go behind the evangelists whose work we have in the canonical Gospels, and bearing in mind the conditions in which the work of the earliest preachers was accomplished,

to ask whether we can say anything more definite than, 'a Gospel practically identical with our second Gospel' when speaking of Markan narrative, and anything which will indicate the second documentary source more certainly than the very indefinite Q. Such questions may well be considered now. An enormous amount of research has been accomplished, and in so far as an agreement has been reached that all three Gospels are not at all original productions but rest upon previously existing documents, the ground has been cleared for the further question whether those documents can be more fully defined. There is no reason why we should approach this question with a feeling of despair. We have certain statements in Patristic writings to guide us. It is true that these have often seemed so contradictory of one another that little use has been made of their statements, and perhaps the impatience which has been felt with regard to anything that savoured of 'the traditional view' may have contributed to the neglect of this part of the evidence for Gospel origins. But there is a feeling in the present time that there is more to be said on the side of 'tradition,' and it may be that our own prepossessions have had much to do with the mutual contradictions which we discover in the writings of the fathers. There is, for instance, a tradition which connects the second Gospel with Egypt, another connects it with Rome. We have too hastily said 'both cannot be right,' and dismissed the writings as being to this extent untrustworthy. And yet we hope to show that there is a sense in which both these statements are correct. The true method of investigation is that in which neither internal nor external evidence is neglected, but the one is tested by the other, and it may well be that following this method we may arrive at what is of supreme importance to the Church at the present day. For if the Gospels as we have them are secondary, that is, if the writers derived them from other sources, so that the

part they played was rather editorial than original, we shall only establish the authority of the Gospels in so far as we see that those who first compiled the writings were in a position to guarantee the statements they have made.

### ADDITIONAL NOTE

#### THE THEORY OF ORAL TRADITION AS A BASIS FOR THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS

IN describing the conditions under which the evangelists worked, we have so far proceeded on the supposition that the sources from which they drew their matter were documentary. This is now largely accepted by scholars both in Germany and in England. Justice must, however, be done to a theory which at one time seemed to promise a full solution of the Synoptic Problem. Towards the end of the eighteenth century G. Herder put forward a theory that all three Gospels were based upon another Gospel which, though fixed in form, only existed in an unwritten tradition. This Gospel originated in Palestine and was written in Aramaic, forming the content of apostolic preaching, and it was communicated frequently in the schools of Catechumens into which new converts were gathered. The fixity of this Gospel was accounted for as due at once to the catechetical method and to the development of memory which followed, and which can be amply illustrated from Eastern parallels. St. Mark was the first to reduce this unwritten Gospel to writing, and later on another version of the same was produced which eventually became our Gospel of St. Matthew. Later still St. Luke, using this Aramaic Gospel, and working over St. Mark's version which by that time had been published in Greek, prepared the Gospel which now bears his name.

This theory was developed by J. C. L. Giesler, who held that even in its Greek form the Gospel continued to be oral, and supported the theory by historical considerations, such as the absence of all allusions in the Gospels themselves to written documents, while the absence also of literary culture in the early Church made it unlikely that the Gospel would assume a written form. In England this theory was advocated by Dr.

Westcott, and later on by Dr. Arthur Wright, whose *Synopsis of the Gospels* in Greek remains to-day the most able presentation of the theory.

The doctrine of an oral basis for the Gospels is at first sight exceedingly attractive. It fits in admirably with the method of instruction which to this day is pursued in Eastern countries, and the element of stereotyping which it assumes seems to offer a reasonable account of the extraordinarily close correspondence to be discovered between the three Gospels based upon it. In spite of this, however, it has failed to carry conviction, and is practically rejected both in Germany and in England.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Schmiedel speaks of the hypothesis as being at once an 'asylum ignorantiae,' and an 'asylum orthodoxiae.' He says it spares the critic all necessity for an answer to the question why one evangelist wrote in this manner and another in that. 'If the Synoptical oral narrative was really so firmly fixed as to secure verbatim repetition of entire verses in three authors writing independently of one another, then the variations between the three become all the more mysterious.' It is further a relief to the orthodox mind because 'it dispenses with the necessity of assuming that original documents from which our Gospels had been drawn—writings of eye-witnesses—have perished. The theory is really wrecked, as Dr. Schmiedel suggests, on the *differences* between one record and the other. Its advocates account for these on the ground that equally credible witnesses would give a different account of the same event, and memory might fail in transmitting orally the same discourse. But it is evident that the two terms of the hypothesis cancel one another. Its advocates cannot have it both ways. They claim 'a stereotyped tradition,' yet with it they allow for 'slips of memory.' If the tradition was so fixed as it must have been to account for the many and marked resemblances, such slips would have been impossible. Nor are these differences slight verbal changes. They amount in some cases to whole sections, and sections of great importance, such as the Lord's Prayer, the Eucharistic words, and the story of the Resurrection. If any sections in the Gospel story were likely to be fixed by frequency of repetition, they are these; yet we find that it is precisely in these that the account varies

<sup>1</sup> See Article *sub. verb.* 'Gospels' in the *Encyclopædia Biblica*.



most, and in each some detail which appears in the others is altogether missing. The hypothesis of an oral basis rests in reality upon the assumption that documents containing memoirs of the works and words of Jesus were comparatively late in appearing, but the existence of Logia preserved upon pieces of papyrus shows that there were documents at a very much earlier stage of Church history. So also does St. Paul's instructions with reference to the parchments which he so specially required during his imprisonment at Rome. St. Luke's language in the introduction to the third Gospel indicates that, even before he began to write, accounts of our Lord's life were extant in documentary form. (See p. 145.)

Again, the original instruction of converts, which we may well agree was given in catechetical form, must have been given in Aramaic, the mother-tongue of the first apostles, while these resemblances are in Greek, and it is difficult to believe that the same fixity in verbal expression would persist through the whole process of translation. An even more destructive criticism of this theory is to be found when we reflect that though this method of instruction must have arisen in Jerusalem, and though it is clear from the fourth Gospel, as well as from indications in the Synoptic Gospels, that there was a Judaeian as well as a Galilean ministry in the course of our Lord's public life, yet this tradition scarcely refers at all to what took place in Judaea. 'The fact that the Synoptic Gospels record only the Galilean ministry is inexplicable if the tradition grew up in the heart of the city they so strangely neglected.'<sup>1</sup> In another passage of the same article Dr. Sanday says, 'The stamp which these Gospels bear is not collective but individual, and this cannot be explained if they are the product of the Church working collectively.' Such arguments make the theory of a purely oral tradition as the basis of the three Gospels untenable.

<sup>1</sup> See Article by Dr. Sanday in *The Expositor*, Fourth Series, iii. p. 186 ff. For a full and clear discussion of this subject, the student is referred to Dr. Stanton's work, *The Gospels as Historical Documents*, vol. ii. p. 17 ff. See also *Oxford Studies*, pp. 98, 99.

## CHAPTER II

## THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS—THE HISTORY OF CRITICISM

THE four Gospels came into regular use in Church services in the first quarter of the second century, and as soon as they were thus put together it became evident that there was much matter common to two, three, or even to four Gospels. It was also seen that with this large body of 'similarities' there was a considerable amount of 'divergences.' The many attempts to deal with these are so many efforts to solve what has become known as 'the Synoptic Problem.' Some methods adopted may be at once dismissed as unscientific. While no attempt was made to account for the points of correspondence, and any recognition of the dependence of one evangelist upon another was resented as a charge of plagiarism, the issue of which would be the weakening of the authority of Scripture, the differences existing between one Gospel and another were explained away through fear of disclosing contradiction between one record and another. This attempt to resolve the variations existing in the several stories was dignified by the name of 'harmonising,' and the methods adopted by some harmonists are not such as to raise them in public esteem, or add to the authority of Scripture.

Even the text of Scripture has in not a few instances been tampered with in the attempt to reduce the several accounts to conformity, and textual critics have come to recognise a whole class of readings as due to this tendency, and quite rightly they make short work of such variants. Harmonists of this class seem strangely to

ignore the fact that, so far from weakening the force and the authority of the record, the acceptance of divergences really increases these, inasmuch as it gives us the story from more than one point of view. The word 'harmony' was indeed ill chosen by those who aimed at conformity, for the blending together of different notes, under well-defined laws, is what a true 'harmony' really means. Reduction to a single expression might give us unison; it certainly does not produce a harmony. In later days the word 'synopsis' has come to be used instead of 'harmony,' and this secures the great advantage of indicating that in such work an attempt is made to bring the whole of the matter dealt with into the range of a single view, the student accepting divergences no less than similarities, and seeking to discover their significance.

In the third century Ammonius prepared a work in which the sections of the other Gospels were compared with those which appear in St. Matthew's Gospel, the text of which was given in full. The first Gospel thus became his basis, and the other Gospels were arranged in parallel columns where, in his opinion, the accounts coincided. He found in this way that Matthew contained 355 sections, Mark 233, Luke 342, and John 232. It is clear that such a method, while it had the advantage of bringing together similar passages, and of thus allowing comparison of their details, suffered from the disadvantage of being arbitrary in so far as the selection of parallels was concerned; it broke up the text of all the Gospels with the exception of Matthew, and we do not know that it led to any criticism of the details thus arranged. It seems to have been rather a selection of parallel passages, than an attempt to deal with the Synoptic Problem. The splitting up of the Gospels other than Matthew seems to have been felt by Eusebius to be a defect, and he therefore, while making use of his predecessor's work, proceeded to number the sections in each Gospel. The sections thus

distinguished were called τὰ παραπλήσια, and in addition to these Eusebius drew up a set of tables κανόνες in which the numbers of the corresponding sections were arranged together. References to these were made by figures written on the margin of the text. These 'canons' were prepared as follows: No. 1 contains a list of 71 places in which all four Gospels agree. Nos. 2, 3, 4 show a list of passages in which three have common matter amounting to 158. Nos. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 contain 141 passages in which two have common matter and No. 10 consists of a list of 62 passages peculiar to some one evangelist. The method of using these canons was as follows: if any one wished to consult the passages which were parallel to one which he was reading, he would look at the margin and see that the section number was accompanied by another number indicating the table to which his passage belonged; turning to this table he would find opposite to the number of the passage he was reading the numbers which indicated the parallels in the other Gospels, and would thus be able to consult them. This method, however, like that which it was intended to supersede, is rather an arrangement of parallel passages than a synopsis.

Another notable harmony was that prepared in the second century by the Syrian Christian named Tatian. Strictly speaking this was not a harmony at all, but rather a Gospel narrative formed by selecting from all the Gospels passages which seemed to follow one another consecutively. Eusebius speaks somewhat contemptuously of this as 'a sort of connection or compilation, I know not how, of the Gospels.'<sup>1</sup> Theodoret also speaks of the mischief done by this 'Diatessaron,' as it is called, and congratulates himself on the fact that having found some two hundred copies of the work in one district of his diocese, he was able to put them away and to replace them with

<sup>1</sup> συνάφειάν τινα καὶ συναγωγὴν οὐκ οἶδ' ὅπως τῶν εὐαγγελίων; see Zahn, i. pp. 14, 15.

Gospels of the four evangelists. It is possible that the Sinaitic and Curetonian texts of the Syriac version of the New Testament came into existence as the result of an attempt to destroy Tatian's work. The Diatessaron is of extreme importance from the standpoint of the textual critic, but it is clear that while the name given to it seems to suggest some attempt at harmonising the four Gospels, in reality it was not so at all, and for our purposes need not be further considered.

From the time when the Gospels began to circulate or to be appealed to, it was the common tradition of the Christian Church that they were written by those whose names they bear. Even Marcion, who took exception to many things which were stated in the Gospels, especially to statements made in the third, and did not hesitate to remove from the letters of St. Paul passages which he considered to be unauthorised and false, never attempted to question the authorship of the three books under consideration. This tradition rested upon no claim made within the books themselves, and the only possible explanation of it is that the tradition rested upon facts so clearly within the cognisance of the Christian Church that denial of the received authorship was held to be impossible. This tradition does not decide anything as to what we call 'the Synoptic Problem.' That is to say, it does not pronounce any opinion as to whether the books were entirely or only in part the work of the evangelists whose names they bear, neither does it say whether the writers wrote at first hand, or whether they were dependent upon others. The earliest titles were apparently those which appear in the oldest codices, and such forms as *κατὰ Ματθαῖον*, *κατὰ Μάρκον* might be used without reference to the dependence of the first Gospel on the second, or of St. Mark upon St. Peter. The early tradition says nothing as to 'Gospel sources.'

In certain codices the books appear in the order Matthew,

Mark, Luke, but Clement of Alexandria<sup>1</sup> held that St. Luke compiled the third Gospel before St. Mark wrote the second. The dates to which these Gospels may be assigned will be considered later in this chapter, but this divergence of opinion is to be noted here, for if it can be shown that St. Luke used an edition of St. Mark's work other than that which we have in canonical Mark, and written at an earlier date, the apparent contradiction may be easily resolved. Irenaeus,<sup>2</sup> too, represents St. Mark as having written his Gospel after the death of both St. Peter and St. Paul. If the third Gospel appeared before the death of the latter—and it is difficult to believe that St. Luke could have closed the account given in the Acts as he has done if St. Paul was not still alive—then the statement of Irenaeus must be held to refer to canonical Mark, a previous edition of that Gospel, differing in details but similar in arrangement and in many particulars even identical, having come into the hands of St. Luke. The order in which the books appear in the different codices cannot be held to be conclusive as to historical sequence. For the books would first be written on separate rolls and kept together. When they were put in the form of a codex the order in which they appeared would be quite adventitious. This is shown by the fact that codices which keep the traditional order for the Synoptic Gospels put the fourth Gospel before them all.

The first attempt to decide on the interdependence of the three Gospels was made by St. Augustine. He held that St. Matthew was the first to write and that St. Mark 'eum subsecutus tanquam pedisequus et abbreviator ejus videtur.'<sup>3</sup> He also held that St. Luke used both Matthew and Mark. This view obtained for a very long time, and it was not until the eighteenth century, when historical questions began to be treated upon scientific lines, that it

<sup>1</sup> Eus., *H.E.*, vi. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Irenaeus, iii. 1, 1; Eus., *H.E.*, v. 8, 2.

<sup>3</sup> *De Consensu Ev.*, i. 2, 4.

was given up. Both in Germany and in England very different views have been held, and some attempt must be made to show the history of criticism.<sup>1</sup>

The first to offer any account of Gospel origins other than that of Augustine was G. E. Lessing, who held that the original Gospel was written in Aramaic, and that the three canonical Gospels are translations of this, the first Gospel coming nearest to the original. Lessing seems to have arrived at this conclusion by a rendering of the passage already quoted from Eusebius.<sup>2</sup>

Lessing was followed by J. J. Griesbach, who taught that St. Matthew wrote his Gospel from his own personal knowledge of Christ, and that St. Luke supplemented this from oral tradition, the second Gospel being made up of excerpts from the other two.

G. Herder seems to have been the first to see that the second Gospel must be considered prior to the other two. He held that St. Mark wrote down for his own convenience the teaching which had been given him orally, and that he did this at a quite early date, that later on an Aramaic Gospel was prepared and has survived in the first Gospel, and was used also by St. Luke, who added that which he had himself received from apostolic teachers.

A notable addition to criticism was made by J. C. L. Giesler, who found the common basis of the Synoptic Gospel in an oral tradition. This need not be further mentioned here, as we have already considered it in the Additional Note to chapter i. Another typical theory is that of B. Weiss. This theory had its antecedent in Eichhorn's, which again is based on that of Lessing noticed above. All of these, while they differ from one another, seek for the source of the Synoptic Gospels in an original Gospel written in Aramaic but early translated into Greek. This Gospel was held to consist for the most

<sup>1</sup> For the whole of this section I have used Zahn's *Intro. to the New Testament*, vol. ii.

<sup>2</sup> *Hist.* iii. 24, 6.

part of discourses, but it also contained narratives, and it may therefore be considered a 'Gospel,' and the Canonical Gospels are accounted for as translations, other supplementary matter being added as each translation was made. Thus the second Gospel was derived from this original Gospel with additions derived by St. Mark from the preaching of St. Peter. The first Gospel used the original and drew additional matter from St. Mark, and the third Gospel is based upon the original, St. Mark, and special sources available to St. Luke. This theory was a great advance upon all that had then appeared, but it is open to the serious objection discussed in connection with the question of an 'Ur-Markus' in chapter v., and further, while it accounts fairly well for resemblances, it breaks down in attempting to account for divergences. For it is not merely in the supplementary matter that these appear, but even when common matter is being narrated by the different evangelists there are differences which are hard to explain if they had before them an original Gospel from which each was transcribing.

It is impossible here to pass in review the many attempts which have been made to solve the Synoptic Problem. The most that can be done is to select those which seem typical of groups, and we therefore turn to a theory which, with modifications, forms the basis of the present work. It is that of Holtzmann, who held that there were two documentary sources before the evangelists. One of these was Markan, and in its original form was used both by the editor who compiled the first Gospel and also by St. Luke. It was not quite identical with the second Gospel. The latter was considerably abbreviated, especially in the earliest section which forms an introduction. The account of the healing of the servant of the Centurion (Matt. viii. 5-13, Luke vii. 1-10) and other incidents were omitted. But additions to the original account were made in what is now canonical Mark, such as the cure of the deaf man



with an impediment in his speech (Mark vii. 32-37), and the many vivid details which characterise the second Gospel. The second document consists mainly of discourses, and is to be found most clearly in the third Gospel, though the Church has acknowledged their author by attaching his name to the first Gospel rather than the third. Other material, such as the genealogies, derived neither from St. Mark nor from the Logia, was added to the first and third Gospels by their respective editors. It is claimed that this hypothesis is in accord with the statements of Papias already quoted. This theory has not hitherto received any great amount of acceptance, though there have been approximations to it in the course of time. These will be noted when the question of the Markan narrative is more fully before us.

Looking back over this necessarily imperfect survey of the course of German criticism we may sum up results as follows :—

1. The basis is held to be documentary rather than oral.
2. The basis is twofold, consisting largely of sayings and of narrative.
3. The former of these is connected with the name of St. Matthew, and the latter with that of St. Mark, and both of these in some form or other were used by St. Luke.

Beyond this point, however, there does not seem to be any general consensus of opinion. The details vary with the critic. When we turn to the course of English criticism, we find that the general results of German research are freely accepted, but here again, beyond the three points mentioned above, there seems to be an almost endless variety of opinion.

Giesler's theory of an oral basis from which all three Canonical Gospels are derived is still maintained by Dr. Arthur Wright. In a recent article in the *Expository*

*Times* (February 1910) he so far modifies his position as to allow that 'documents—temporary documents—were in use from the first'; but he finds these documents in tablets, 'perhaps half a dozen which St. Peter used for refreshing his memory.' This concession, however, is hardly sufficient, and it is difficult to imagine St. Peter 'using notes' as a modern preacher might do.

In 1884 a work appeared under the names of Dr. Edwin A. Abbott and Mr. W. G. Rushbrooke, entitled *The Common Tradition of the Synoptic Gospels*. In this it was held that the basis of the three Gospels was to be discovered by ruling out everything except that which appeared in all three Gospels. When this is done, the remainder consists of briefest notes as terse as the wording of 'a modern telegram,' and the necessary expansion, before these could be worked up into the Gospels as we have them, accounts for the divergences which exist between them. This system of discovering the basis or bases of the Gospels is altogether too mechanical. The nucleus which results is called by the authors 'the Triple Tradition,' but it is clear that, inasmuch as the common matter may have come from one source, a better name would be that of 'the Original Tradition,'<sup>1</sup> and even thus it would fail to account for many of the peculiar features of these Gospels. The expansions, for instance, reveal a considerable amount of correspondence, and this fact becomes inexplicable if the three editors were expanding independently of one another.

The theory of an Ur-Markus, or original Gospel corresponding most closely to the second Gospel, is supported by Dr. Salmon, who holds that 'Matthew and Luke did not copy Mark, but that all drew from a common source, which, however, is represented most fully and with most verbal exactness in St. Mark's version.' Dr. Salmon thinks that it is even possible that St. Mark's Gospel may

<sup>1</sup> See Salmon, *Introduction*, etc., pp. 132 ff.

be the latest of the three, since it contains a good deal more than the Petrine tradition. This is an important concession from the point of view of the present work ; for if canonical Mark is later than the Markan narrative which appears in the first and third Gospels, it would account for those features which have thus impressed Dr. Salmon. The question of an Ur-Markus will receive separate treatment in a later chapter.<sup>1</sup> In addition to this Dr. Salmon assumes the existence of Matthaean Logia upon which the first and third Gospels are based.

The ninth edition of Dr. Salmon's *Introduction to the New Testament* was published in 1899, and since then we have had at least three works in English to which we must give some attention.

The first is that of Dr. Burkitt, entitled *The Gospel History in Transmission*, and published in 1906. Dr. Burkitt does not accept either the theory of oral tradition as a basis, or that of an Ur-Markus. He holds that 'the main common source of the Synoptic Gospels was a single written document.' This document he finds in canonical Mark. He follows Wellhausen in the belief that with one exception 'Mark was known to both the other synoptists in the same form and with the same contents as we have it now.' The one exception which Dr. Burkitt makes is that of the Eschatological Discourse (Mark xiii. 3-37), which he considers to differ in literary form from the rest of the Gospel, and regards as a separate 'fly-sheet' incorporated by the evangelist, with or without alteration, into his work. He considers the Matthaean contribution to the first Gospel to be not the Logia, the reconstruction of which he holds to be hopeless, but a collection of Messianic proof-texts drawn up by Matthew the publican, and taken for the most part direct from the Hebrew. These Messianic texts were probably the Logia of which Papias, as quoted by Eusebius, speaks, and which

<sup>1</sup> See p. 107.

‘each one interpreted as he could.’ The non-Markan portions of the first and third Gospels he holds to belong to a work now lost, to designate which he adopts the convenient formula ‘Q.’<sup>1</sup> Many of the positions here taken up will be discussed under the several headings to which they belong. We are concerned here with the mere statement of them.

In 1909 Dr. V. H. Stanton published a volume of extraordinary value for those who would study ‘the Synoptic Problem.’ It is entitled *The Gospels as Historical Documents*, vol. ii., and it is a clear and balanced statement of the many questions that arise in this connection. Dr. Stanton mentions the following as ‘positions in regard to which a large amount of agreement has been attained’ :—

1. The resemblances between the Synoptic Gospels are such as require us to suppose connections through Greek sources.
2. The relations between the first three Gospels cannot be adequately explained by the influence of oral tradition.
3. Our third evangelist was not to any considerable extent dependent upon the first (or the first upon the third) for the common contents of their Gospels.
4. A record which, if not virtually identical with our St. Mark, is at least most nearly represented in it, was largely used in the composition of our first and third Gospels.
5. There was a second principal source common to our first and third evangelists, consisting mainly of discourses and sayings of Jesus, which they independently combined with their Markan document.

Dr. Stanton finds a considerable amount of freedom in amending the Markan document on the part of both the first and the third evangelists, and this may be readily

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 38 ff.

allowed. It is possible, however, that some things which look like editorial emendations may be due to the fact that the editions of St. Mark used by these other evangelists differed from that which appears in canonical Mark. Dr. Stanton himself seems to recognise this, though he makes no clear pronouncement on the subject. Thus, in discussing Markan sections omitted from the first Gospel, he speaks of the possibility of their having been absent from the copy of St. Mark which the evangelist was using, and the agreements of Matthew and Luke against Mark are accounted for as belonging to 'an earlier form of Markan document.' This explanation he prefers to that advanced by B. Weiss, that they indicate an 'Apostolic Gospel,' containing both Logia and narrative, and drawn upon by all three of our evangelists. On the other hand, he speaks of the omission of the healing of the demoniac in Matthew as having been due to mere inadvertence. Again he accounts for the description of Jesus in Mark vi. 3, as 'the carpenter,' whereas Matthew has 'the son of the carpenter' (xiii. 55), and Luke 'the son of Joseph' (iv. 22), by ascribing the first-named to 'a revising hand,' and where St. Mark has the expression 'servant of all' (Mark ix. 35), the phrase is accounted for as having been introduced by a copyist 'owing to his familiarity with other sayings of our Lord.' In Mark xi. 17 the words 'for all the nations,' wanting in Matthew and Luke, 'may have been supplied from a recollection of the passage of the prophet, and a sense of their significance.'

So in dealing with St. Luke's revision of his Markan document, Dr. Stanton says that St. Luke, 'while adhering closely on the whole to St. Mark's narrative, seems to have here and there drawn inferences from what he read, to have formed his own idea of the circumstances and incidents, and then to have told the facts as he conceived them. Or again, the special interest which he felt in the subject-matter, and the belief that he could improve the

presentation of it, have moved him to add various touches or to rearrange the account. Or, once more, some little piece of additional information which he possessed, or a different mode of telling a story to which he had become accustomed, has exercised an influence upon him.'

Now while the possibility of these motives cannot be denied, yet most, if not all, of such departures from the Markan narrative seem to be better accounted for on the supposition that they were not 'departures' at all, and that the real variation is in St. Mark's method of telling stories which he repeated more than once. Thus it is well known that though St. Luke is fond of the word used for 'preaching the Gospel'—as indeed a follower of St. Paul was likely to be—he never uses the word 'Gospel.' And yet the word is used absolutely in several passages occurring in the second Gospel. Dr. Stanton accounts for the non-appearance of this word in the third Gospel by suggesting that the text of the second Gospel was altered so as to allow for the insertion of the word. But we prefer the theory that canonical Mark is a later edition of the Markan narrative which St. Luke used, and that during the time that had intervened between the publication of the two editions the teaching of the Church had assumed the more definite form of a Gospel. It therefore appears in canonical Mark, but not in St. Luke's Gospel.<sup>1</sup>

Other examples bearing upon this point will be given in a subsequent chapter, and we shall only say here that a more thorough development of the theory of different editions of the Markan document may possibly afford a better explanation. In another passage Dr. Stanton says: 'There are good reasons for thinking that our Matthew may have been the last composed of the Synoptic Gospels, and if so, it is obviously possible that the Markan document may have come to the hands of the writer of it with additions which it had not received when it lay

<sup>1</sup> See p. 122.

before St. Luke.' With this we would agree, only we hold that the subsequent additions were made by the hand of Mark himself, with still further additions in the third edition which is our canonical Mark.

We have dwelt at this length here on the question of the Markan document lying before the first and third evangelists because not only does a clearing up of this matter help us in deciding as to the exact contents of the Markan document, but it also has a distinct bearing upon the character and contents of the second document which has by common consent been designated 'Q.' For where we have matter common to the first and third Gospels, yet wanting in whole or in part from the second, its appearance in Matthew and Luke is often accounted for on the supposition that it was derived from Q. It will be shown that many of such instances are fully accounted for on the supposition that while they appeared in proto- and deutero-Mark, for some reason or other they were omitted, or considerably curtailed, when St. Mark came to draw up his latest edition, and in many cases it is not at all impossible to see the reasons which may have led him to make the alteration.

Early in 1911 there appeared a volume entitled *Oxford Studies in the Synoptic Problem*. This volume is the work of several members of the University of Oxford under the general editorship of Dr. Sanday. The members contributing, in addition to the editor, are Sir J. C. Hawkins, Archdeacon W. C. Allen, Dr. J. V. Bartlet, and the Revs. B. H. Streeter, W. E. Addis, and N. P. Williams. With such a composite authorship the book exhibits a certain amount of dissentient opinion between the different writers. Dr. Sanday minimises this difference of opinion, but to us it seems to be considerable. Thus Dr. Bartlet, and to some extent Archdeacon Allen, rejects the 'two-document theory,' while the others accept it. Sir J. C. Hawkins, in discussing the use of Q by the first and third

evangelists, considers that St. Luke did not use the same collection of sayings as was used by St. Matthew. Mr. Streeter, on the other hand, considers that he did, and that he has preserved the original order of Q better than St. Matthew has done. Dr. Allen again considers that the first Gospel is the best authority for the contents of Q. Dr. Bartlet, who contributes what he calls 'a Minority Report,' accepting a two-document basis for the third Gospel alone, holds that the special source of Luke was bound up with Q and can scarcely be separated from it. It is therefore far from easy to indicate the general opinion of this school of criticism as a whole on the subject.

We notice a general abandonment of an oral basis for the three Gospels. The priority of Mark is allowed, but in every case this priority is qualified. The phrase generally used is: 'What was practically identical with Mark.' But it may be asked, Wherein lay the difference if there was not complete identity? It will be the purpose of the following chapters to show that a thorough application of the theory of a proto-, deutero-, and trito-Mark *to documents* will answer this and many other questions. In considering the question whether Q contained narrative as well as 'sayings' properly so called, there seems to be a general abandonment of Lightfoot's well-known contention that the term 'logion'<sup>1</sup> might be used of scripture generally without insisting too rigorously upon the meaning 'discourse.' Yet the stories of the Baptism and the Temptation, as well as that of the healing of the centurion's servant, are all attributed to Q, in spite of the fact that in the first Gospel the formula which always marks the transition from discourse to narrative is used in passing from the Sermon on the Mount to the healing of the servant. Apparently the inclusion of the three sections in Q is due to the difficulty of accounting for the differences between them as they appear in canonical Mark and as

<sup>1</sup> See p. 43.



they appear in the other two Gospels, supposing that canonical Mark was before the other evangelists. This question of the exact contents of the Markan source must be settled before we can hope to arrive at a conclusion as to the nature and composition of Q.

If it is at all possible to summarise criticism in England of the origins of the Synoptic Gospels, we may say that the general opinion, with notable exceptions, is as follows :—

1. The basis was documentary rather than oral.
2. The documents were two in number, and consisted of a collection or collections of 'sayings,' and a narrative portion corresponding most closely to canonical Mark.
3. In addition to these there were special sources available to the first and third evangelists which account for such features in both as the genealogical tables, the Messianic texts, and 'the Travel Document,' or Perean Section.

In America a notable contribution to the study of the Synoptic Problem is to be found in an able Introduction to a Commentary on the second Gospel by Dr. B. W. Bacon of Yale University. Dr. Bacon's conclusions are to the effect that the second Gospel is the work of a redactor, and very much more than a mere editing of St. Peter's discourses, inasmuch as it contains sections which show no intrinsic evidence of proceeding from such a source, and is dominated by theoretical considerations, often manifestly derived from the Pauline Epistles, especially Romans. He also holds that this redactor used Q to embellish and supplement an earlier and simpler Petrine narrative. Dr. Bacon does not discuss in detail the other sources, but he apparently holds that Q contained the sections which describe the preaching of the Baptist and the Baptism and Temptation of our Lord, and also that some

of the narrative supplements of Mark are derived from the Lukan form of Q.

A more detailed and comprehensive discussion of the whole question is to be found in an excellent reprint from the Decennial Publications of the University of Chicago by Dr. E. De Witt Burton, entitled *The Principles of Literary Criticism and the Synoptic Problem*. We cannot do more than summarise the conclusions of Dr. Burton, which are as follows :—

1. Our Mark, or a document in large part identical with it, was employed as a source of both our first and third Gospels.
2. The Matthaean sources in addition to Mark are, a document not employed by Luke, made up chiefly or wholly of discourses and presumably the Logia of St. Matthew. In addition, two documentary sources common to Luke and Matthew are found in what are described as the Galilean document and the Perean document. Minor sources also exist in the infancy narrative, etc.
3. St. Luke has the same chief sources as are indicated in Matthew, with the exception of the Matthaean Logia as above said. He has interpolated material from the Galilean document into the Markan narrative, omitting St. Mark's similar narratives when they seemed to him less full and vivid, and adding the Perean document in two solid sections. The agreements of Matthew and Luke against Mark are left as an unexplained remainder by Dr. Burton.

It will thus be seen that the general results of criticism in America are much the same as we have found in England. Such differences as exist are prominent when an effort is made to define more closely the sources of the Gospels as we have them.

## CHAPTER III

## THE SAYINGS OF JESUS

THESE 'Sayings' constitute a prominent feature of the first and third Gospels. They are generally described as the non-Markan element in those Gospels, but the phrase is not sufficiently definitive. In the first place, it is still a moot question whether St. Mark does not, to some extent at least, introduce into the Gospel which bears his name sayings of our Lord technically so called. If he did, he may have drawn them from a source open to either or both of the other two evangelists. If again he did not, the phrase needs some further definition, inasmuch as matter may be Markan in origin, even though it do not appear in the second Gospel. Harnack seems to adopt the idea of a non-Markan element common to the first and third Gospels as indicating a certain source which was used by the evangelists of those Gospels, but, as Dr. Willoughby Charles Allen points out, the method is open to serious question ; for even if those two evangelists agree closely in many sections, it does not follow that they derived them from a single source. It will later on be shown that while the fact that the sayings in question are spoken by one teacher gives them a considerable amount of resemblance, there is nevertheless good reason for believing that the two evangelists derived them from different sources. Another descriptive title, used formerly in speaking of this source, is the word 'Logia.' But this again is open to misconception. For the same word seems to be used, notably in Romans iii. 2, where we should use the word 'Scriptures.' Such a term then might denote a docu-

ment which contained as much narrative as discourse, or it might be used in a more strictly etymological sense to describe more oracular sayings. The uncertainty would then arise whether, when the word was used by any particular scholar, it was taken to cover a source consisting entirely of sayings, or whether it connoted one which contained a certain amount of historical matter, or in other words a 'Gospel,' as the word is understood in our days.

To avoid such difficulties the non-committal formula 'Q' (=Quelle=Source) has found general acceptance of late years. But, unfortunately, the uncertainty still remains. We are told that St. Matthew caused to be collected (συνετάξατο) the 'sayings' (Logia) of Jesus. Are we to suppose that this collection of St. Matthew's is what we are to understand by Q? Or does the formula indicate some underlying basis of that apostle's work? Even then the question remains, and there seems no probability of any immediate consensus of opinion on the part of scholars, whether Q consisted entirely of discourse or whether it contained—be it St. Matthew's work or not—some admixture of narrative. If some agreement on terms could be arrived at by scholars, the Synoptic Problem would come appreciably nearer solution.

Collections of precepts spoken by their Master would commend themselves very early to the disciples. The treasuring up of sayings uttered by Rabbis was already a common habit among the Jews, and that the followers of Jesus should do the same was but natural under any circumstances. But there was a certain character about the sayings of Jesus which made them specially likely to be early thrown together into some sort of collection. They were terse, pointed, epigrammatic apophthegms which could easily be retained in the memory. They were didactic rather than historical, inasmuch as they dealt with universal truths, and had a distinctly moral

and spiritual application. They might be expanded into what we call a 'parable,' but the unity of the parable was always some central truth, to which all other details were but setting and scenery. Many of the most striking of the sayings were in fact interpretations of the Mosaic Law, which sounded a note far deeper and truer than those to which the Jews had become accustomed in Rabbinical schools. When the earliest Christians assembled together to partake of the Agape, we may feel quite sure that the sayings of the Master would form the text of many a discourse, or they might be committed to memory in the catechetical schools which were early established. In the course of time a considerable number of these sayings would be in vogue, and the collections would be continually growing, as devout men and women called to remembrance sayings which their Master had uttered. In such a method of compilation there was room for a certain amount of variety in the form in which the sayings were recorded. Some memories would be more accurate than others, and while the general idea was the same, there would be a difference of expression when the same saying was given by this one and by that. It was also inevitable that a piety which was more imaginative than accurate would put forth as sayings thoughts which belonged to their own minds, and had never been spoken by Christ at all, and a considerable number of spurious sayings would come into existence in this way. If the question be asked how it is that no such collection has survived, the answer would probably be found to lie in the fact that such collections were unauthorised, arbitrary, and exposed to the uncertainties attending such collections. A study of the sayings which are to be found in the apocryphal Gospels reveals many which it is difficult to accept as having been spoken by our Lord. One such may be cited. It is quoted by Origen from the Gospel according to the Hebrews. 'The Saviour Himself says: "Just now the Holy Spirit

my Mother, took me by one of my hairs, and carried me away to the great mountain Tabor” ’ (Origen, *In Johann.* ii. 6). The gulf between such a saying and those which appear in the Sermon on the Mount is immeasurable. At the same time we may feel quite sure that the necessity would be quickly felt of sifting this increasing quantity of puerile and unworthy sayings, and the task of doing this seems to have fallen in the first instance to St. Matthew. Later on another attempt was made by St. Luke, or by some unknown compiler whose work St. Luke adopted, and as soon as these ‘Authorised Versions,’ as we may call them, came into existence, their obvious superiority would quickly lead to the disappearance of inferior collections.

It is necessary to repeat here the often quoted passage from Eusebius in which this work of St. Matthew’s is described. It is given as a statement made by Papias, and occurs in the *Ecclesiastical History* (iii. 39). ‘So then Matthew composed the Logia in the Hebrew language, and each one interpreted them as he was able.’ It is to be noted that in this passage we have a variant reading; the word *συνεγράφατο*=‘caused to be written’ appearing in some MSS. instead of *συνετάξατο* ‘caused to be drawn up.’ Dr. Arthur Wright prefers the reading *συνετάξατο* as fitting in better with the idea of an oral basis for this source. But even if *συνετάξατο* be preferred, it is difficult to see how a definite compilation could be secured unless the sayings were given in writing. Another indirect allusion to the same work seems to be given by Papias when, referring to St. Mark’s memoirs of St. Peter’s preaching, he says that Peter adapted his instructions to the needs of his hearers, but had no design of giving ‘a connected account of the Lord’s Logia.’<sup>1</sup> Here, presumably, we are led to infer that the ellipse may be supplied, ‘as St. Matthew had done.’ It is to be noticed again that in

<sup>1</sup> *σύνταξιν*, cf. *συνετάξατο* in the former quotation.

this passage too there is a variant reading, some MSS. giving λόγων instead of λογίων.

In considering these references to the work of St. Matthew, we notice—

1. That it was originally written in Aramaic. This is borne out by other statements made both by Origen and Irenaeus. It follows from this that if the first Gospel contains St. Matthew's contribution to the Gospel story, it had been translated into Greek before it was added to the Markan narrative which the first Gospel undoubtedly contains.
2. St. Matthew's work was not a mere collection or accumulation of sayings. There was some method and plan in the matter. He arranged the sayings. The word συνετάξατο seems to indicate some classification or distribution of the sayings, and a more or less topical arrangement is at once suggested.
3. The phrase 'each one interpreted them as he was able' points to the use of these sayings in the assemblies of the Christian congregations, as we have already suggested. They formed exegetical material for moral and spiritual exhortations in the earliest Church, as they still do in the later Church of our own times.

Now when we turn from these Patristic references to the Gospel itself we are at once struck with the fact that it contains a considerable number of sections which come under the description of such a word as Logia, if we interpret that word in the sense of an utterance more or less of an oracular character. These sections are sharply, it will be seen that they are almost mechanically, divided from the Markan narrative in which they are inserted. Many of them are terse and epigrammatic, admirably constructed for remaining in the memory of those who listened

to them. Others are more in the character of a discourse, while others again take the form of a parable. All, however, either enunciate or interpret great spiritual or moral laws. They deal with what is universal rather than local, and have to do with the inner spirit rather than the outward expression of religious thought. The question has never been fully discussed whether these sayings as they exist in the first Gospel constitute the work of St. Matthew as described by Papias. Most scholars content themselves with saying that the Logia of that apostle are lost, and that these sections of the first Gospel are derived from Q. With reference to this source again there is the greatest uncertainty. Some hold that while it consisted for the most part of discourses, it nevertheless contained a certain amount of narrative. Even here there is uncertainty, for some would assign to it a Passion narrative. Others, like Harnack, cannot agree that it contained an account of our Lord's Passion and Resurrection, and yet they assign to it an account of the ministry of the Baptist, and the story of our Lord's Temptation, and even an account of the healing of the Centurion's servant. Dr. Allen very pertinently asks what an account of the preaching of the Baptist, or of the healing of the Centurion's servant, has to do in a collection of discourses. Harnack points out that while much attention has been given to the Markan element in the Gospels, comparatively little has been directed towards a definition of Q. A definition of this source he himself attempts in a work, to which frequent reference will be made by the present writer, but by assuming that Q consists of the whole of the non-Markan element in the first and third Gospels, and by the further assumption (implied by the use of the same formula to denote the source of both) that their authors used a common document, he does not really carry us very much further towards a solution of the problem. The importance of the problem, as well as its difficulty, can scarcely be over-



estimated. Its solution will affect even our conclusions with regard to the Markan question, which Harnack says has been treated with scientific thoroughness. For, at present, sections of the first and third Gospels are assigned to Q which may after all be found to belong to that form of the Markan narrative which the evangelists who compiled those Gospels used. The question really turns upon whether Q is to be considered to be one document common to St. Matthew and St. Luke, and whether it is to be held to contain narrative as well as discourse. In approaching this question the first thing to do is to attempt to come to some decision with reference to the use of the word λόγιον. Etymologically it would be most natural to take it to denote something spoken, and as a diminutive of λόγος it would stand for some brief utterance as distinguished from a lengthy or reasoned statement. As such it was used to describe the utterances associated with oracular shrines such as that at Delphi, and if the use of the word could be thus limited we should have no difficulty in coming to a conclusion. In 1875 Dr. Lightfoot published his *Essays on Supernatural Religion*, and in these the student will find a discussion of the use of this word marked by the scholarship and research which we generally associate with Lightfoot's name. In this he contends that though the word was used to describe 'oracles,' properly so called, yet from the time of Philo onwards it was used to cover a much wider connotation, and that it was used by Philo and others in the sense in which we use the word 'Scripture,' denoting thereby both historical incident and didactic matter. It is certainly so used by St. Paul in Romans iii. 2. But while we shall agree that this use of the word was not uncommon in the time when Papias wrote, he may quite well have used it in the equally well-known sense of 'oracle.' In the writings of Clement of Rome the word is used together with γραφαί, as though that writer, in order that he might give a more

comprehensive expression covering both history and discourse, used both the terms side by side. Lightfoot's contention is well discussed by Sir John Hawkins (*Ox. St.*, p. 105), and his conclusion is as follows: 'I think that if a person who has freed himself, as it is not difficult to do now, from all bias on either side, will take concordances and indexes and will examine for himself the forty-six places in which *λόγιον* occurs in the LXX or in the Hexaplaric fragments, the four places in the New Testament, the five places in Clement (Rom. i. and ii.) and Polycarp, and the two in Justin Martyr, he will come to the conclusion that the sense which a Christian writer of the date of Papias would (apart from any special reason to the contrary) naturally attach to the word is that of a divine or sacred utterance. And this seems to be an opinion widely and increasingly held by recent English writers.' To the present writer this conclusion seems inevitable; and I shall therefore assume that if we are to seek for the Matthaean contribution in the first Gospel, we must look for 'sayings' properly so called, and where we find words of Jesus which occur in describing some incident in His ministry they must be held over for the time as not belonging to the Matthaean part of the Gospel, until we are able to assign them to some other of the different elements which go to make up the first Gospel.

If sayings of our Lord were from an early date recited and expounded in the Church, and afterwards collected and written down, it is inevitable that the question should arise whether indications of such sayings are to be found elsewhere than in the two Gospels in which they appear so conspicuously. The answer is distinctly affirmative. There are traces of such both in the canonical writings of the New Testament and in the writings that belong to the sub-apostolic period of Church history, and the evidence which these afford has been greatly strengthened by recent discoveries in Egypt. If we could put ourselves in the

place of those for whom the New Testament writings were first prepared, we should doubtless find that many of the moral or spiritual exhortations contained in the Epistles were the more pointed and authoritative, because they were at once recognised as echoes of familiar words spoken first by Him who remained the great Master of Assemblies. Thus St. Paul in writing to the Corinthian Church impresses upon them the importance of celebrating the Lord's Supper, and in doing so uses words which are not found in the institution of that Supper as recorded in the Gospels, though a suggestion of them occurs in the account given by St. Luke. 'As often,' he writes, 'as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death until He come.' Now these words are given in the *Apostolic Constitutions* as words of Christ Himself, and the phraseology is identical with that which appears in the Epistle to the Corinthians. They also appear as distinct words of Jesus in several ancient liturgies, and it thus seems probable that St. Paul uses these words as conveying an injunction, already familiar to those to whom he wrote, and authoritative, as being recorded words of Christ Himself. There are many other moral injunctions in the Epistles which are given as words of Christ in non-canonical writings, but it seems uncertain whether in the latter they are cited as the words of the Lord because they occur in the Scriptures. It is possible that they are repetitions of the Pauline injunction rather than taken from some source common to St. Paul and to the Father who uses them. We are on much surer ground when we turn to the well-known passage in Acts xx. 35 where St. Paul is represented as bidding the Ephesian elders 'remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He Himself (*αὐτός*) said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."' These words occur in no edition of the Gospels. They are quoted by Epiphanius (*Haer.* 74. 5), and they also appear in the *Constitutions*. There can be

no reasonable doubt that they are a genuine Logion of Jesus, and their use by St. Paul offers presumptive evidence that he may have used others, even though he did not specifically declare their origin as in this case. Another likely saying given by St. Paul occurs in Ephesians iv. 26 : 'Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.' It is true that St. Paul does not ascribe the words to Jesus, but the somewhat formal way in which Origen does so in his Dialogue (*De recta Fide*), 'The Lord, being good, says, "The sun, let it not go down upon your wrath,"' indicates that he at any rate considered the words to have been spoken by Jesus.

Another passage generally accepted as an unrecorded 'saying' is given by St. James where he speaks (i. 12) of 'the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him.' No such 'saying' occurs in the Gospels, but the phrase 'the crown of life' occurs in Rev. ii. 10, and the use of the definite article, both here and in the Epistle of St. James, suggests that the phrase had become familiar in the Christian Church, and that the promise possessed a sanction which could only have been derived from Christ. There are other injunctions in the Epistle of St. James as there are in St. Paul's writings which read like 'sayings' woven into the exhortations of the writer, but it is unnecessary to refer to any except those that can fairly be claimed as examples of unrecorded 'sayings,' and a single instance is enough for our present contention that such 'sayings' were used in the early Church.

A striking and often quoted Logion is found in the great Cambridge Codex known by the name of *Codex Bezae*. In the sixth chapter of St. Luke's Gospel, where our Lord is represented as in controversy with the Pharisees on the subject of the keeping of the Sabbath, the following words occur : 'On the same day, seeing a man working on the Sabbath, He said to him, O man, if thou knowest what thou doest, blessed art thou ; but if thou knowest

not, thou art accursed and a transgressor of the law.' The saying is one of extraordinary force, and is a distinct echo of such teaching as our Lord is said to have given in such passages as Matthew xii. 12, in which He shows that there were certain works which might be done with deliberation on the Sabbath day. It upholds the spirit of the law, while it shows a proper reverence for that well-being of mankind which our Lord maintains is the true purpose of the law of the Sabbath when He says 'the Sabbath was made for man.' The passage in *Codex Bezae* is one of the many interpolations familiar in the so-called Western Text. We cannot accept it as belonging to St. Luke's original writing. It was probably inserted at an early date, but its appearance again bears out our contention that such sayings formed part of the treasured inheritance of the early Church, and might or might not be included in the canonical Gospels. We must content ourselves with two instances from Patristic writings. The former of them we take from Origen, who says in one of his Homilies (*On Jerem.* xx. 3): 'Moreover the Saviour Himself says, He that is near Me is near the fire; and he who is far from Me, is far from the kingdom.' The saying must be interpreted in very general terms to mean that while the greater danger lay in being far removed from Christ, yet proximity to Him who came to send fire upon earth would mean a cleansing fire to one who, as St. Paul said, built with wood, hay, or stubble. But whatever the interpretation of this saying may be, there is no doubt that Origen considered it to be a real saying of our Lord. The second is also from Origen, though it is quoted by several others of the Patristic writers. Origen says (*On John*, xix. 2), 'The command of Jesus which says, Become ye approved bankers.' In the *Pistis Sophia* also we read, 'The Saviour of Mary replies, "I said to you of old, Be ye as prudent bankers, take the good, cast out the bad."' And Chrysostom, after giving the Logion, says, 'Not that

ye should stand in the market-place and count silver coins, but that ye may test your words with all exactness' (*Chrysostom*, v. 844). The above may be taken as examples, which might be considerably augmented, of sayings which were attributed to our Lord, and it is to be noticed that they all possess the common characteristics of terse moral injunctions conveyed in such a way as to be easily carried in the memory. It may be said that there is a slight difference between these and those which appear in the Gospels, but this difference may be due to our familiarity with those that are extant in the Scriptures, and they certainly differ much more from the extravagant and puerile sayings often attributed to Christ in the Apocryphal Gospels. But whether they are genuine or not does not make much difference to our argument, which is that it was well known that from earliest times sayings of a certain character were attributed to our Lord, and that these were treasured in the memory of the faithful, and were freely quoted in homilies delivered to the Church.

These indications of the use of the Lord's sayings received additional significance by the discovery in 1897 of a leaf of papyrus containing eight sayings similar in character yet differing from those which were extant before. They were discovered by Messrs. Grenfell and Hunt in the village of Oxyrhynchus, south of Cairo, and were speedily given to the world in an edition in which the lacunæ, or gaps in the text caused by the breaking away of the papyrus, were tentatively filled up by capable scholars. The sayings have no sort of connection with one another; each is entirely detached, and is introduced by the simple formula, 'Jesus saith.' No historical framework was considered necessary for the different sayings, each was recorded for its independent value, and the whole collection would probably be used for purposes of meditation by some early Christian. The sayings are as follows :—

1. Jesus saith, Except ye fast to the world, ye shall in

nowise find the kingdom of God ; and except ye make the Sabbath a real Sabbath, ye shall not see the Father.

2. Jesus saith, I stood in the midst of the world, and in the flesh was I seen of them ; and I found all men drunken, and none found I athirst among them. And my soul grieveth over the sons of men, because they are blind in their heart, and see not their wretchedness and their poverty.
3. Jesus saith, Wherever there are two, they are not without God ; and wherever there is one alone, I say I am with him. Raise the stone and there thou shalt find me ; cleave the wood and there am I.
4. Jesus saith, A prophet is not acceptable in his own country ; neither doth a physician work cures upon those who know him.
5. Jesus saith, A city built upon the top of a high hill, and established, cannot fall nor be hidden.
6. Jesus saith, Thou hearest with one ear (but the other thou hast closed).
7. . . . And then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote that is in thy brother's eye.
8. . . . Poverty. . . .

The editors of these striking sayings have put forward the following propositions :—

1. The sayings were part of a collection of sayings, not extracts from a Gospel.
2. They were independent of our Four Gospels in their present shape.
3. They were put together earlier than A.D. 140, and it might be in the first century.
4. They do not belong to heretical writings.

These propositions seem to have met with general accept-

ance, and there can be very little doubt that they form part of some collection loosely strung together for didactic or devotional purposes. Their independence of canonical Scripture is full of significance. The collector, whoever he was, had access to some other source than that which is furnished by our Gospels, and if there was one there may have been many in the earliest Church. They differ in tone and spirit from the great majority of those which appear in the Gospel according to the Hebrews, the Ebionite Gospel, and other apocryphal writings. Now as soon as we consider these sayings thus put together we are bound to recall the statement made by Papias, and already quoted, as to a collection of the sayings of our Lord which Matthew made in the Hebrew tongue, and on which Papias himself is said to have written a commentary. The question arises whether that collection of St. Matthew's could have been anything of this sort. If the phraseology of Papias, as quoted by Eusebius, can be relied upon, the answer must be in the negative. For the word *σύνταξις* indicates some sort of arrangement, and not a mere accumulation of disjointed utterances such as we have here. It will be further shown that we have in the first Gospel something which comes much nearer to the description of St. Matthew's work which Papias gives us.

When we turn from these 'sayings' to those which are recorded in the first and third Gospels, we see that the latter can be placed under two categories. We have sayings which spring out of some incident, and the narration of the incident is necessary for discovering the point of the saying. The words spoken by Christ, for instance, in connection with His temptation, require what we may call the historical setting before they become intelligible to us; and when He says of the Centurion 'I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel,' the statement is without point unless we read it in connection with the request of the Centurion. Such sayings, too, lack



the 'oracular' character which others reveal. They deal with special instances rather than with universal truths. We have urged elsewhere, in connection with the supposed use of Q by St. Mark, that the appearance of words spoken by our Lord when performing a miracle, or when dealing with those who sought Him, does not necessarily imply derivation from a collection of sayings properly so called, and the Synoptic Problem will have come appreciably nearer solution if scholars can agree to distinguish between statements of our Lord made in the course of His common intercourse with men, and those which He made when He dealt with great underlying principles of life and godliness. These last belong to the second of our two categories. They resemble in form and structure those which we have discovered in the Epistles and in extra-canonical writings, and there is a strong likeness between them and those discovered at Oxyrhynchus. They are independent of any setting of narrative or historical statement. Any of them may quite well be found in a catalogue of apophthegms needing no other introduction than that which has now become familiar—'Jesus saith.' Sayings that belong to the former class may then be accounted for in connection with some narrative source, and we may consider with reference to the second whether or no there are indications of some collection or collections of 'oracles' that will account for those features of both the first and third Gospels which differentiate them from the second. If it be possible to account for the former class as belonging to a narrative source, then the term Q could be used for the second, and if this could become the universal custom of scholars the gain would be very great, for, as we have shown, there is no common use of terms at present, and 'Q' seems to represent some sort of receptacle to which are relegated all the bits and ends of Gospel sections, the origin of which seems to be uncertain. Dr. Burkitt contends that Q was a Gospel now irretrievably lost, but

the present writer holds that there is far more to be said for Dr. Sanday when he writes :—

‘The leading purpose of this little book appears to have been to set before its readers some account of the Christian ideal, the character and mode of life expected of them as Christians. It was felt that this could best be done by collecting together a number of typical sayings and discourses of Christ. There was no idea of writing a biography, and not even in this case of composing a ‘gospel’ (or full statement of the redeeming acts of Christ), but only a brief exemplar to set before the eyes and minds of converts’ (*Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, vol i. p. 575).

Harnack also does not allow that Q contained a Passion narrative, and states that it was no Gospel like Matthew, Mark, and Luke, though it was not a mere formless compilation of sayings and discourses without any thread of connection. He does, however, allow that it contained the story of the baptism of Jesus with its closely connected sequel, the temptation, and adds to these the account of the healing of the Centurion’s servant. Dr. Stanton is in general agreement with this. If these scholars could see their way to remove from Q the narratives above mentioned, as they have already removed the story of the Passion, the question of these sources would be immensely simplified, and, as it seems to me, a fair solution of a difficult problem would come at last into sight.

It is not difficult to see why it is found convenient to relegate the stories of the baptism, the temptation, and the healing of the Centurion’s servant to Q. It is because of the great difficulty of accounting for these as coming from the Markan source, always supposing that by ‘the Markan source’ we are to understand canonical Mark. The last of the three is not given at all by St. Mark in the second Gospel, and his account of the baptism and temptation is so exceedingly brief, as compared with the other accounts, that it is impossible to suppose that the editors of the first

and third Gospels took the liberty of amplifying to the extent which they must have done if only canonical Mark was before them. It is thought better to refuse a Markan origin for these sections, and if we ask where then their source is to be found, the answer is 'in Q.' I would urge that this avoidance of one difficulty only leads us to another. It is exceedingly difficult to see what an account of the Baptist's ministry has to do with sayings and discourses of Christ. Our Lord's words in reply to the Tempter differ in essential characteristics from the sayings which we have in the Sermon on the Mount; and, as we have already seen, to claim that the word 'I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel,' belongs to a collection of 'sayings,' is criticism in despair. There is another and a better way out of this difficulty. It is to accept, what I hope to show has very much in its favour, that St. Mark wrote down his memoirs of St. Peter's preaching more than once, and that in earlier editions, prepared one in Palestine and the other in the interests of a Jewish-Christian community, a full account of the Baptist's ministry, and of his relation to our Lord, would be entirely in place; these subjects, however, would be mentioned in the briefest possible way in a later edition prepared in Rome, for a Church which was largely Gentile. These earlier editions would naturally include also the account of the coming of the Centurion, because the point of our Lord's words on that occasion was that Israel had failed to evince the faith which He had found in this Gentile.

We may account for the inclusion of a Passion narrative in Q by some scholars, though not by any means by all, in the same way. When we make a comparative study of the three accounts of our Lord's Passion, we find that the first and second Gospels are in close correspondence, but St. Luke obviously departs to a considerable extent from them, and he departs entirely in his account of the resurrection appearances of our Lord. The question then

arises: if he did not derive this matter from St. Mark, from what source did he obtain it? Again the answer is 'from Q,' and so we are presented with the theory that this collection of sayings and discourses contained an account of the Passion. Then when arguments against this are brought forward, we have Dr. Burkitt rounding upon his critics and saying: 'I find it difficult to believe that a critical method is wholly to be trusted, which presents us with a document that starts off with the story of our Lord's Baptism, and then gives us His words but not the story of His Cross and Resurrection.' To my mind Dr. Burkitt is here (*Journ. of Theol. Stud.*, p. 454) unanswerable, but a truer conclusion than that which he gives us seems to be this—that neither the Baptism nor the Passion story belongs to Q; that the one belongs to an earlier edition of St. Mark than that which we have in the second Gospel, and the other belongs to that special source which, as we shall show,<sup>1</sup> St. Luke so freely used. I would therefore strongly urge that the term Q be reserved for a collection of sayings properly so called, and that all sections which contain anything of narrative which is more than a mere introduction be assigned to some other source. Among such sections would certainly be found the three to which we have just referred.

But having got as far as this we are confronted by a further question. Are we to suppose that Q thus interpreted stands for the collection of our Lord's sayings which we learn from Papias St. Matthew compiled? Or are we to use the term Q for some such collection as that of which we have a fragment remaining in the Oxyrhynchus Logia? And what is St. Luke's relation to this collection? Did he use the Matthaean collection? Or did he use, as St. Matthew did, some collection of sayings which he reduced to some sort of order? If the latter, was the collection before him the same as, or other than, that

<sup>1</sup> See chap. vi.

before St. Matthew? To these questions we must now address ourselves.

If by Q we are to understand the Matthaean collection of sayings, then it will follow that St. Luke used St. Matthew in all that part of his Gospel which contains sayings of Jesus, and against this, as we shall see, there are great objections which may be brought whenever we say that St. Luke derived this or that from Q. Further, if we identify Q with the Matthaean collection, and if this—as Dr. Burkitt and others maintain—is no longer extant, then it is difficult to see why St. Matthew's name ever came to be connected with the first Gospel. The Logian sections of the first Gospel would in that case be a mere selection from the work of that apostle. His connection with the book would be considerably more remote. But if we present ourselves with the hypothesis that St. Matthew had before him one of the many loose and informal collections of sayings of which the Oxyrhynchus papyrus is a type, and if he distributed these sayings which he could accept as genuine under different heads, making his distribution topical in its scheme; if further this σύνταξις, so far from being lost, actually exists in the first Gospel, sandwiched between blocks of Markan narrative, we shall at once account for the statements of Papias, and also for the association of St. Matthew's name with the first Gospel. Before such a hypothesis can be accepted it must of course be tested in the light of what is given us in the first Gospel. This part of our task will be attempted in the chapter in which we discuss that Gospel more in detail, but for the sake of clearness I would here reconstruct the history of the production of the first Gospel somewhat as follows.

The words of the Lord Jesus began to be quoted and expounded in the Christian assemblies at a very early date. To facilitate such work, and also for the purpose of private meditation on the part of individual Christians, collections

of such sayings began to appear. These were in no sort of order, nor was it necessary to do more by way of introducing them than to use the formula 'Jesus saith.' But the method was open to abuse. The sayings could not always be guaranteed, and spurious sayings began to be attributed to our Lord. St. Matthew then undertook the task of drawing up a collection of true sayings, and he did so in their original Aramaic, each speaker in the Christian assemblies translating or expanding them as he was able. In this way full justice is done to the statement of Papias which Eusebius records. But when Hellenistic Jews began to enter the Christian Church, the Aramaic, in which the sayings were recorded, was felt to be a difficulty, and at a comparatively early date the sayings were translated into Greek. In this form they found their way to some centre in which there were a number of Jewish Christians. The conditions of a Church in Alexandria would exactly correspond with the imaginary conditions which we have thus laid down. But that Church had other treasures than this collection of sayings. St. Mark had been one of its first 'bishops,' and he had even before coming to Egypt drawn up some memoirs of St. Peter's preaching. That he would do so again for the Church in Egypt we may feel assured, and for some time the two documents would exist side by side. The arrangement, however, was awkward, and later on an attempt was made to join the two documents, and at the same time to add other matter which had come to hand. This was done in the simplest way by introducing the different Matthaean sections bodily into the Markan narrative, at such points as seemed suitable, and a simple formula was used to form such connections as were felt to be necessary to make a single volume out of the two.

When we turn from the first Gospel to the third we notice at once that whether St. Luke used the same source as St. Matthew did or not, he has undoubtedly distributed

his material on a different principle. St. Matthew has arranged his sayings topically, bringing together in five sections (though some critics consider the number to be seven and others eight) what he considered represented the teaching of Jesus, each section having a theme of its own. These five sections are discussed in the chapter which deals with the first Gospel. St. Luke, however, arranged his Logian material not topically but chronologically, distributing them among the Markan and other sections which appear in his Gospel in such a way as to give the impression that they were spoken on certain occasions indicated by the evangelist. Thus, to take a well-known example, St. Matthew places the Lord's Prayer in the considerable body of sayings which he has put together and which we call 'the Sermon on the Mount.' St. Luke, however, shows us that the prayer was given by our Lord quite late in His ministry, on an occasion when His disciples approached Him with the request that He would teach them to pray.

It is generally accepted that St. Luke no less than St. Matthew used Q, and an attempt has been made to decide which of the two kept the closer to their common source, and from the conclusion arrived at it is generally thought that some guidance may be reached with a view to the reconstruction of Q. Thus Dr. Stanton says: 'If we ask in which of the two writers the contents of a document which both have used, or two editions of which they respectively used, is most likely to be given in its original order, there can be no question that it is in St. Luke.' Dr. Stanton is here in agreement with Dr. Burkitt, but it is to be noticed that both of these critics assume Q to be a document containing narrative as well as discourses, and this, as we have shown, is a point to be settled by discussion, and not assumed. If the source underlying the Logian sections of the two Gospels be, as we prefer to regard it, a collection of sayings without order or definite arrange-

ment, or rather of two such collections, then it becomes unnecessary to discuss which of the two adheres the more closely to the original. Schmiedel seems to feel this uncertainty, for he contends that if we are to consider which of the two has preserved the Logia in the more original form, the answer must be that it is sometimes the one and sometimes the other. Dr. Plummer has pointed out in his commentary on the third Gospel that absence or scarcity of the characteristics of St. Luke is most common in the matter which appears in the first and third Gospels, and he infers from this that where the materials were already in Greek, St. Luke would use them without any great amount of alteration. 'It is incredible that two or three independent translations should agree almost word for word.' This, however, scarcely affects the conclusion at which we have arrived, that the Logia in the first Gospel came from a source other than that which was used by St. Luke, for none of the passages cited by Dr. Plummer in illustration are taken from the five great blocks of sayings which appear in the first Gospel. The fact that Lukan characteristics are most lacking in passages taken from Logian sections would indicate St. Luke's special reverence for this particular source, and if we find that there is any considerable difference between the sayings in the one Gospel and the sayings in the other, we may safely infer that St. Luke did not use the same collection as did St. Matthew. Now this is precisely what we do find. Dr. Stanton indeed points out that the degree of correspondence varies in the third Gospel, that in some passages the sayings are identical, and in others there is more difference. He would single out those sayings in which the correspondence is so close as to lead us to conclude that the two evangelists used a common source, and he would account for the sayings in which there is more difference by ascribing that difference to conditions affecting the translation into Greek of the Aramaic collection of sayings. But may not



the explanation be a far simpler one ? If there were many attempts to set forth the facts of our Lord's life and teaching, we have only to suppose that one collection of sayings was used by St. Matthew and another by St. Luke to sufficiently account for the differences, while the character of these sayings, their epigrammatic form, and the reverence in which such sayings would be held, would completely account for the fact that some sayings would appear in the one collection in a form all but identical with that in which they appear in the other. The differences, moreover, are too great for us to account for them merely on the score of translation. The different versions of the Beatitudes alone is sufficient to settle this. We may feel sure that in this section least of all would St. Luke feel himself at liberty to amend the form in which he found the sayings, yet his version differs considerably from that in St. Matthew's Gospel. In the section of St. Luke which most corresponds with the 'Sermon,' as given in the first Gospel, we are told that our Lord stood upon a level place where St. Matthew speaks of 'the mountain.' There is no necessary contradiction in this, but in the sayings which follow our Lord is represented as speaking directly to His disciples: 'Blessed are ye poor . . . Blessed are ye that hunger,' etc., while in the first Gospel the form is more general: 'Blessed are the poor,' etc. The number of Beatitudes is different. There are only four in Luke, while there are nine in the first Gospel. In the third Gospel the Beatitudes are followed by a corresponding number of woes which do not appear in the first Gospel. Again, the Beatitudes in the third Gospel are simpler in form and more universal in application, while in the other there is some amount of interpretation of the general truth; thus 'the poor' in the one becomes 'the poor in spirit' in the other. There is the same difference in the saying in which 'salt' is used to convey the teaching. St. Matthew gives us the Logion as follows: 'Ye are the salt

of the earth, but if the salt lose its savour wherewith shall it be salted? It is good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden underfoot of men.' This appears in the third Gospel in quite another setting and in the following form: 'Salt is good, but if even the salt have lost its savour wherewith shall it be seasoned? It is fit neither for the land nor for the dunghill; men cast it out.'

Instances of such differences may easily be multiplied, but these will suffice to show the difficulty of believing that St. Luke used the same document as St. Matthew did. If the two evangelists had the same document or even two editions of the same document before them, one or the other must have allowed himself an amount of freedom in transcribing them of which we have no evidence elsewhere in their respective writings. Neither can we believe that St. Luke would have taken the liberty to separate and distribute the sayings as he has done, if they appeared in his source thrown together into the considerable 'blocks' in which they appear in the first Gospel. Now all these difficulties disappear in a moment if we can accept the theory that the two evangelists had before them different collections of sayings thrown together without any attempt to arrange them under different heads, or to indicate the occasion on which each was spoken by Christ. The freedom in that case would be readily allowed them to arrange these as each thought best. St. Matthew preferred to bring together those which bore upon some aspect or other of 'the kingdom,' St. Luke attempted to place each in its chronological setting. The form of the saying will account for whatever likeness may be discovered between the two versions; the more epigrammatic it was the more likely was it that it would be identical in the two versions. At the same time, the fact that it was written down by different persons in the first instance would account for whatever difference may appear between the two versions. The two sources, we are convinced,

/ would resemble the collection discovered at Oxyrhynchus, and just as in that collection we have the saying, 'And then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote that is in thy brother's eye,' which has a great amount of resemblance to the corresponding logion in the first Gospel, and yet differs from it, so we may be sure, between those used by St. Luke and those used by St. Matthew, there would be likeness and unlikeness. They would be like in the essential teaching, and yet would vary in the form of expression.

We conclude then that if the formula Q be still used to indicate the logion source, it should be used to indicate a far more simple and elementary source than one which, by adding narrative to logia, would partake of the character of a Gospel, and in order to show that the source used by one evangelist differed from that used by the other, we should make the further differentiation of Q (L) and Q (M).

/

## CHAPTER IV

## THE FIRST GOSPEL

IN discussing the many questions which arise out of a study of the first Gospel we shall find ourselves obliged to repeat much that we have already stated in the preceding chapter, for the problem of the first Gospel is bound up in the problem of Q. In so far as the Markan element in it is concerned, critics have arrived at a fair amount of agreement. Zahn is now the only critic of eminence who maintains that the first Gospel was prior to the second, and was used by St. Mark. He does so largely upon the consideration that the evidence from Papias points to a Hebrew Gospel prepared by St. Matthew, and this Hebrew original, he maintains, was afterwards translated by St. Mark into Greek. He thus accounts in part, but not entirely, for differences between the first and second Gospel on the ground of translation. The second of the two great arguments he brings forward refers to the character of the contents of the first Gospel. These show that it must have been written for Jewish Christians, and therefore it could scarcely be dependent upon a work written at Rome and for Gentiles. He also considers that in Matthew 'the material stifles the thought. On the other hand, in spite of numerous infelicities of expression, Mark shows himself a master in clear narrative, in his ability to portray a situation, and to reproduce with exactness trivial details, which in the memory of an eye-witness, are inseparably connected with the kernel of the event. If this is true it follows that Matthew is more original. It would be inconceivable that with the narratives of Mark before him,

which for the most part are very clearly drawn and accurate in details, he should have obliterated or otherwise destroyed those characteristics without intending either to correct errors or to make considerable abridgment.'<sup>1</sup>

These contentions of Zahn have often been met and refuted. The student will find an admirable discussion of them in Dr. Stanton's work.<sup>2</sup> We shall not attempt to go over the same ground, but we would point out that Zahn's position is really based upon two assumptions each of which fails to commend itself. The former of the two is this, that by the Logia of St. Matthew written in Hebrew we are to understand the first Gospel as it stands in the Christian canon. A far better interpretation of the reference in Eusebius is that which considers that the term Logia is to be used not of a Gospel, but of a collection of sayings uttered by our Lord, preserved in the memory of the earliest Church, and thrown into form and order by St. Matthew.

The second assumption is that when we speak of the priority of Mark we are shut up to the idea of the priority of the canonical Gospel known by that name. If it can be shown that there is good reason to suppose that St. Mark wrote his Gospel more than once, and that it is an earlier edition which is contained in the first Gospel, an edition too which bears distinct signs, as Zahn declares, of having been prepared in the interests of Jewish Christians, then it follows that there may well be a Markan element in the first Gospel which will agree with the rest of that Gospel in exhibiting Jewish characteristics, and in maintaining a 'unity of design,' and that nevertheless in the later canonical Mark we shall have as distinct a Gentile reference and as great a richness of detail as that which Zahn, quite correctly, considers to belong to a late work.

Accepting then the idea of the priority of Mark as

<sup>1</sup> *Intro. to the New Test.*, (Eng. Trans.), vol. ii. p. 606.

<sup>2</sup> P. 38 ff.

established in this sense, we proceed to mark off three main sections in the first Gospel. These are :

1. A Nativity section consisting of chapters i. and ii.
2. A Markan section which is not consecutive, but is arranged alternately with blocks of matter to which the description 'discourses' may be assigned.
3. A section consisting of discourses. These are sandwiched between Markan sections, as we have said, and possess distinct characteristics of first-rate importance as indicating the origin and purpose of the Gospel.

In addition to these main divisions we notice that the editor of the Gospel had before him a collection of Messianic proof-texts, which he inserted in the record wherever he thought it desirable to do so. These must be distinguished from quotations from the Jewish Scriptures made by our Lord Himself. They are easily distinguished as belonging rather to the comment of the evangelist than to Christ, and they are usually introduced by the formula 'that it might be fulfilled,' *ἵνα πληρωθῇ*, or its equivalent. They appear in the following passages : i. 23, ii. 6, 15, 18, 23, iv. 14-16, viii. 17, xii. 17-21, xiii. 35, xxi. 5, xxvii. 9-10. These citations greatly intensify the strong Jewish point of view which Zahn and others discover in the Gospel, but they present no great difficulty in connection with the Synoptic Problem. They are clearly interpolations, taken from a variety of sources some of which are not to be discovered in the Old Testament.

The Nativity section stands alone. There are linguistic peculiarities such as the use of 'behold,' *ἰδοὺ*, after a genitive absolute which occur only in these chapters ; but apart from these we have the story of the Massacre of the Innocents and the flight into Egypt, of which we have no mention in the Nativity section of the third Gospel.