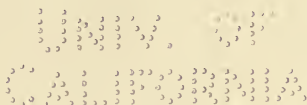


BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL STUDIES

BY

THE MEMBERS OF THE FACULTY OF
PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

PUBLISHED IN COMMEMORATION
OF THE ONE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE FOUNDING OF THE SEMINARY



NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
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TO VINDI
ANROTLIAC



THE INTERPRETATION OF THE SHEPHERD OF HERMAS

One need not apologize for choosing what may appear to some an unimportant and petty problem in the history of the church. It is not such. Its solution will affect considerably our estimate of the church of the second century, especially in respect to its literary activity, its dogmatic conceptions, and the part played in it by Christian prophecy. Moreover it has a direct bearing on the question of the origin and growth of the New Testament canon. For there is a number of scholars to-day who affirm that the idea of a New Testament canon as we now have it does not appear in the church until toward the end of the second century; that up to that time the Old Testament (including the Apocrypha and Jewish Apocalypses) had been the "Bible" of the church, and the words of the Lord and the utterances of Christian prophets had been closely associated with it as authoritative; that this condition continued until about the close of the second century, when, out of the struggle with Gnosticism and Montanism the church emerged with a new standard of canonicity namely *apostolicity*.¹ That is to say it is asserted that Christian prophecies even when reduced to writing were regarded as authoritative in the church just because they were prophecies and without any regard to their date or the person of the prophets, and this continued until the exigencies of the church demanded that a new test be erected, at which time those prophecies which had hitherto been regarded as authoritative were deposed from their high dignity unless they could establish a claim to apostolic origin.

¹E. g. Harnack, *Dogmengeschichte*, 4 Aufl. I, pp. 372-399. Leipoldt, *Entstehung des neutest. Kanons*, I, pp. 33, 37 f., 39 Zusatz 2, 41 ff. B. Weiss, *Einleit. in d. Neue Test.* 3 Aufl. Sec. 5, 4, n. 1; 8, 5; 9, 6.

The *Shepherd* of Hermas has always played a part in the discussion attending this theory for it is one of the so called prophecies which are said to have been degraded, but it has not, I think, played the part it should have or will when its unique position is understood. For not only can its date be approximately fixed in the first half of the second century, but it is the only one of the so called prophecies which does not claim for itself apostolic origin. In connection with its history therefore, can the test of prophecy versus apostolicity in the middle and third quarter of the second century be brought to the clearest issue. If it be found that the book was published and accepted as a prophecy, we shall be able to tell from the nature of the reception accorded it what the opinion of the church then was regarding contemporaneous Christian prophecy. And if on the contrary it turns out that it was not published or accepted as a prophecy, the main problem will be to ascertain how such a work could in the course of say forty years claim equal rank with acknowledged inspired and authoritative books; and we shall incidentally have removed from the discussion the only work, which at present can be pointed to in support of the theory that Christian prophecy *qua* prophecy, was authoritative in the second century. I therefore propose to examine the *Shepherd* of Hermas and its early history with a view to determining the author's intention regarding it, the nature of its reception and treatment by the early church, and how and why it is involved in the history of the canon of the New Testament.

It is strange that this subject has been comparatively neglected. The text of the *Shepherd* has recently received very careful attention, the questions of its origin and unity and date have been, and are still, warmly debated, and the material furnished by it is liberally drawn upon by all students of the early Christian church. But the question of the intention of the author in publishing his work in the form of an apocalypse has been on the whole much neglected. Most writers to-day seem to assume that its author and his contemporaries ingenuously believed that he had been the recipient of real and divine revelations. But little or no discussion is given to the matter. For the sake of completeness I shall enumerate the

four hypotheses which to my mind exhaust the possibilities, any one of which might be regarded as satisfactory; and I may add that each of them has its supporters. (1) The work may be regarded as a genuine revelation.² (2) It may be regarded as a deliberate though pious fraud.³ (3) The visions and revelations may be regarded as purely subjective. In this case Hermas may be regarded as a mystic, or a visionary, or epileptic, or be classed in a general way with the "prophets" of the second century, without inquiring particularly about the psychology of such "prophecy". Some such explanation as this is quite possible, being not infrequently paralleled in history, and we must give it the more consideration as it is the view most generally accepted by scholars to-day.⁴ (4) We may regard it as fiction, pure and simple, and the visions and heavenly commands as a literary garb deliberately chosen by the author without any intention of deceit; in other words it may be an allegory.⁵ Of these four possibilities

² In modern times this has been held by Wake (*Apostolical Fathers*, p. 187), and some Irvingite scholars, e. g. Thiersch, *Die Kirche im apostolischen Zeitalter*, pp. 350 ff.

³ So apparently Bardenhewer, *Geschichte der altkirchlichen Literatur* (1902), Vol. I. p. 563, "Der Verfasser schreibt auf Grund göttlicher Offenbarungen und infolge göttlichen Auftrags. Er tritt als ein vom Geiste Gottes inspirierter Prophet auf. Ohne Zweifel hat er damit seinen Mahnungen und Mitteilungen eine grössere Kraft, eine höhere Weihe geben wollen. Dass er Anstoss erregen würde, war kaum zu befürchten. Er schrieb zu einer Zeit, wo der Glaube an die Fortdauer des prophetischen Charismas noch allegemein geteilt wurde". Mosheim, *De rebus Christ. ante Constant.*, pp. 163, 166 inclines to a view of Hermas which makes him "*scientem volentemque fefellisse*". Salmon, *Dict. Chr. Bio.*, Art. "Hermas", thinks Hermas "probably cannot be cleared from conscious deceit".

⁴ Bigg, *Origins of Christianity*, p. 73 f. Zahn (*Der Hirt des Hermas* pp. 365 ff.) perceives the importance of the problem and laments the lack of interest shown in it to-day. He regards the visions as real experiences of the author and thinks the Roman Church was right in seeing in them a divine message, but refuses to discuss the question of their permanent worth (pp. 381 f.). Harnack, *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* III, p. 369, and elsewhere. Leopoldt, *op. cit.*, p. 33, n. 2, and others.

⁵ Donaldson, *The Apostolical Fathers*, p. 326 ff. Lightfoot, *Bibl. Essays*, p. 96. Charteris, *Canonicity*, p. xxiv. Behm, *Ueber den Verfasser der Schrift, welche den Titel "Hirt" führt*. J. V. B(artlet), *Encyc. Brit.* 11th ed. Art *Hermas* favors the more symbolic view. How these views

the second should only be made on the basis of far stronger evidence than has yet been adduced, and after all other hypotheses have been shown to be insufficient. Moreover, as the first and third have certain points of contact and in the minds of some cannot be sharply sundered, we may state our problem in the question: *Is the Shepherd of Hermas an apocalypse or an allegory*,—using the word “apocalypse” as significant, not of the real nature of the contents of the work, but of its claims. And should it appear in the course of our examination that the *Shepherd* does indeed claim to be a revelation, then, and not till then, will emerge the question of the justification of such a claim.

There is no difficulty about determining the date of the *Shepherd* in a general way. Most scholars agree that it was written somewhere between 97 and 140 A.D., or thereabouts.⁶ But when we seek to define the time more accurately, a difficulty presents itself, for we have, curiously, two excellent pieces of testimony, one internal and one external, which are hard to harmonize. In the early part of his work⁷ Hermas refers in quite a natural unforced manner to a certain Clement as one to whom had been committed the duty of corresponding with foreign churches, and apparently as one of the presbyters of the Church at Rome, of which Hermas was a member. Now there is one Clement well known to all antiquity as the author of the epistle of the Church of Rome to that at Corinth, to whom this seems undoubtedly to point. That would give a date somewhere about 100 A.D. The other piece of evidence is that contained in the so-called *Muratorian Fragment*, which dates from about the end of the second century. This informs us that the *Shepherd* was written “very recently, in our own times”, during the episcopate of Pius of Rome, by Pius’s brother Hermas. This would give a date about 150 A.D.

have received modification and been related to the varying opinions concerning the date and authorship of the *Shepherd* may be seen in the table furnished in Gebhardt und Harnack, *Patrum Apostolicorum Opera*, Fasc. III., p. lxxxiii, n. 2.

⁶ For the few who go outside these limits, see the table referred to in note 5.

⁷ *Vis.* ii. 1.

Until quite recently scholars have been divided according as the first or the second of these testimonials seemed to them the more weighty, and ingenious conjectures have been proposed for explaining away the rejected evidence.⁸ Lately, however, as an outcome of discussion concerning the unity of the work, the opinion has gained ground that the *Shepherd* was not produced at one time but piecemeal throughout a number of years. This and the uncertainty both of the date of Clement's death and of the years of Pius' episcopate have made it possible for Prof. Harnack to propose a compromise.⁹ He thinks now that the earlier portion of the work was produced about 110 A.D. (possibly in the 3rd year of Trajan) when Clement may still have been living, and that the book was published in its completed form about 135-140 A.D., when Pius may have been bishop of Rome. For our purposes we need not enter into the details of the argument. We shall assume, that which is denied by very few, that the work was in existence in its finished form about the year 135 or 140—always remembering that it may have been known earlier.

Taking this, then, as the date when the *Shepherd* was given to the church, we ask: how was it received? Remember, it is not a small book; it is about equal in size to our first two gospels together. Nor was it published in a corner, but at the center of the world, in the city of Rome. Such a work as this, if regarded as divinely inspired, and equal to the Old Testament in authority, must have made a considerable stir, and that immediately, and in the whole church. And yet there is not one particle of evidence to show that it was regarded as Scripture or in any sense divine during the 30 or 40 years following its publication. Not until we come down to Irenaeus, the *Muratorii Fragment*, Clement of Alexandria, Origen and Tertullian is it quoted and referred to as Scripture or of divine inspiration. Nor can it be objected that this is merely an argument from silence and so of no cogency.

⁸ Zahn, in *Der Hirt des Hermas* and elsewhere, has been the strongest defender of the earlier date.

⁹ *Geschichte d. altchristlichen Literatur* ii., i. pp. 257 ff., where a brief review of the argument and the more important literature may be found.

For there were events in Rome at this time, and discussion in the church concerning authoritative and non-authoritative writings, of which we are well informed, and into which the *Shepherd* undoubtedly would have been drawn had it occupied the exalted position that is claimed for it. The result is the same wherever we look—not only at Rome but throughout the whole of the Christian literature coming from or dealing with this period, there is not the slightest evidence that the *Shepherd* was regarded as of any special importance.

It was at this time, for instance, that Marcion founded his school at Rome and formed his canon. But in all the discussions about the books he rejected or received, there is no word of the *Shepherd*, although we are informed by Tertullian¹⁰ that he rejected a work now frequently associated with it in discussions concerning the canon, *viz.*, the Apocalypse of John. This should be decisive alone. If the *Shepherd* were regarded by either party as divinely inspired, it is incomprehensible that it should not have been brought into the controversy by one side or the other.¹¹ The Gnostic Valentinus was also established in Rome at this time. He accepted all the Catholic Scriptures, as we are informed by Tertullian,¹² and turned them to suit his own ends by means of the allegorical method of interpretation. But there is no sign that he accepted, or so used the *Shepherd*; although its form and contents are admirably adapted to his methods and results. We know that he so used the Apocalypse of John,¹³ but neither Irenaeus, who gives us this information, and who was acquainted with the *Shepherd*, nor Tertullian, who would not have failed to attack the heretic for making use of a work which he himself regarded as apocryphal and false, contains the slightest indication that Valentinus knew anything about the *Shepherd*. Hegesippus was in Rome at this time—during

¹⁰ *Adv. Marc.* IV. 5.

¹¹ Harnack (*Gesch. d. altchrist. Lit.* I. i., p. 51), remarks without comment, and apparently without perceiving the import of his remark: "Bemerkt sei, dass sich bei den Gnostikern und Marcion keine Spur einer Benutzung unseres Buches findet."

¹² *Praescr.* c. 38.

¹³ Irenaeus, *Hacr.* i. 15.

the episcopate of Anicetus.¹⁴ Unfortunately, the only piece of evidence we have from his pen is the statement preserved by Eusebius to the effect that some of the so-called apocrypha were composed in his (i. e. Hegesippus') day by heretics. And yet even this is important coming as it does through Eusebius, who used all diligence to discover the origin of the books disputed or rejected in his own time—one of which was the *Shepherd* of Hermas. For, on the one hand, as the *Shepherd* was certainly not regarded as heretical or apocryphal in the days of Anicetus, it cannot be assumed among those referred to by Hegesippus in this passage; and, on the other hand, as Eusebius records nothing from Hegesippus' writings concerning the *Shepherd*, the probable inference is that he found nothing worthy of record; certainly it was not one of the authoritative books of the Church. Justin Martyr, too, was acquainted with the Rome of this period, and speaks in a general way of prophets being still known in the church,¹⁵ but in all his writings there is no mention of Hermas or any reference to his book. The answer is the same when we inquire of Celsus, the opponent of Christianity, who probably wrote during the period under review. He shows considerable acquaintance with Christianity and the Christian writings, but there is no sign of Hermas or his *Shepherd*.¹⁶ Nor does the early history of Montanism, although concerned with prophecy, afford any evidence. It is not until the time of Tertullian that it is brought into the discussion.¹⁷ It is true that a relationship has been found or fancied between the *Shepherd* and the letters of Ignatius,¹⁸ that of Polycarp,¹⁹ the so-called Second

¹⁴ Eusebius, *HE.* iv. 22.

¹⁵ *Trypho*, c. 82.

¹⁶ A definite reference could hardly be expected. Celsus knows of Christian prophecy in his own time, but the description he gives of it does not tally with the contents of the *Shepherd*. See Origen, *contra Cels.* vi. 34 f., vii. 11.

¹⁷ The Anti-montanist of Eusebius (*HE.* v. 17), gives a list of those who prophesied under the new covenant. Two names are added to those known in Scripture, but Hermas is not one of them. This writer is later however than the period we are discussing; Bonwetsch (*Art. Montanismus* in Herzog, *Realencycl.*, third ed.) and McGiffert (*Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers*, Vol. I., p. 233, n. 32), put him about 192 A. D.

¹⁸ Zahn, *Ignatius von Antioch*, pp. 618 f.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 620.

Epistle of Clement,²⁰ the Preaching of Peter,²¹ Theophilus of Antioch²² and Melito of Sardis,²³ but these are mere resemblances²⁴ and prove at most only acquaintance with it. None of them rises to the rank of citation, much less is there anything to show that the *Shepherd* was regarded as on an equality with the Old Testament or divinely inspired. In short, there is nothing in the literature of this period to show that the *Shepherd* of Hermas commanded any more respect than might be given to any work suitable for edification.²⁵

In and after the last quarter of the second century we find a change of attitude toward the *Shepherd*. In Gaul Irenaeus quotes it as "Scripture",²⁶ thus apparently putting it on a par with the other canonical works. And yet scholars are by no means agreed that this is his intention. It is difficult to reconcile Irenaeus' usage elsewhere, and his emphasis upon apostolicity as a prerequisite of canonicity, with such an explanation. It is noted that the *Shepherd* is not named in this quotation,²⁷ nor is it quoted anywhere else in Irenaeus' works as far as we know them, although some resemblances are found;²⁸ moreover, when he is confessedly marshalling the

²⁰ Harnack, *Theol. Literaturzeitung*, 1876, Col. 104. Cf. Overbeck, *ibid.*, 1877, Col. 287 f.

²¹ Hilgenfeld, *Hermes Pastor*, p. 1 f., 35.

²² Harnack, *Patr. Apostol. Op.*, Fasc. iii., note to *Vis.* 1, 6.

²³ Harnack, *Sitzungsbericht d. Berliner Akademie d. Wissenschaft*, 1898, p. 517 ff.

²⁴ For still more doubtful resemblances to other works, see Gebhardt und Harnack, *Patr. Apostol. Op.* Fasc. iii., p. xlv f., n. 2.

²⁵ Leiboldt, *op. cit.*, pp. 33 ff., p. 38, Zusatz 1, gives the earliest references to the Apocalypses. A convenient list of early citations of the *Shepherd* may be found in Harnack's *Geschichte d. altchristl. Literatur*, I, i., pp. 51 ff., and a fuller discussion of them in the various editions of the text, particularly that of Gebhardt and Harnack.

²⁶ *Haer.* IV. 20, 2, quoting *Mand.* I., 1.

²⁷ It is a possible but not necessary inference that Harnack (*Patr. Apostol. Op.*, Fasc. iii. p. xlv, n. 1, c.) draws from this fact, viz. that the book was so well known that its name might be omitted.

²⁸ Harnack, *Geschichte d. altchr. Lit.*, I, i., p. 52, gives the following passages: *Haer.* I, 13, 3 = *Mand.* xi. 3; I, 21, 1 = *Mand.* I, 1; II, 30, 9 = *Sim.* IX, 12, 8; *Frag. Gr.* 29 (Harvey II, p. 494) = *Sim.* VIII, 3, 2, and perhaps *Haer.* IV, 30, 1 = *Sim.* I. Cf. Zahn, *Der Hirt des Hermas*, p. 267, n. 2. None of these are more than resemblances.

scriptural arguments against the Valentinians,²⁹ though he quotes freely from most of the books of the New Testament (as we know it), he has no reference to, or proof drawn from, the *Shepherd*. In view of these facts some scholars have thought that Irenaeus regarded the book as of apostolic origin;³⁰ others have supposed that he may have used the term "Scripture" in this place in the general sense of "writing", or that he made a mistake, fancying that the passage he quoted was Scripture;³¹ others again are of the opinion that Irenaeus, while not ascribing the same honor to the *Shepherd* as to the prophetic and apostolical writings, regarded it nevertheless as authoritative.³² It is not necessary for the purposes of this investigation to decide between the merits of these differing views, but I may be allowed to say in passing that neither the view that Irenaeus regarded the *Shepherd* as fully canonical and of apostolic origin, nor that which asserts that he regarded it as authoritative, but not canonical in the strict sense of the word, accounts for the fact that he quotes the *Shepherd* only once when he might have used it many times to his advantage, unless it be assumed that he was not well acquainted with the contents of the work. Again to say that he was mistakenly of the impression that he was quoting from some canonical book is to take refuge in a conjecture which is incapable of proof; and to take "Scripture" in any other than its usual technical sense, while permitted by the usage of this author in a few places,³³ is contrary to the general custom of the time, and unsuitable in the passage before us, where the section from Hermas is used for the purpose of proving a doctrine and inserted between two passages from

²⁹ *Haer.* Book III.

³⁰ Hilgenfeld, *Apostolische Väter*, p. 180. Zahn, *Geschichte des neutest. Kanons*, i., p. 335.

³¹ Donaldson, *The Apostolical Fathers*, p. 319, though not committing himself to this view. Gregory, *Canon and Text of NT.*, p. 241 f. But he treats the evidence too cavalierly.

³² Harnack, *Geschichte d. altchristl. Literatur*, I, i., p. 52; *Patr. Apostol. Op.*, Fasc. III, p. xlvi. A fuller discussion of the matter may be found in this latter place, or, where a different conclusion is reached, in Zahn, *Geschichte d. neutest. Kanons*, I, p. 333 f.

³³ *Haer.* III, 6, 4; III, 17, 4; V, Preface.

the Old Testament. All the facts of the case would be accounted for if we might assume that the *Shepherd* had only lately come into Irenaeus' hands, that he regarded it as canonical and of apostolic origin, but had not been able to acquaint himself intimately with it.

In North Africa, Tertullian, in his treatise *De oratione*, not only shows acquaintance with the *Shepherd*, but also informs us indirectly that the book was well known in the church³⁴ and that some Christians regarded it as normative in matters of devotional conduct. Whether or not he shared their views may not be clear; but certainly he was not concerned to argue the matter at this time.³⁵ In another work, however, after he had been converted to Montanism, and found the *Shepherd* in conflict with his rigoristic views, he calls it "that apocryphal *Shepherd* of adulterers",³⁶ and reminds his opponents that it had been condemned as "apocryphal and false by every council of the churches, even your own",³⁷ and that the Epistle of Barnabas (the canonical Hebrews) was more received among the churches than it was.³⁸ It is sometimes said that in the period which elapsed between these two references to the *Shepherd* the attitude of the church generally toward the work had undergone a change; the first coming from a time when it was universally regarded as authoritative and inspired, the second from a later time when the apocalypses were being excluded from the canon. Such a sweeping inference is, of course, unjustifiable; we cannot say that Tertullian speaks for a larger section of the church than

³⁴ Harnack, in *Patr. Apostol. Op.*, Fasc. iii. p. xlviij, n. 1, a. e. agreeing with Zahn (*Gött. Gel. Anz.* 1873, st. 29, s. 1155), concludes that in Tertullian's time the *Shepherd* was known to the North Africans in a Latin Translation. Since then Zahn has changed his opinion and affirms that it was not translated until later, (*Gesch. d. neutest. Kanons*, I, 345). Cf. also Harnack, *Das Neue Testament um 200*, p. 87.

³⁵ Tertullian, *de orat.* 16.

³⁶ *De pudic.* 20.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 10.

³⁸ *Utique receptor apud ecclesias epistola Barnabae illo apocrypho Pastore moechorum, ibid.*, 20. I cannot find any justification for Gregory's translation, "Would that the letter of Barnabas were rather received among the churches than that apocryphal *Shepherd* of adulterers" *Canon and Text of the NT.*, p. 223.

that with which he was familiar. But we are bound to ascertain, if we can, Tertullian's attitude toward the *Shepherd*, and whether he changed it, and, if so, why. There can be no doubt of his later attitude. He then considered the work "apocryphal and false" and so unworthy of a place in the "divine instrument". We cannot be altogether sure what he meant by "apocryphal" here. The word has been variously understood in different periods. The earliest meaning³⁹ appears to have been "excluded from public use in the Church", without reference either to origin or contents of the book excluded. Soon, however, it came to denote not the fact but the grounds for such exclusion; that is to say, it stigmatized a work as untrue with respect either to its contents or to its origin⁴⁰ or both. But though we know that these several connotations existed in the early centuries, we cannot always be sure in which of them a writer uses the word. It is indeed sufficiently clear, from the opprobrious terms Tertullian heaps up, that he condemns the teaching of the *Shepherd* out and out, but we should like to know whether by "apocryphal" he means to imply that the work is also not what it claims to be with respect to origin; and of this we cannot be certain.

Let us now turn to an examination of the earlier reference. Some of the North Africans apparently regarded it as important to lay aside their cloaks during prayer and to seat themselves afterwards. In justification of the first of these they appealed to 2 Tim. iv. 13, and for the second to the fifth vision of the *Shepherd*. Tertullian treats both customs and both passages appealed to in the same way. Such customs he says are irrational, superstitious, and savor of idolatry, and such an interpretation of Scripture childish, and leads to the foolishness consequences if consistently applied. Now while it is true that this argument says nothing either of the canonicity of Paul's letter or the uncanonicity of the *Shepherd*, still as

³⁹ See Zahn, *Geschichte des Neutestamentl. Kanons*, I, p. 125 ff. E. Schürer in *Herzog, Realencyclopaedie*, ed. 3, vol. I, p. 622 ff.

⁴⁰ To Augustine "apocryphal" meant that the origin of a book was "hidden" or unknown, *De civit. Dei*. xv. 23, 4. Harnack, *Patr. Apostol. Op.*, III, p. xlix., n. 1, b., thinks Tertullian uses it with reference to authorship.

Tertullian did regard Paul's epistles as canonical, and as the North Africans to whom he was writing seemingly regarded the *Shepherd* as equally authoritative in matters of conduct, it is often affirmed that the African father would not have lost this opportunity to correct the erroneous estimation placed upon the latter, had he been at the time of this writing of the same opinion that he was when he wrote *De pudicitia*. Moreover, it is noted that he here calls the *Shepherd* "*Scriptura*". It is true that he does this also in the later reference, but in that case it is obvious that he does so sarcastically with reference to the attitude of those who would appeal to it, and that he may contrast it with the true Scriptures.⁴¹ But in the former case there is, it is said, no sign of sarcasm, nor anything to show that he differed from his correspondents in his estimate of the *Shepherd*, or that he regarded it as less binding than the writings of Paul.⁴²

⁴¹ At ego eius pastoris scripturas haurio qui non potest frangi."

⁴² Harnack (*Patr. Apost. Op.*, Fasc. iii., p. xlix) thinks that Tertullian at this time regarded the *Shepherd* as "Scripture" but as inferior to the prophets and the apostles ("sed minime audeo dicere Carthaginienses tum temporis Pastorem inter scripturas prophetarum et apostolorum recensuisse"). He refers to Tertullian's treatment of the Book of Enoch and suggests that the *Shepherd* may have had a place at the close of the New Testament after the Epistle to the Hebrews. But, in Tertullian's treatment of the Book of Enoch (*de cult. fem.* I, 3; II, 10, *de idol.* 15), there is every sign that he himself regarded this work as of equal authority with other Old Testament Scriptures; he calls it "*Scriptura*", cites it by way of proof, answers criticisms of its authorship and transmission, says it is vouched for by the Apostle Jude, and tries to explain why it was unjustly rejected by the Jews. Nor can the statement "et legimus omnem scripturam aedificationi habilem divinitus inspirari" (*de cult. fem.* I, 3, 2 Tim. iii. 16), be taken to explain Tertullian's attitude toward the *Shepherd*, for Tertullian is speaking here only of the Old Testament Scriptures, as was St. Paul before him—a thing that is often overlooked in discussing this passage (on the importance of this interpretation of Paul's words for the history of the New Testament canon, see Harnack, *Das Neue Test. um das Jahr* 200, pp. 25, 39 f., and opposed to him Leipoldt, *op. cit.*, p. 40).

With regard to the relative value of the *Shepherd* and the Epistle to the Hebrews the matter is somewhat different. Harnack is here following Credner (*Geschichte d. neutest. Kanons*) and Rönisch (*Das neue Testament Tertullians*), in the view that Tertullian had in his New Testament as a kind of appendix, some works which were to some degree

If this be the correct explanation of this passage we have to ask further on what grounds Tertullian granted such a high

inspired and authoritative but on a lower plane than others. Rönsch gives as the names of these the Epistle of Peter *ad Ponticos* (1 Peter), the Epistle of Barnabas to the Hebrews (Hebrews), the Epistle of Jude, and the Epistle of the Presbyter (2 John). But, without going into details, it is hard to believe, after reading *Scorp.* 12 and 14, and *de orat.* 20, that Tertullian set the known writings of Peter in any respect below those of Paul; the Epistle of Jude is referred to only once (*de cult. fem.* I, 3), but then as a work of an Apostle and as authoritative; and 2 John is neither mentioned nor used by the North African Father (*Rönsch*, p. 572, see Zahn, *Gesch. d. NT. Kanons*, Vol. I, p. 111, n. 1, pp. 304 ff., pp. 320 f.).

Tertullian's attitude toward the Epistle to the Hebrews requires closer examination. In his treatise *de pudic.*, after he had passed in review the teaching of the Evangelists, the Acts of the Apostles, Paul and the other Apostles, concluding with the Revelation and First Epistle of St. John, Tertullian draws the argument to a close (*de pud.* 20), and then adds, "I wish however to subjoin in addition, redundantly, the testimony also of a certain companion of the Apostles, which is well adapted for confirming, by nearest right, the teaching of the masters" (*volo tamen ex redundantia alicuius etiam comitis apostolorum testimonium superducere idoneum confirmandi de proximo jure disciplinam magistrorum* (Ed. Oehler). He then introduces the Epistle to the Hebrews as the work of Barnabas for whom Paul vouched, and adds, "and at all events the Epistle of Barnabas is more received among the churches than that apocryphal *Shepherd* of adulterers" (*et utique receptor apud ecclesias epistola Barnabae illo apocrypho Pastore moechorum*). He then quotes Heb. vi., 4-8. There are two questions raised by this passage: the first concerns Tertullian's estimate of Hebrews, the second the comparative value of the *Shepherd* and Hebrews. With regard to the first of these it is evident that the Epistle to the Hebrews, according to Tertullian, was not in itself possessed of divine authority. This appears from the formal conclusion of his argument based on the Apostolic teaching (*disciplina apostolorum proprie*) before he turns to it, from the express statements that he uses it only to *confirm* the teaching of the Apostles and that it is excessive (*ex redundantia*), from the fact that he does not ascribe but rather denies apostolicity to it, and that he never calls it "Scripture" (he uses *titulus* instead or refers to it by name). The view, which Zahn thinks possible, (*Gesch. d. Neutest. Kanons*, Vol. I, p. 291) that Tertullian himself placed a higher estimate on the work than is here apparent, and did not cite it among the writings of the New Testament only because it was not universally received, and therefore any argument drawn from it not universally valid, while commending itself for several reasons is incapable of proof. According to the evidence before us the Epistle to the Hebrews was outside of Tertullian's canon, and enjoyed only that amount of favor which was

place to the *Shepherd*. In the first place it cannot be thought that he accepted it without having some opinion of its authorship; for he denounces strongly all works that do not "bind

due to the writings of a man who was approved of St. Paul and God. But what does Tertullian mean by saying that the Epistle to the Hebrews was "more received among the churches" than was the *Shepherd*? Does "*receptor apud ecclesias*" mean that it was more highly esteemed, or that it was received as canonical by more churches? Rönisch understands it to mean both (*Op. cit.*, p. 565); Harnack to mean one or the other, he does not say which (*Patr. Apost. Op.* III, p. xlix f., n. 1, c), but in stating that the *Shepherd* seems to have had a place at the end of the New Testament after the Epistle to the Hebrews (*ibid.*, p. xlviii. f., n. 1 e) he favors the former, and in another place (*Texte und Untersuchungen* V, i., p. 59), the latter. Zahn holds firmly to the latter interpretation (*Gesch. d. neutest. Kanons*, I, pp. 121, n. 292 f.) on the ground that "*receptus*" is not capable of degrees, and of the presence of the plural "*ecclesias*". So also Credner, *Gesch. d. neutest. Kanons*, p. 117. But neither of these explanations is free from difficulty. By the first Tertullian is made to disagree with his other statement in this same treatise, that all the councils of the church had declared the *Shepherd* "apocryphal and false". To accuse him of exaggerating in the latter remark (Harnack, *Texte u. Untersuchungen*, V, i., p. 59, Weiss, *Einleitung in d. NT.*, 3rd ed. p. 74) is unwarranted, and, as we shall see later these words may express literally a natural interpretation of a Roman statement concerning the *Shepherd*. Zahn's argument is unsatisfactory because it does violence to the Latin. Had Tertullian wished to say that the Epistle to the Hebrews was received by more churches than the *Shepherd* we should expect "*receptus apud plures ecclesias*". It seems to be true that "*receptus*" was used as *terminus technicus* to denote the inclusion of a work among the canonical books, and that in this sense it was incapable of degree. But the word was not used exclusively in this connection, and when not it could be compared (see instances in Zahn *loc. cit.*). It is in this latter sense that the word is used in the passage before us. The discussion is not about canonical works, but about two, both of which Tertullian definitely excludes from the Scriptures. With this in mind the argument in this chapter of *de pudicitia* is both clear and consistent with other parts of the treatise. I have now, says Tertullian in effect, concluded my argument from the New Testament Scriptures, but I wish to add the testimony of one other, which may not be used in the argument proper but is of value in confirming the teaching of the Apostles, for its author was their comrade. I refer to an Epistle of Barnabas, a man commended by God and the Apostle Paul. And though he is not an authority, you must at least acknowledge that his Epistle is recognized as of more value by the churches than that apocryphal *Shepherd* of adulterers which has been condemned by all the councils of the churches.

themselves by full title and due profession of author",⁴³ And it is equally clear that he received only such works as were of apostolic origin, that is to say, composed either by Apostles or apostolic men.⁴⁴ We would therefore conclude that Tertullian regarded Hermas as a disciple of the Apostles. But if this be so the question immediately thrusts itself upon us, why does he not use the *Shepherd* more frequently in his writings? To this no certain answer can be given, though it may be pointed out that Paul's Epistles to Titus and Philemon, the First Epistle of Peter and that of Jude, although undoubtedly belonging to Tertullian's canon, are referred to no more frequently or hardly so than is the *Shepherd*.

But this view, although held in slightly differing forms by many scholars, appears to me to be wrong from beginning to end. When the Christians of North Africa, in defence of their superstitious practices of laying aside their cloaks before prayer and of sitting down after it, appealed to the statements that Paul had left his cloak behind him at Troas (presumably having laid it aside at prayer) and that Hermas had sat down on his bed after prayer, the answer that sprang to Tertullian's lips, as it would to those of any other sensible Christian, was that such a use of Scripture was childish, silly, superstitious, and incapable of being indulged without entailing ridiculous results. More was unnecessary. To argue the question of the authority or canonicity of the *Shepherd* would not have been to the point. On the contrary it would have weakened the argument, as it might be taken to imply that had the *Shepherd* been authoritative, such a use of it would have been justified. Tertullian here as elsewhere sees the main issue clearly and sticks to it. And yet he has not left us without at least a hint of his estimate of Hermas and his book. He introduces them with the words "that Hermas whose scripture is generally called the *Shepherd*".⁴⁵ This is

⁴³ *Marc.* IV, 2.

⁴⁴ To Tertullian apostolic men (*apostolici*) were those who had associated with and learned from the Apostles, *Marc.* IV, 2; *Praescr.* 32. Cf. also *Praescr.* 21 ff.; 30; 44; and what he says against works of post-apostolic date, *Praescr.* 30.

⁴⁵ *Quid enim, si Hermas ille cuius scriptura fere Pastor inscribitur, etc. De orat.* 16.

not the way one introduces a well known and acknowledged canonical book. The demonstrative "that" pointing to Hermas with quite particular emphasis is hard to account for unless we find in it, as several scholars do,⁴⁶ the note of contempt. The words "that Hermas" find their parallel in "that *Shepherd* of adulterers", and the delicate sarcasm of the words "whose (i. e., Hermas') scripture" is perceived at once when they are put beside those others, which we have heard Tertullian using elsewhere in discussing the *Shepherd*, "but I quaff the scriptures of that Shepherd who cannot be broken".⁴⁷ We are compelled therefore to the conclusion that, though some of his countrymen estimated the *Shepherd* very highly,—exactly how highly we cannot say for lack of evidence,—Tertullian at no period of his life of which we have any knowledge shared their views. He despised it.

In Alexandria Clement knew the *Shepherd* and was fond of it. He quotes it freely and shows beyond possibility of doubt that he believed it to contain a genuine revelation. He speaks of "the Shepherd, the Angel of Repentance" that spoke to Hermas,⁴⁸ of the "Power that spoke divinely to Hermas by revelation"⁴⁹ or "the Power that appeared to Hermas in the vision in the form of the Church";⁵⁰ more frequently he cites it simply as the "*Shepherd*".⁵¹ He appeals to it as proof of Christian teaching associating it with the books of our Bible, he even interprets one passage allegorically.⁵² And yet in spite of all this there are few who venture to affirm that Clement puts the *Shepherd* on a par with the Gospels and writings of the Apostles. It is noted that he never calls Hermas an Apostle as he does Barnabas and Clem-

⁴⁶ So Credner, *Gesch. d. neuest. Kanons*, p. 117; Oehler, *Tertull. op.* Vol. I, p. 567, *not. c.*; Gregory, *Canon and Text of the NT.*, p. 242.

⁴⁷ See note 41.

⁴⁸ *Strom.* i., 17, 85.

⁴⁹ *Strom.* i., 29, 181.

⁵⁰ *Strom.* vi., 15, 131, *cf.* *Strom.* ii., 1, 3.

⁵¹ The passages have been gathered by Harnack, *Gesch. d. altchristl. Lit.*, I. i., p. 53.

⁵² Harnack (*Gesch. d. altchristl. Lit.*, I. i., p. 53). Kutter, (*Clemens Alexandrinus und das Neue Testament*, p. 86) would weaken the force of this, by showing what Clement does is to interpret allegorically an *act* of Hermas. But in any case Clement is dealing with a passage out of the *Shepherd*.

ent of Rome, that he does not cite his book as "Scripture" as he does for example the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles.⁵³ It is pointed out that he regarded Greek Philosophy and the oracles of the Sybil as in a sense divine.⁵⁴ And the testimony of Eusebius is called to show that in the *Hypotyposes* in which he commented upon all the books of the canonical Scriptures not omitting the disputed books, which are more nearly defined as Jude, the other Catholic Epistles, Barnabas and the Apocalypse of Peter, the *Shepherd* of Hermas is not included.⁵⁵ It has been argued too that, as the final authority for Clement was the Lord and his Apostles⁵⁶ and as the apostolic time ended for him in the days of Nero,⁵⁷ he could not have regarded a work, which he must have known to be of later origin, as on a par with the writings of the Apostles.⁵⁸ It does not come within the scope of our investigation to inquire more definitely into the merits of these views. Our purpose is accomplished when we have ascertained that Clement as a matter of fact did regard the *Shepherd* as at least containing a divine revelation; though it is not unimportant to note that of all the Christian writings appealed to by Clement as

⁵³ Kutter, *Clemens Alex. u. d. Neue Test.*, p. 139 f. On the use of *γραφή* in a broad sense and the extension of the term apostolic to include the later years of John's life and also Clement of Rome and Barnabas, *ibid.*, pp. 130, 136.

⁵⁴ *Strom.*, vi., 5, 43. cf. *Protr.* vi. 72; viii, 77, et al. See Eickhoff, *Das Neue Testament des Clem. Alex.* p. 7. Kutter, *op. cit.* 140 f.

⁵⁵ Eusebius, *HE.* vi., 14. Photius' statement (*Bibl. cod.* 109) that the *Hypotyposes* covered only Genesis, Exodus, the Psalms, the Pauline Epistles, the Catholic Epistles and Ecclesiastes, cannot stand in the face of Eusebius' explicit reference to the Apocalypse of Peter. Nor is the omission of the *Shepherd* accounted for by saying that Eusebius has probably omitted it through accident (Harnack, *Gesch. d. altchristl. Lit.* I. i., p. 53) or that Clement did not comment on it because of its length (Zahn, *Gesch. d. neutest. Kanons*, i., p. 330). Nor does Eusebius' failure to mention the *Shepherd* among the works used by Clement (*HE.* vi., 13) destroy the argument.

⁵⁶ *Strom.* i., 1, 11.

⁵⁷ *Strom.* vii., 17, 106.

⁵⁸ Kutter, *op. cit.*, pp. 108, 128 ff., 139 f., cf. Kunze, *Glaubensregel* etc., pp. 40, 138. But it is by no means sure that Clement was as well informed of the origin of the *Shepherd* as was the author of the Muratori Fragment, as Kutter assumes.

authoritative, this is the only one for which apostolical origin was not claimed in one way or another; and the difficulties which arise in connection with his use of the *Shepherd* would be to a large extent removed, and his procedure shown to be consistent with his own principles, if we might assume that for which there is nothing *pro* or *contra* in his writings, namely, that he thought this book to be the product of the golden age of the Apostles.

Origen, the successor of Clement in Alexandria, regards the *Shepherd* as "very useful and divinely inspired",⁵⁹ and frequently adduced proof from it as from any other Scripture. But he also informs us that the book was not universally received but even despised by some.⁶⁰ From him also we have a definite statement concerning the authorship and date of the *Shepherd*, namely that it was written by the Hermas to whom the Apostle Paul sends greetings in his Epistle to the Romans;⁶¹ that is to say he refers it to apostolic times, the period which produced all the other canonical books.⁶² Nor can we doubt that the opinion of Origen with respect to the authorship of the *Shepherd* was shared by a large proportion of the Alexandrian church.⁶³

Among the Roman writers of this period we find no such high respect for the *Shepherd* as we have found in Alexandria. Hippolytus especially, than whom none was better ac-

⁵⁹ Valde mihi utilis videtur et ut puto divinitus inspirata. *In Rom.* (xvi. 14), com. x. 31.

⁶⁰ καταφρονούμενος, *De princip.* iv. 11; cf. *In Psalm. Selecta*, hom. i. in *Psalm.* 37; *In Ezech.* xxviii. 13, hom. xiii. These and other references in Harnack, *Gesch. d. altchristl. Lit.*, I. i., pp. 53 ff.

⁶¹ *In Rom.* xvi. 14, com. x. 31, "Puto tamen, quod Hermas iste sit scriptor libelli illius qui Pastor appellatur".

⁶² Cf. Origen in *Euseb. HE.* vi., 25, 12 f.

⁶³ See Zahn, *Gesch. d. neutest. Kanons*, i., pp. 330 ff, where he retracts his earlier statements. Harnack (*Patr. apost. op.* iii., p. lvii) would have us believe that Origen is expressing only his own opinion when he ascribes the *Shepherd* to the Hermas of Rom. xvi. 14. It may be true, as he asserts, that Origen does not claim to have any traditional basis for this opinion and never calls Hermas *virum apostolicum*, but it is hard to believe that a man of such scholarly methods as Origen was should make such a statement without basis for it.

quainted with the affairs of the Roman Church, and who had plenty of opportunities to use it, does not once mention by name, or quote from, the work.⁶⁴ And yet there is asserted to be reason for believing that here too the book was regarded as inspired and authoritative and on a par with other canonical writings. I shall briefly review what evidence there is. (1) Tertullian, in a passage already referred to, has in mind that the *Shepherd* is opposed to his montanistic views and defends himself against its teachings. "But I would yield to you", he says, "if the Scripture called the *Shepherd*, which alone loves adulterers, were worthy of a place in the divine instrument,—if it had not been adjudged among the apocryphal and false writings by every council of the churches even your own".⁶⁵ As Tertullian throughout this treatise has the bishop of Rome in mind, the *Pontifex Maximus* as he sarcastically calls him in the initial chapter, it has been inferred that the Roman had appealed to the *Shepherd* in defence of his laxer administration of discipline.⁶⁶ The inference is possible but but by no means necessary. Tertullian had to defend himself not only from the actual arguments of the past but also from the possible ones of the future, against attacks not only from Rome but also from nearer home, where as we have seen the *Shepherd* was in high repute. The words "your churches" refer of course to the Catholic churches, not to those of any particular locality.⁶⁷ (2) The next witness is the so-called *Liberian Catalogue* of the bishops of Rome, which has the following note under the name Pius: "During his episcopate his brother Hermes wrote the book in which is contained the command which the angel enjoined upon him when he came to him in the garb of a shepherd".⁶⁸ This catalogue in its completed

⁶⁴ Bonwetsch, *Zu den Komm. Hippolyts. Texte u. Untersuchungen* N. F. Vol. i., 2, p. 26, finds a couple of resemblances.

⁶⁵ *De pudic.* 10. "Sed cederem tibi si scriptura Pastoris qui sola moechos amat divino instrumento meruisset incidi, si non ab omni concilio ecclesiarum etiam vestrarum inter apocrypha et falsa iudicaretur".

⁶⁶ So Harnack, *Gesch. d. altchristl. Lit.*, I. i, 52, and others.

⁶⁷ According to Harnack, Tertullian could not be referring to Roman or Italian councils (*Texte u. Untersuch.* V. i., p. 59).

⁶⁸ "Sub hujus episcopatu frater ejus Hermes librum scripsit in quo

form belongs to the middle of the fourth century and therefore lies outside the period of our investigation; but there is good reason for supposing that the earlier part of it, down to 231 A.D., was composed a century or more earlier and is from the pen of Hippolytus himself.⁶⁹ But even the earlier part did not leave the hand of Hippolytus in its present form. Some later editor or continuator added chronological synchronisms at least (the names of contemporary consuls, Emperors, &c.), and perhaps also this and one other note (concerning the death of the Apostle Peter). According to the table of contents appended to one of the recensions of Hippolytus' *Chronica* we should find in it *Nomina episcoporum Romae et quis quot annis praefuit*.⁷⁰ The natural inference is that all except the names and the number of years was added later. Still, while expressing doubt on the matter both Lightfoot and Harnack think it probable that the notice concerning Hermas was in the original work, the former because it "seems intended to discredit the pretensions of that work to a place in the canon and therefore would probably be written at a time when such pretensions were still more or less seriously entertained", the motive being "the same as with the author of the *Muratorian Canon* who has a precisely similar note",⁷¹ the latter because "just at Hippolytus' time the *Shepherd* was excluded from the sacred collection in many churches and this notice apparently has reference to the controversy [involved]".⁷² It is true that the *Liberian Catalogue* agrees with the *Muratorian Fragment* in ascribing the *Shepherd* to a certain Hermas (or Hermes), the brother of Pius, but it is equally important to note that it definitely asserts that it is a genuine revelation, which the *Muratorian Fragment* does not; and it is highly improbable that Hippolytus, had he entertained this view of the work, would have made no mention of, or citation from, it in his other works.

mandatum continetur quod ei praecepit angelus cum venit ad illum in habitu pastoris."

⁶⁹ See discussion in Lightfoot, *Apostol. Fathers*, I. i., pp. 253 ff. and a summary of results in Harnack, *Gesch. d. altchristl. Lit.*, II. i., pp. 144 ff.

⁷⁰ Lightfoot, *Loc. cit.*, p. 260.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 261 f.

⁷² Harnack, *Loc. cit.*, p. 150.

Moreover, if the purpose of the author of this notice was to contribute something toward the settlement of the controversy concerning the canonicity of the book, he chose a very inappropriate method. The statement that the book dates from the days of Pius does indeed implicitly deny apostolicity to the work, but the affirmation of its prophetic character definitely asserts its inspiration.^{73 74}

⁷³ The singular *mandatum* also is suspicious. *Mandata* (pl.) might by a stretch be made to cover the whole book, but not its singular. The question rises what is meant thereby. The explanation of Zahn (*Hirt des Hermas*, p. 25 f.) would solve the problem. In a letter of Pseudo-Pius dealing with the Quarto-decimanian controversy and therefore dating probably from early in the 4th cent., the writer appeals to a command given to Hermas by the angel that appeared to him in the garb of a shepherd, to the effect that the *Pascha* should be celebrated on the Lord's day ("eidem Hermae angelus domini in habitu pastoris apparuit et praecepit ei ut pascha die dominica ab omnibus celebraretur"). Zahn thinks this is the command referred to in the *Liberian Cat.* in which case the notice there contained must not only be from the fourth cent., but also have no reference to our work for it contains no such command. See also Harnack, *Gesch. d. altchristl. Lit.* I, i., p. 56, who finds Zahn's explanation "very improbable".

⁷⁴ For the sake of completeness we must say a word about the puzzling Pseudocyprianic tract known as *de aleatoribus*. This work might be ignored here were it not that Prof. Harnack (*Texte und Untersuchungen*, Vol. v.) some years ago endeavored to show that it is from the pen of the Bishop Victor of Rome. This view has not found much favor with scholars and recently Prof. Harnack himself does not seem so desirous of maintaining it (*Gesch. d. altchristl. Lit.*, i. 52, 719. Cf. Herzog, *Realencycl.* 3rd ed. vol. iv., p. 347; xx., p. 602). It has, however, been taken up by Leopoldt in his *Entstehung des neutestamentlichen Kanons*, and part of Harnack's argument made the basis of much of this work. In this tract the *Shepherd* is quoted once fairly literally, once loosely, and several passages seem to reflect the words and thoughts of Hermas. In no case is the *Shepherd* or its author mentioned by name. In the case of the first quotation (cap. 2) the introductory words are *dicit enim scriptura divina* and the quotation is coupled with a passage from Sirach and one from an unknown source ["*dicit enim scriptura divina* (quotation from *Sim.* ix. 13, 5), *et alia scriptura dicit* (Sirach xxxii., (xxxv. 1), *et iterum* (an unknown passage)"]. In the second case (cap. 4) the author evidently thinks he is quoting St. Paul, ["*apostulus idem Paulus commemorat . . . dicens* (several passages from the Epp. to Timothy being combined), *iterum* (1 Cor. v. 11), *et alio loco* (apparently from *Mand.* iv. 1, 9) *in doctrinis apostolorum est* (a quotation from an unknown source, possibly

We may pause here for a moment to review our examination to this point. There is no evidence that, during the first thirty or forty years of its existence, the *Shepherd* occupied any preëminent position in the church. There are signs that it was known and used, but there is not the slightest reason for thinking that it was regarded as an apocalypse, as authoritative, or in any sense on a par with the Scriptures of the Old Testament. On the contrary, there is good reason for the opinion that no one, orthodox or heretical, was concerned to make or maintain any such claims for it. After that period a higher estimate of it appears in some sections. In Gaul it is quoted by one great teacher as "Scripture", but in such a way as to

dependent on the *Didache*"]]. Our hesitancy, in the face of this, to receive this author as a first-class witness to the canonical authority of the *Shepherd* is increased when we take into account his very loose manner of quoting, the fact that several of his quotations cannot be identified, and also that all the Old Testament passages he cites are to be found in Cyprian's *de Lapsis* or *Testimonia*.

We are not concerned except indirectly with the general question of his forms of citation and the argument that is built upon them in the discussion of the history of the canon of the New Testament; but I cannot refrain from remarking that when Prof. Harnack lays down, as the basis of further argument, the *dictum* that the author (of *de aleatoribus*) "follows a quite definite and strongly consistent method of citation" ("*eine ganz bestimmte und streng festgehaltene Citationsweise befolgt*," *loc. cit.*, p. 56) he seriously weakens his own argument by assuming that the author had two forms of citation, *dicit scriptura divina* and *dicit dominus*, that were apparently of equal value (*augenscheinlich gleichwerthig*). Nor should he say in another place (*Das neue Testament* um 200, p. 36) that according to *de aleatoribus* "the Old Testament and the Apocalypses of Hermas and John belong to the *scripturae divinae* but not so the Gospels and Epistles." Nor should Leiboldt follow him by saying (*loc. cit.*, p. 37) that "this writing (*de aleatoribus*) regards apparently only two books outside of the Old Testament as Holy Scripture in this strict sense of the term". As a matter of fact the Old Testament is never cited as *scriptura divina* in *de aleatoribus*, the passage from Sirach alone excepted, nor is the Apocalypse of John, which is introduced by the words *dominus occurrit et dicit* (cap. 8). To say, as Leiboldt does (*loc. cit.*) that this is apparently accidental is to confess that the whole argument is unfounded. It has escaped the notice of these writers that another and simpler, and consistent principle may be found for the author's method of citation, namely, that in all passages, whether from the Old or the New Testament, from the Gospels or Apocalypse, in which, *in the Scriptures*, the Lord is repre-

leave us in doubt whether he really regarded it as Scripture in the strict sense of the word. In Africa the common people esteemed it highly, but their scholarly leader Tertullian despised it. In Alexandria it fared better. Both Clement and Origen regarded it as a real revelation, the former for reasons not clear to us, the latter ascribing it to the Apostolic age. From Rome, where it was produced and where it presumably was best known, comes exceedingly little evidence. Not a single author can be proved to have regarded it as divine or authoritative, but neither do we find any condemnation of it. This cannot be the record of a work which was originally published as a divine revelation, accepted as such by the leaders of the church, and drawn upon by them in matters of faith and practice. It is rather the story of a book that began its career in a humbler fashion, that found its way to the hearts of the common people first, that was then occasionally dimly reflected in the words of some writer or other, and that then here and there, especially far from its native place, and where a wrong opinion of its origin was current, came to be regarded as divine. But we have still one piece of evidence to consider, perhaps the most important of all, and we shall turn to it now.

The so-called *Muratorian Fragment*,⁷⁵ it is generally conceded, sented as speaking the introductory formula is *dominus dicit*. In the one occasion where the words quoted are not immediately ascribed to God in the Scriptures, the introductory phrase is enlarged by the addition of *per prophetam* (cap. 10, quoting Eli's words in 1 Sam. ii. 25). When the quotation is from the Gospels the addition *in evangelio* is found three times (cap. 3, 10) and in the only other formal quotation from them, both *dominus* and *in evangelio* are lacking (cap. 2). The subject could be mentally supplied; and *in evangelio* was apparently not regarded as necessary. When the quotation is from the Epistles either the name of the apostle (Paul, cap. 3, 4, John, cap. 10), or the title *apostolus* without name (cap. 4, 10) is found with *dicit* (*dicens*). When the authority of the apostolic college is cited the formula is *in doctrinis Apostolorum* (cap. 4). In all other cases the general term *Scriptura* is used (cap. 2). The author has given us no passage from the Acts of the Apostles or from narrative portions of the Bible, and so we cannot say how he would have introduced them.

⁷⁵ The text may be found in an appendix to Westcott's *Canon of the New Testament*, also in Zahn, *Grundriss der Gesch. d. neutest. Kanons*, p. 75, Harnack, *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, Vol. v., p. 595, and elsewhere. An English translation is given in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. v., p.

comes from about the end of the second century and reflects the opinion of the Roman or Italian church. It contains an incomplete list of the books received into or rejected from the New Testament Scriptures, with notes on the same. Toward the end of the list is found the following paragraph: "Of apocalypses also we receive only those of John and Peter which (latter) some among us will not have read in the church. But the *Shepherd* was written by Hermas, very recently, in our own times, when his brother Pius the bishop was sitting in the episcopal chair of the church of the city of Rome, and therefore it ought indeed to be read, but it cannot be publicly read to the people in church, either among the Prophets whose number is complete, or among the Apostles to the end of time."⁷⁶ Such a statement as this would not be found in this place unless canonicity had been claimed for the *Shepherd*. It is natural too to infer that such claims had been made within that particular church from which the *Fragment* emanates. But this is not necessary. The writers had in mind not their own community only, but also the whole Catholic Church,⁷⁷ and therefore had to take cognizance of works for which claims were made by outsiders. From whatever quarter these claims may have come, however, the *Fragment* leaves us in no doubt about certain pretensions which were made for the *Shepherd*, and which were doubtless urged in favor of its canonicity. These were two in

603. This is not the place to discuss the date and source of this unique document. I shall assume that it comes from Rome or at least represents the Roman tradition. Also when the plural number is used to denote the authors, I am only following a hint contained in the *Fragment* itself, ("*recipimus*"), without affirming anything of the authorship.

⁷⁶Ll. 71-79. "Apocalypse etiam iohannis et pe|tri tantum recipimus quam quidam ex nos|tris legi in eclesia nolunt pastorem uero | nuperrim e temporibus nostris in urbe | roma herma conscripsit sedente cathedra urbis romae aecllesiae pio ep̄s fratre | eius et ideo legi eum quidē oportet se pu|blicare uero in eclesia populo neque inter | profetas completum numero neque inter | apostolos in finē temporum potest". In corrected Latin: "Apocalypses etiam Johannis et Petri tantum recipimus, quam quidam ex nostris in urbe Roma Hermas conscripsit sedente cathedra urbis Romae ecclesiae Pio episcopo fratre ejus; et ideo legi eum quidem oportet, se publicare uero in ecclesia populo, neque inter prophetas completo numero, neque inter apostolos in finem temporum potest".

⁷⁷*Frag.*, l. 66, cf. 69.

number. The first was that the *Shepherd* dates from apostolic times. This is evident from the way the *Fragment* heaps up clauses to disprove such an early origin.⁷⁸ It was written, it says, "very recently", "in our own times", "when Pius was bishop of Rome", by the brother of this same Pius and this is given as the ground (*et ideo*) for its exclusion from the Canon.

The second argument was that the *Shepherd* was an apocalypse. This is evident enough from its being classed with the Apocalypses of John and Peter. What is the attitude of the *Fragment* toward this? In the first place, it cannot be urged that the parallelism "we receive only . . . but" shows the writers' own view *viz.* that the *Shepherd* too is in an apocalypse. The only necessary inference is that the work was commonly or sometimes ranked as an apocalypse. Again, it may be asked, whether in asserting the late date of the book the *Fragment* does not mean to imply that it is not apocalyptic. No definite answer can be given to this, but the indications are that it does. Elsewhere⁷⁹ the *Fragment* is pronouncedly anti-montanistic, and it is hard to believe that its authors could have thought of revelations as late as the time of Pius.⁸⁰ But there is still another indication that this is really the view of the *Fragment*. The last lines of our paragraph read, "it cannot be publicly read . . . either among the Prophets whose number is complete or among the Apostles till the end of time." "Prophets" and "Apostles" here, as elsewhere in the literature of this period, are doubtless equivalent to the Old and New Testaments. But there seems to be an especial appropriateness in the use of the terms here. Out of several designations of the Scriptures at their disposal, all current at the time, the authors of the *Fragment* have chosen two which had reference to the two arguments advanced in favor of the *Shepherd* by their opponents. That this is so, that the use of these words is not perfunctory, is shown too by the insertion of the phrase "whose number is complete" after "prophets". This phrase indeed

⁷⁸ So too Zahn (*Gesch. d. neuest. Kanons*, i., p. 340) who however does not regard the *Fragment* as well informed concerning the date of the *Shepherd*, but thinks its author was driven to exaggeration by the zeal of the advocates of an early date.

⁷⁹ L. 84.

⁸⁰ Zahn, *op. cit.*, ii., p. 116.

amplifies and completes the argument against the reception of the *Shepherd*, begun in the assertion of its late date. The *Fragment* therefore says in effect, that the *Shepherd* cannot be classed with the Apostles for it is of later date, nor with the Prophets for their number is complete, that is Hermas was not a prophet nor his work a revelation.⁸¹

Taking this then as the view of the authors, and remembering the historical situation, this little section of the *Muratorii Fragment*, so puzzling to commentators, becomes a well conceived and carefully guarded statement. The problem was this: Here was a work forty or fifty years old, which had been popular and useful in the church. On account of its apocalyptic form and the apostolic name of its author it was held by some to be divinely inspired and equal to the canonical Scriptures. The authors of the *Fragment* knew better. They knew by whom it was written and when, and that it was not a revelation. They had to remove the misunderstanding that was abroad concerning the work, but they had to do so warily or create an opinion of the *Shepherd* as incorrect as the one they would destroy. They dared not say for instance "we do not receive it", a phrase which is used of other books.⁸² Of course in one sense the *Shepherd* is rejected.⁸³ It is not recognized as part of the canonical Scriptures. But all the works of which "not received" is said (apocryphal letters of Paul and the writings of Arsinous and others), are not only rejected from the Canon but positively stigmatized as evil; as the *Fragment* says, "gall should not be mixed with honey."⁸⁴ This phrase could not therefore be used of the *Shepherd* without giving rise to the impression that it was "gall", and so the authors avoid it. Again, let us put ourselves for a moment mentally in the position of those who believed Hermas to be the friend of Paul to whom he sent greetings, and the *Shepherd* to be the record of

⁸¹ Similarly, Leipoldt, *op. cit.*, p. 48; Hesse, *Das muratorische Fragment* p. 270 f.; Credner, *Gesch. d. neutest. Kanons*, p. 117, whose statements however are not in full harmony, cf. p. 165; Overbeck, *Zur Gesch. des Kanons*, pp. 100, 105, and others.

⁸² Ll. 63 ff.; 81 ff.

⁸³ This is involved in "*tantum . . . vero*".

⁸⁴ L. 67.

divine revelations which had been vouchsafed to him. What would be our first thought, were we informed that the book was written a hundred years after we had supposed, and was not a revelation? We would say at once: then the book lies about its origin and its contents, it is apocryphal and false. These are exactly the words Tertullian, as we have seen, used to describe the declaration of some councils of the churches concerning the Shepherd, and it seems more than probable that just such a statement as the one before us was in his mind.⁸⁵ Whether, however, Tertullian is guilty of this or not, such a false inference had to be guarded against, and it is for this purpose that the authors of the *Fragment* after the assertion of the *Shepherd's* late date hasten to add "therefore it ought to be read." Commentators have been puzzled by the "therefore" here. One, who otherwise has excellently understood the situation, is driven to the extremity of saying that the work was ordered to be read because it was written by the brother of a bishop.⁸⁶ But the matter is clear when seen in its proper setting. The writers have in view those who would be inclined to go from the extreme of admiration to that of denunciation. To these they say: "the *Shepherd* is not what you think it is, but you must not condemn *it* because *you* have made a mistake; it is a good book and therefore it ought to be read." But after all the main thing in the writers' minds is to ensure the exclusion of the *Shepherd* from the Scriptures, and so, after having qualified its rejection in this way, they conclude strongly (the "therefore" being still in force): "but it cannot be read publicly in the church to the people either among the Prophets whose number is complete or among the Apostles to the end of time;" that is to say, it is to be ranked with neither the Old nor the New Testament.

The correctness of this interpretation will be more apparent

⁸⁵ Similarly Credner, *Gesch. d. neutest. Kanons*, p. 117. An interesting parallel to Tertullian's statement is found in Zahn, *Gesch. d. neutest. Kanons*, ii., p. 113, "wer das Buch trotz des Namens Clemens (vis. ii. 4) und vieler anderer Anzeichen für ein Werk aus der Zeit um 145 hielt, musste es für eine pseudepigraphische Fiction halten". Cf. also p. 118 and vol. i., p. 342.

⁸⁶ Hesse, *op. cit.*, pp. 268 ff.

when we see how others are involved with difficulties. I will take for examples those of Professors Zahn and Harnack, who approach the matter from different standpoints. Professor Zahn,⁸⁷ who has little respect for the judgment of the author of the *Fragment*, explains the injunction to read the *Shepherd* as follows. The Fragmentist believed that the *Shepherd* had been published as an apocalypse but was himself of the opinion that it was not such, and was not kindly disposed toward it. But because it could not be charged with heresy, or intentional falsehood, or because it had been found valuable in the church, or perhaps by way of concession to the opposite party,—we cannot be sure of his motives,—he retained the work in a minor position, as a sort of deuterocanonical work, and ordered it to be read, only providing that it shall not be read in the public services of the church along with the Old and New Testament. But such an interpretation is possible only to one who holds as low an opinion of the author or authors of the *Fragment* as Prof. Zahn does. In several respects it is out of accord with the statements of the *Fragment*, and what we know from other sources about this time. Elsewhere the *Fragment* is straightforward, honest, and, we may add, definite in its statements concerning the rejection or acceptance of writings. When there is a difference of opinion in the church regarding a work, as in the case of the Apocalypse of Peter, the fact is recorded without comment or attempted compromise. It is hardly thinkable therefore that the author or authors would admit even to a secondary place a work which they believed laid claim to inspiration falsely. Moreover, there is no sign in the *Fragment* or in the other literature of this time of any deuterocanonical books,⁸⁸ and later when there were, only such works were involved as were of obscure origin. For the authors of the *Fragment* the origin of the *Shepherd* was not doubtful.

Professor Harnack⁸⁹ thinks that the author of the *Fragment*, in agreement with the church generally, regarded the *Shepherd* as a genuine prophecy; that the eloquent silence of the author

⁸⁷ *Gesch. d. neutest. Kanons*, vol. i., pp. 342 ff., vol. ii., pp. 111-118; in Herzog, *Realencycl.* 3rd ed. vol. ix., pp. 778 f.

⁸⁸ Harnack emphasizes this, *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, iii. p. 399.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 369 ff.

concerning Christian prophetic writings in their relation to the authoritative church collection is very significant; that the time was past when prophecy just because it was prophecy could be accounted canonical; other conditions were now prerequisite to reception into the sacred collection; that it was necessary therefore for the Fragmentist to create a new category for Christian prophetic books, and that he did this by making it the *duty* of Christians to read them *privately*, that is, not in the public church services. But how inconsistent that is with itself and with what Prof. Harnack says elsewhere in the same article! How can the *Fragment* be "eloquently silent concerning the relation of the prophetic writings to the authoritative church collection" and at the same time "create for them a special category"? And how does the creation of a special category differ from the erection of a deutero-canon, of which Prof. Harnack tells us there is no sign at this time in the *Fragment* or elsewhere? Or, looking at the larger question, is it possible that works which a few years before had occupied a position second to none among the Christian writings, should within one generation be relegated to at least comparative obscurity?⁹⁰ But quite apart from these considerations Harnack's interpretation is wrecked on the fact that the *Muratorii Fragment* has not one word to say about Christian prophetic writings as a class being read. All other so-called Apocalypses are definitely excluded by the "only" of line 72; the *Shepherd* alone is separated from them and made the subject of special remark. There is not a shadow of justification for the statement that the contents of this remark were applicable to any other writings or class of writings.

When, therefore, we find these scholars, differing as they do in their attitude toward the history of the Canon and in their estimate and interpretation of the *Muratorii Fragment*, both alike involved in difficulties and inconsistencies through the assumption that the *Shepherd* was published, and for long regarded, as an apocalypse, we come back with the more con-

⁹⁰ Harnack himself (*ibid.*, p. 405) acknowledges the "ausserordentlich raschen Verlauf des Prozesses. Cf. the criticism by Overbeck, *op. cit.*, p. 75 f.

fidence to the interpretation of this passage to which we were led by our investigation of the historical background. What the authors of *Murator Fragment* say here is in effect: "We know in detail the history of the origin of the *Shepherd* of Hermas and can assure the church that it never was intended to be taken as an apocalypse; those who have so regarded it have been mistaken; it is a good book and ought to be read, but it is not part of the Scriptures." In other words, what the *Murator Fragment* does, is not to take away the authority which had universally been conceded to the *Shepherd* at one time, but to check a growing tendency to regard it as canonical.

When we turn to the *Shepherd* of Hermas itself, the first thing that engages our attention is that the work is in the form of a revelation, then that there is a certain correspondence between it and the other apocalyptic and cryptic literature of the time. Divine messengers as mediators, visions as the mediums of the revelations, prayer and fasting as suitable means of preparation, the dialogue form, are common features. Moreover, some of the incidents in the *Shepherd* are strikingly similar to those in the apocalypses, for instance, the command to write down the revelations, the appearance of the saints of God in the form of sheep, the mention of angels' names, the church in the form of a woman; and finally as Hermas quotes from one of the apocalypses—the lost book of Eldad and Modat—there can be no reasonable doubt that he was acquainted with, and influenced by this sort of literature in the production of his own work.

More recently the attempt has been made to connect the *Shepherd* of Hermas with the Hermetic literature of Egypt. Reitzenstein⁹¹ would have us believe that not only is the name

⁹¹ Reitzenstein, *Poimandres*, pp. 11 ff., 32 f. C. Taylor (*Jour. of Philology*, xxviii., p. 37) finds "an intricate and artificial correspondence" between the *Shepherd* and the *Tabula Cebetis* which he can account for only "on the hypothesis that Hermas used the *Tabula* with necessary variations as material for his Christian allegory." Taylor has done good service in pointing out the intentional enigmatic character of the *Shepherd*, but his conclusions, both in the article referred to and in his *Hermas and the Four Gospels* are too far fetched always to command respect. See the criticism by St. John Stock in *Journ. of Phil.*, xxviii.

“Hermas” connected with Hermes Trismegistus and the title “Shepherd” with Poimander, and the Arcadia in the *Shepherd* with the belief that this was the home of Hermes, but also, from a striking parallel between the fourth vision of Hermas and the introduction to the *Poimander*, concludes that the author of the former had the other work before him, though in a form somewhat different from that which has come down to us.

But if the *Shepherd* is undoubtedly similar to the apocalypses in form, it is just as certainly different from them in every other respect.⁹² The best proof of this is a perusal of the works themselves. The other Jewish and Christian so-called apocalypses belong to an entirely different world of ideas. The intellectual background, the purpose of writing, the attitude toward the past, the present, the future, the object of writing, the centre of interest—in all these matters the *Shepherd* goes its own way. The eschatological interest which dominates the other apocalypses is almost entirely lacking. We learn that the future world is summer to the righteous and winter to sinners,⁹³ that for some there is no hope but even a double penalty, even eternal death,⁹⁴ that the Church at last shall be utterly pure from spot and blemish,⁹⁵ that the building of the tower has been stopped for a little to allow some to repent,⁹⁶ that the Master is now away but may return at any moment,⁹⁷ but beyond such general statements the writer does not go. Not that the church and present conditions are isolated from the past and present—the *Shepherd* knows that God who made all things of nothing has created the heaven and the earth, and all things for his Church.⁹⁸ But he does not pry into these matters nor do they ever occupy the central place in his thought. In general he is content with the knowledge that God is back of all. Nor of the secrecy which is such a prominent feature of the Jewish apocalypses is there

⁹² See Zahn, *Der Hirt des Hermas*, p. 366 ff. where earlier literature is noted. Hilgenfeld, *Die apostolischen Väter*, p. 158. Hennecke, *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen*, pp. 16,* 208. Donaldson, *The Apostolical Fathers*, p. 336 f. Krüger, *Hist. of early Christian Literature*, Engl. trans., p. 42.

⁹³ *Sim.* iv.

⁹⁴ *Sim.* ix. 18.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ *Sim.* ix. 14.

⁹⁷ *Sim.* v. 5, ix. 5, 7.

⁹⁸ *Vis.* i. 3.

any trace. On the contrary there is hardly a paragraph, certainly not a section, which does not contain an injunction to Hermas to publish what he has heard to all the saints or a statement that the promises made to him hold good for all others as well. The *Shepherd* is the only so-called apocalypse which does not take refuge in a fictitious claim to antiquity, and put forward one of the prophets or heroes of the past as author. The writer "comes forward unabashed as the bearer of a presently given message for his contemporaries". Some writers have thought the contrary but their evidence is not drawn from the work itself.⁹⁰ As little is there any wish to pry into the mysteries of the other world. Angels and other heavenly beings are mentioned, but only as part of the necessary machinery,¹⁰⁰ and occupy a small place. They are interesting to the writer only in so far as they are subservient to the building of the church. Of heavens piled upon heavens, of the entrances and the exits of the greater and lesser luminaries, of the myriads of angels and their glory, of the mysteries of the spiritual world, there is no word. And finally, of the sadness which beclouds every page of the apocalyptic literature, the sorrowful review of the past and its many sins, the sense of present tyrannical oppression, the terrible questions concerning sin and retribution, the old promises and their apparent lack of fulfilment—of all this there is no trace. The *Shepherd* is as little concerned with the past as with the future. The present is his sole concern. The tower of the church of God is abuilding, white and shapely stones are needed and

⁹⁰ Such an hypothesis was thought necessary to account for the conflicting views of the early church, viz. that the *Shepherd* was written by a brother of Pius (cir. 150), that the author was a contemporary of Clement, and that the author was identical with Paul's contemporary. The various forms of the hypothesis are tabulated by Harnack (cf. note 5).

¹⁰⁰ This is a noteworthy fact. There is scarcely anything mentioned in the *Shepherd* that has not an allegorical import and of which the interpretation is not given. So consistent is the author in this respect, that we must assume that those things which obviously were intended to be taken as symbols and whose explanation is obscure to us (e. g. the roots of the white mountain, *Sim.* ix. 30; the four legs of the bench, *Vis.* iii. 13) were quite intelligible to the early readers.

it is his concern to provide them; and he sets himself joyfully to this task.

The Jewish apocalypses regarded the future kingdom of the Messiah as a transformed material world. The *Shepherd* regards the church of God as something drawn out from the world both now and hereafter. He can therefore contemplate with equanimity the horrors and signs of evil that so oppressed the Jewish and Judaistic apocalypses, and confine his view to the beauty of the tower which shall surely be completed according to the plan of the Master.¹⁰¹ There is a great calm over the *Shepherd*. This is the more remarkable as the work was produced in the midst of persecutions, when the church might be called on at any time to suffer stripes, imprisonments, great tribulations, crosses and wild beasts for the Name's sake;¹⁰² when friend might betray friend, and even children their parents.¹⁰³ No one can read the vision of the beast,¹⁰⁴ or the parable of the willow tree,¹⁰⁵ or of the stones cut out of the mountains of Arcadia,¹⁰⁶ without perceiving that the writer was familiar with scenes like those pictured in the story of the martyrdom of Polycarp, of Perpetua and Felicitas, or of those of Vienne. The *Shepherd* of Hermas too was written in the blood of the martyrs; and it would not have surprised us if the author had been goaded into picturing the judgment about to fall on persecutors, or the sufferings of the blessed martyrs, or had caught at the current ideas of the coming antichrist, or pictured in glowing visions

¹⁰¹ The keynote of the *Shepherd* is struck in the passage (*Vis.* i. 3): "Behold the God of hosts, who by his invisible and mighty power and by his great wisdom created the world, and by his glorious purpose clothed his creation with comeliness, and his strong word fixed the heaven and founded the earth upon the waters and by his own wisdom and providence formed his holy church which also he blessed—behold, he removeth the heavens and the mountains and the hills and the seas, and all things are made level for his elect, that he may fulfil to them the promise which he promised with great glory and rejoicing, if so be that they shall keep the ordinances of God, which they received with great faith." I have availed myself here and elsewhere of Dr. Harmer's excellent translation. Cf. the description of the finished tower, *Sim.* ix. 9 f., ix. 18.

¹⁰² *Vis.* iii. 2.

¹⁰³ *Vis.* ii. 2.

¹⁰⁴ *Vis.* iv.

¹⁰⁵ *Sim.* viii.

¹⁰⁶ *Sim.* ix. 19 f.

the brightness of the heavenly home. Nor would it be strange under such oppression and with the view of families divided against themselves—of many being eaten up with the cares of riches¹⁰⁷ or preferring the life of the Gentiles,¹⁰⁸ if he had allowed doubts to arise and pessimism to dominate. Compared with the over-wrought dreams of the apocalypses the *Shepherd* of Hermas is a sane and wholesome work. Instead of their fatalistic lamentation it is a song of hope; instead of the swan-song of a despairing nation, the battle-cry of a vigorous community,—a community so young that it is not yet clear as to its beliefs or its rules of conduct,¹⁰⁹ but old enough to have pride in its witnesses, confidence in its divine Lord, assurance of ultimate victory and peace amid turmoil.

All this is not without bearing on the meaning and purpose of the author. For knowing as he did these other movements in the church, feeling as he must have the perils that threatened, and having in mind, as we know, the other apocalypses, he has deliberately turned his back upon them, and sharply condemned the prevalent desire to penetrate the mysteries of the unseen future. For when Hermas after watching the building of the tower of the church ventured to ask his heavenly guide whether the consummation should be even now, "She cried out with a great voice saying, 'Senseless man, dost thou not see that the tower is still building? Whosoever therefore the tower shall be finished building the end cometh; but it shall be built up quickly. Ask me no more questions: this reminder is sufficient for you and for the saints and to the renewal of your spirits.'" ¹¹⁰ On only one other occasion was Hermas so sharply reprovved by his guide. It is not without meaning that the terrible words which were for the heathen and apostates are omitted, and only those recorded which were "suitable for us and gentle".¹¹¹

Of the relation of the *Shepherd* to the Hermetic literature it is more difficult to speak. Reitzenstein's recent critics have shown that its dependence upon the *Poimander* is at least not

¹⁰⁷ *Sim.* i., ii.

¹⁰⁸ *Mand.* x. i.

¹⁰⁹ This is fundamental and cannot be harmonized with a theory of Jewish origin of the *Shepherd*.

¹¹⁰ *Vis.* iii. 8.

¹¹¹ *Vis.* i. 3.

yet proven, but there is a general agreement that both works, in form at least, have much in common.¹¹² And indeed, Reitzenstein claims little more. For although he points out resemblances between Hermas' conception of prophecy and that of the Hermetic literature,¹¹³ between the lists of good and evil powers,¹¹⁴ these are things common to a larger literature, and he is too well acquainted with both the *Shepherd* and the Hermetic literature to affirm more than a literary relationship. In discussing what he considers the clearest case of borrowing he says that the appearance of the divine messenger in the form of a shepherd is a "perfectly meaningless mask" in the Christian work and that "his (Hermas') conception of the shepherd is blurred and confused, so that everything indicates that here we have to do with a foreign type which has been clumsily introduced into the Christian apocalyptic literature".¹¹⁵ And again, "I do not venture just now to say how far these heathen ideas have influenced the theology of the Christian author, that is to so say, how far the phenomenon of the shepherd was a matter of belief or only literary fiction; the writing (the *Shepherd*) is too unique for us to determine whether the lack of prominence given to Christ and of clearness in picturing him is to be explained by the assumption that his heathen counterpart has been taken over along with the literary form." After saying that "the whole fiction of these progressive revelations and visions is quite consonant with such an assumption", he continues, "But even if we admit only a purely literary influence we have a result both peculiar and well worthy of notice. The Christian author uses heathen models quite as unconcernedly as did the author of the Christian Clementine romance or the inventor of the apocryphal Acts of an Apostle at a

¹¹² Krebs, *Der Logos als Heiland im ersten Jahrhundert*, pp. 136 ff. Bardy, *Le Pasteur d'Herma et les livres hermétiques*, *Rev. Biblique*, 1911, pp. 391 ff. Lietzmann, *Theol. Literaturz.*, 1905, sp. 202. Cf. Cumont, *Les religions orientales dans le paganisme romain*, p. 340, n. 41; Dibelius *Zeit. f. Kirchengesch.*, 1905, pp. 169 ff. who will not go so far.

¹¹³ *Op. cit.*, p. 203 f.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 231 f.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 13. But see the severe criticism by Krebs (*op. cit.*, p. 138 f.), who however has to assume that the Angel of Repentance in the *Shepherd* is identical with the youth in the previous visions.

later time. This indeed contradicts such conceptions (of Hermas) as for instance that of Zahn, who makes of him a 'man of the people' to whom literary influences could not come, and who on account of his lack of culture must have really seen his visions as he reported. I will not speak of the biased exaggeration that underlies the expression 'man of the people'. . . . It does not follow from the author's lack of culture that he was fully independent of literary models; the only immediate inference is that we have to seek these models among the lower strata of literature and as a rule must assume a more independent attitude toward them on the part of the author."¹¹⁶ In these sentences Reitzenstein shows that he has a keener appreciation of the problem of the interpretation of the *Shepherd* than some theological writers. For if the *Shepherd* of Hermas is "quite unique", if only a formal relation to the apocalyptic and Hermetic literature can be asserted and the whole intellectual and religious background is different, and this in spite of the presence of some heathen and perhaps Hermetic ideas, is it not difficult to conceive of it as the naïve record of the real or fancied experiences of a Christian prophet? Much more likely is it the conscious, and in some respects clumsy imitation that Reitzenstein supposes it to be.

That Hermas was one of the "prophets" occasionally mentioned in early Christian literature has now become so firmly fixed an opinion that it is more often asserted than examined. And yet both the "prophets" and Hermas are sufficiently described in the *Shepherd*, for us to institute a comparison, which will show that Hermas could not have regarded himself as one of this order, in spite of Harnack's contention that the appearance of "apostles and teachers" in the *Shepherd* instead of the usual "apostles, prophets and teachers" indicates the contrary.¹¹⁷ In the eleventh mandate after a description of the false prophet, who with other criticisms is described as "not having the power of a divine Spirit in him", as being "empty", or, because he sometimes speaks truth, as one whom "the devil fills with his own spirit", Hermas describes true prophecy. "No Spirit given by God needeth to

¹¹⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 33.

¹¹⁷ *Mission and Expansion of Christianity*, 2nd ed. Engl. trans., I, p. 339f.

be asked: but such a Spirit having the power of divinity speaketh all things of itself for it proceedeth from above, from the power of the divine Spirit." The true prophet may be recognized by the following signs: "By his life test the man that hath the divine Spirit. In the first place he that hath the divine Spirit which is from above, is gentle and tranquil and humble minded, and abstaineth from all wickedness and vain desire of this present world, and holdeth himself inferior to all men, and giveth no answer to any man when inquired of, nor speaketh in solitude, for neither doth the Holy Spirit speak when a man wisheth him to speak; but then he speaketh when God wisheth him to speak. When therefore a man having the divine Spirit comes into an assembly of righteous men who have faith in a divine Spirit and this assembly of men offers up prayer to God, then the angel of the prophetic Spirit who is attached to him filleth the man, and the man, being filled with the Holy Spirit, speaketh to the multitude as the Lord willeth.¹¹⁸ In this way therefore the divine Spirit shall be evident. As touching the divine Spirit therefore whatever power there is, is of the Lord." If the test of the true prophet is his life, Hermas, according to his own statements, could not have passed examination. There are indeed good things said of him. He is temperate, he abstains from every evil desire and is full of all simplicity and guilelessness,¹¹⁹ but he also is over indulgent toward his family, corrupted by the sins of the world,¹²⁰ covets a place of honor higher than he is entitled to,¹²¹ is doubtful minded in religious matters,¹²² and even says weeping of himself and without contradiction "Never in my life spake I a true word but I always lived deceitfully with all men and dressed up my falsehood as truth before all men,"¹²³ and in another place, "I know not what deeds I must do that I may live, for my sins are many and various."¹²⁴ Examples might be multiplied but it is not necessary for the Angel of Repentance himself in

¹¹⁸ τότε ὁ ἄγγελος τοῦ προφητικοῦ πνεύματος ὁ κείμενος πρὸς αὐτὸν πληροῖ τὸν ἄνθρωπον, καὶ πληρωθεὶς ὁ ἄνθρωπος τῷ πνεύματι τῷ ἁγίῳ λαλεῖ εἰς τὸ πλῆθος καθὼς ὁ κύριος βούλεται.

¹¹⁹ *Vis.* i. 2.

¹²⁰ *Vis.* i. 3.

¹²¹ *Vis.* iii. 1.

¹²² *Vis.* iv. 1.

¹²³ *Mand.* iii.

¹²⁴ *Mand.* iv. 2.

reminding him that "there are others before thee and better than thou art unto whom these visions ought to have been revealed"¹²⁵ informs us that Hermas did not measure up to the standard required of a "prophet".

But even though Hermas were able to stand the moral test, or be regarded as an exception, as the words of the Angel of Repentance might imply, the manner in which he received the revelations does not accord with his description of prophecy. According to the passages we have quoted the prophet is filled with the prophetic spirit, he does not speak when he will or where he will but only at the instance of the divine spirit that descends upon him *ab extra*, and the words that he speaks are wholly divine. That is to say Hermas conceives of a prophet as a mere tool in the hands of the prophetic spirit and as contributing nothing of his own but the voice. Such is not the case with Hermas. The "prophetic spirit" is never mentioned as the source of his revelations. The divine messengers do not speak through him but to him. He fails to comprehend, is reprov'd for his curiosity, argues with his guide, and always maintains his own personality and the human point of view. He is throughout not a passive instrument but an active and fallible reporter. "Canst thou carry a report of these things to the elect of God?" asks the Church appearing as an old woman. "Lady, I say to her, I cannot retain as much in my memory but give me the book and I shall transcribe it."¹²⁶ The angel of Repentance commands him "to write down the commandments and parables . . . that thou mayest read them off-hand, and mayest be able to keep them".¹²⁷ And the possibility of neglect of duty is implied in the repeated injunction "Continue in this ministry and complete it unto the end".¹²⁸ "Quit you like a man in this ministry, declare to every man the mighty works of the Lord and thou shalt have favor in this ministry."¹²⁹ Such words would be inappropriate to the prophets the Angel describes.¹³⁰ We are not surprised therefore that Hermas never

¹²⁵ *Vis.* iii. 4.

¹²⁶ *Vis.* ii. 1.

¹²⁷ *Vis.* v.

¹²⁸ *Sim.* x. 2.

¹²⁹ *Sim.* x. 4.

¹³⁰ The *Shepherd's* conception of a prophet as one completely dominated by the divine Spirit, suggests a simpler reason for the omission of the

calls himself, nor does any other early writer give him the title of prophet. Neither is his work called a prophecy, nor after the name of the reputed author as was customary with prophecies and apocalypses but after the chief mediator of the revelations, the *Shepherd*. Clement of Alexandria, though he occasionally when quoting loosely, uses *Shepherd* as the title of the book,¹³¹ generally nicely distinguishes by his method of citation those parts which were revealed by the *Shepherd*, the Angel of Repentance¹³² from the revelations given by others whom he calls "the power that spoke to Hermas",¹³³ or "the power that appeared to Hermas in the vision",¹³⁴ or "the power that appeared to Hermas in the form of the Church".¹³⁵ We must conclude that Hermas was not the spirit-filled passive being such as is meant by "prophet", and, if the *Shepherd's* statements are to be taken literally, had the gift of seeing visions, which Irenaeus also distinguishes from that of prophecy.¹³⁶

This latter hypothesis necessitates that the statements of the *Shepherd* concerning Hermas' life and character be true, and to test it we must examine them with a view to determining their consistency and probability. Of the outward circumstances of his life we learn very little. The first *Vision* be-

"prophets" from their usual place between "apostles" and "teachers" than that proposed by Prof. Harnack. The apostles and teachers, as well as others, are introduced by the *Shepherd* only for commendation or blame, —in order to relate their rewards or punishments (*Vis.* iii. 5; *Sim.* ix. 15, 16, 25). But the prophet *qua* prophet was irresponsible and consequently above praise or blame. In omitting them the author is simply obeying the injunction of the *Didache* (chap. x. f.) "the prophet that speaketh in the Spirit is not to be tried or judged."

¹³¹ *Strom.* ii, 12, 55 (13, 56); iv, 9, 74.

¹³² *Strom.* i, 17, 85; cf. vi. 6, 46; ii, 9, 43.

¹³³ *Strom.* i, 29, 181.

¹³⁴ *Strom.* ii, 1, 3.

¹³⁵ *Strom.* vi, 15, 131. With Origen this is reversed. He generally cites the book by its title (*ποιμήν*), only rarely speaking of the Angel of Repentance as the source of the revelation, e. g. *De princip.* i, 3, 3; *In Joann.* i, 1 comm. t. I, 18. The references are from Harnack, *Gesch. d. altchr. Lit.* I, i, pp. 53 f.

¹³⁶ *Haer.* ii, 32, 4; v, 6, 1. Cf. Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.* v, 7. Hermas uses the terms vision (*δρασις*) and revelation (*ἀποκάλυψις*) of his experiences, e. g. *Vis.* iii, 10.

gins: "He who reared me sold me to a certain Rhoda in Rome. After many years I met her again and began to love her as a sister. After a certain time I saw her bathing in the river Tiber and I gave her my hand and led her out of the river. So, seeing her beauty, I reasoned in my heart, saying, 'Happy were I if I had such an one to wife, both in beauty and in character' ". Later in the same vision we gather that he already has a wife and grown children, who are fearfully corrupt and through whose sins Hermas has lost his possessions. The second *Vision*, which is said to have occurred a year after the first, mentions the children as being still evil, this time as having betrayed their parents, and still further added to their sins wanton deeds and reckless wickedness. Of his wife too it is added that she does "not refrain from using her tongue, wherewith she doeth evil". From the third *Vision* we learn that a little distance from the city he had a field in which he cultivated grain,¹³⁷ and also that "when thou (Hermas) hadst riches thou wast useless but now thou art useful and profitable unto life".¹³⁸ Several later passages imply that he was engaged in business,¹³⁹ and on one occasion he is addressed as "thou who hast fields and dwellings and many other possessions".¹⁴⁰ Toward the end we are informed that his family repented and was reunited.¹⁴¹ There is nothing necessarily inconsistent about these statements. Harnack indeed doubts the historicity of the first *Vision* on chronological grounds,¹⁴² Donaldson points out the improbability of anyone, however naïve, speaking of his wife and children as Hermas does,¹⁴³ and the statement that Hermas had fields, dwellings and other possessions is certainly surprising, coming where it does, and especially as it is coupled with a warning against seeking wealth. Still it is quite possible to weave the incidents, as Zahn has done,¹⁴⁴ into a self-consistent and touching

¹³⁷ *χορὸφιζεις*. Cf. Zahn, *Der Hirt. des Hermas*, p. 83 f.

¹³⁸ The loss of wealth is mentioned also in *Vis.* i, 3, if we accept Zahn's interpretation of *ἀπὸ* as a privative, *op. cit.*, p. 490 f.

¹³⁹ *Vis.* ii, 3; *Mand.* iii; x; *Sim.* iv.

¹⁴⁰ *Sim.* i.

¹⁴¹ *Sim.* vii.

¹⁴² *Patr. Apost. Op.*, not. ad loc.

¹⁴³ *Apostolical Fathers*, p. 327.

¹⁴⁴ *Op. cit.*, pp. 70 ff. But he omits the reference to wealth in *Sim.* i.

picture of wealth, early sins, persecution, loss of possessions, repentance and restoration.

We turn to Hermas' intellectual and moral qualities. We learn that he was habitually patient, good-tempered and always smiling,¹⁴⁵ that he abstained from every evil desire and was full of all simplicity and great guilelessness,¹⁴⁶ that he is saved by his simplicity, great continence and guilelessness,¹⁴⁷ that he is useful and profitable unto life since he has lost his wealth,¹⁴⁸ and has great zeal for doing good.¹⁴⁹ That is one side. On the other, we have the statement that he was an over-indulgent and careless husband and father,¹⁵⁰ that his double-mindedness made him of no understanding, and his heart was not set on the Lord,¹⁵¹ that his spirit was aged and already decayed and had no power by reason of his infirmities and acts of double-mindedness.¹⁵² Indeed, double-mindedness, one of the worst of faults, is frequently ascribed to him.¹⁵³ He says of himself with tears, "Never in my life spake I a true word, but I always lived deceitfully with all men and dressed up my falsehood as truth before all men."¹⁵⁴ He is ignorant concerning repentance because his heart was made dense by his former deeds.¹⁵⁵ He is included among those who "have never investigated concerning the truth, nor inquired concerning the Deity, but have merely believed and have been mixed up in business affairs, and riches and heathen friendships, and many other affairs of this world".¹⁵⁶ He will not cleanse his heart and serve God, and has to be warned lest haply the time be fulfilled and he be found in his foolishness.¹⁵⁷ And yet in spite of all this he is commended for having done nothing out of order since the Angel of Repentance came to him.¹⁵⁸

All attempts to refer Hermas' sins to an earlier period¹⁵⁹ in his life must fail. In most cases at least the sins referred to are stated to be present ones, as is shown by his tears, his

¹⁴⁵ *Vis.* i, 2.¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*¹⁴⁷ *Vis.* ii, 2; iii, 1.¹⁴⁸ *Vis.* iii, 6.¹⁴⁹ *Sim.* v, 3.¹⁵⁰ *Vis.* i, 3; ii, 2.¹⁵¹ *Vis.* iii, 10.¹⁵² *Vis.* iii, 11.¹⁵³ *Vis.* iv, 1; vi, 1; *Mand.* ix; xii, 3 f.¹⁵⁴ *Mand.* iii.¹⁵⁵ *Mand.* iv, 2.¹⁵⁶ *Mand.* x, 1.¹⁵⁷ *Sim.* vi, 5.¹⁵⁸ *Sim.* x, 2.¹⁵⁹ As Zahn does.

ignorance of the sinfulness of certain actions, his prayers for forgiveness, and his joy at the possibility of repentance.¹⁶⁰ The simple fact is that the statements regarding Hermas' moral character are difficult if not impossible of union in a self-consistent picture. Moreover, what are we to think of a Christian who has penetrated so far into the principles of Christian morality that he can put nice questions concerning the treatment of an adulterous wife, or the rightfulness of second marriage,¹⁶¹ or the possibility of repentance after baptism,¹⁶² and yet is not aware that evil thoughts are sinful,¹⁶³ thinks the Church appearing in the form of a woman is the Sybil,¹⁶⁴ is unaware that business lies are wrong;¹⁶⁵ and can we conceive of a Christian, however low his station, who did not know that the Church was built upon the Son of God,¹⁶⁶ or was ignorant of what the martyrs had suffered?¹⁶⁷ In the light of such inconsistencies it is easier to regard Hermas as a composite and fictitious figure, which could and did vary to suit the requirements of the author, who at times must address even the very ignorant. Only such an assumption will explain Hermas' repeated estimate of himself: "I am absolutely unable to comprehend anything at all."¹⁶⁸

But even though we were to admit the possibility of these mutually exclusive elements existing in one person, and should accept the resultant picture of a "man of the people" somewhat as Zahn has so sympathetically drawn it, we should only involve ourselves in a greater difficulty. For whether we agree with this same writer in saying that one of such little culture was incapable of producing a romance, we can most decidedly affirm that such a Hermas as is pictured in the *Shepherd* was not the author of the work that bears his name. This is a matter so obvious that it is surprising it has not been more clearly perceived. For, if Hermas be ignorant it is another than he that informs his ignorance, that is to say that provides the major portion of the *Shepherd*. In other words, either Hermas as author gives answers to his own

¹⁶⁰ E. g. *Vis.* i, 1 f.; *Mand.* iii; iv, 2 f.

¹⁶¹ *Mand.* iv, 1.

¹⁶² *Mand.* iv, 3.

¹⁶³ *Vis.* i, 1 f.

¹⁶⁴ *Vis.* ii, 4.

¹⁶⁵ *Mand.* iii.

¹⁶⁶ *Sim.* ix, 4.

¹⁶⁷ *Vis.* iii, 2.

¹⁶⁸ *Mand.* iv, 2; *Sim.* ix, 14.

questions, and corrects his own faults, or else he was the recipient of real external revelations. Wake, Thiersch, and others who hold to the reality of these revelations, were consistent. Prof. Zahn too feels the logical necessity of making Hermas a man of the people, and regards them as real, though refusing to estimate their present value. But there is no excuse for those who describe Hermas as he describes himself and still make him the author of the *Shepherd*. The author of the *Shepherd*, whether he wrote in ecstasy or with deliberation, was somehow or other competent both to picture his shortcomings and correct them. Von Dobschütz, although dominated by the current theory of Hermas' prophecy, feels the necessity of accounting for the didactic portion of the work in some tangible way when he says: "All this is said to Hermas by the Church. To be sure she appears to the prophet as a heavenly figure. But we do not err when we transfer the vision to earth."¹⁶⁹ Why not then boldly transfer it, as our evidence requires, and recognize in Hermas not the naïve prophet, not the unconscious type of the Roman Christian of his day, not the "strange, solitary, weak, ignorant, ecstatic, inspired perhaps but not inspiring" teacher, who "if he was really brother to a bishop must have been a trial to his relative",¹⁷⁰ but the intentional, variable type, drawn indeed from life, but from more lives than one, the result of the experience of the author, who, as the apparently reliable *Muratorii Fragment* reports, was brother to Bishop Pius. A book that imposed upon Clement and Origen and was regarded as most useful by Athanasius,¹⁷¹ was not written by a fool, however ecstatic.

The silly, well-meaning Hermas in the *Shepherd*, with his hopes and fears, his delight in all he sees and hears, his changing moods of doubt and confidence, and especially his ques-

¹⁶⁹ *Christian Life in the Primitive Church*, Engl. trans. p. 315. Leipoldt, (*op. cit.*, p. 33 n. 2) says: "Die Apokalyptik als literarische Form zu benutzen, dazu was Hermas zu ungeschickt." Of course he was—and too ignorant to instruct himself or others. He says so himself. Then who did it?

¹⁷⁰ Bigg, *Origins of Christianity*, p. 73.

¹⁷¹ *De incarn. verb. Dei*, iii, 1.

tions, frequently stupid, as the Angel tells him, very often quite unnecessary and sometimes to our mind (and we doubt not to the minds of the early Christians) amusing in their naïveté, is merely a foil for the writer. Through him he addresses directly any and every member of the community. For the Hermas so pictured is guilty, or in danger of falling into practically every venial sin mentioned in the book, evil thoughts, morbid introspection, a wrong estimate of fasting, curiosity, doubt, business lies, heathen friendships, pride, sadness, anger, the love of wealth, lack of faith, seeking revelations, double-mindedness, unchastity, indulging his wife and children. This is the reason that he appears suddenly in the middle of the work as possessed of lands, dwellings and other possessions, and it is probably because he is here so plainly a type that Zahn has passed over this passage in picturing his life and character. By this device, too, the author has a simple means of breaking up the otherwise wearisome (or more wearisome) mandates and similitudes, and of introducing expositions of his visions. In his *Pilgrim's Progress*, John Bunyan on only one occasion steps over the frame of the picture, namely when he asks Hope concerning the Slough of Despond. The incident undoubtedly mars the picture, and we feel that he would have done better to allow the explanation to be given to someone within the picture as he invariably does elsewhere. The author of the *Shepherd* has adopted as his usual method that which was exceptional with Bunyan, but with the same results, save that he partly defeated his own purpose, for his fiction, like so many others, was mistaken by some for literal truth. Such is the most natural conclusion to draw from what we have seen of the history and contents of the *Shepherd* and there are still other indications that it is the right one.

Contrary to the manner of Apocalyptic books, the *Shepherd* despises secrecy. Its teachings are to be flung broadcast over the earth. What is said to Hermas is intended for all, and there is scarcely a paragraph in which he is not charged with the duty of publishing it to his fellow-Christians either orally or by writing. But this is not all. Not infrequently the writer (through the Angel) addresses the many directly. The

first instance of this¹⁷² is introduced by a command to Hermas to bear the message to the leaders and others, but such direction is so frequently omitted and the singular and plural alternate without reason or excuse, that the most natural explanation is that the writer was not always true to his fiction of one interlocutor but unconsciously addressed the many whom he really had in mind.¹⁷³ One who reads these passages with attention to the alternation of the singular and plural cannot but mark how the person of Hermas is dimmed and merged in the crowd back of him. One example must suffice here. “ ‘ Sir, this one thing alone *I* ask concerning the three forms of the aged woman, that a complete revelation may be vouchsafed to *me*’. He saith to *me* in answer, ‘ How long are *ye* without understanding? It is *your* double-mindedness that maketh *you* of no understanding, and because *your* heart is not set towards the Lord.’ I answered and said unto him again, ‘ From thee, Sir, *we* shall learn the matters more accurately.’ ‘ Listen’, saith he, ‘ concerning the three forms of which *thou* inquirest. In the first vision wherefore did she appear to *thee* an aged woman and seated on a chair? Because *your* spirit was aged, and already decayed, and had no power, by reason of *your* infirmities and acts of double-mindedness. For as aged people, having no longer hope of renewing their youth, expect nothing else but to fall asleep, so *ye* also, being weakened with the affairs of this world, gave *yourselves* over to repining and cast not *your* cares on the Lord; but *your* spirit was broken, and *ye* were aged by *your* sorrows. . . . But in the second vision *thou* sawest her standing and with her countenance more youthful and more gladsome than before, but her flesh and her hair aged. . . . For he (the Lord) had compassion on *you* and renewed *your* spirits and *ye* laid aside *your* maladies. . . . And therefore he showed *you* the building of the tower. . . . But in the third vision *thou* sawest her younger and fair and gladsome and her form fair. . . . So *ye* have received a renewal of *your* spirits by seeing these good things. And whereas *thou* sawest her

¹⁷² *Vis.* ii, 2.

¹⁷³ E. g. *Vis.* ii, 6; iii, 10; iii, 11; *Sim.* i; *Sim.* vi, 1; vii; ix, 24, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33; x, 1, 4; et. al.

seated upon a couch, the position is a firm one.' " ¹⁷⁴ The real mind of the writer is expressed in the words of the Angel of Repentance: "All these things which are written above, I, the Shepherd, the Angel of Repentance, have declared and spoken to the servants of God." ¹⁷⁵ These servants of God with their virtue and weakness, their steadfastness and doubt, their simplicity and double-mindedness, their hope and their fear, are all to be found within the figure of Hermas.

Some striking omissions in the *Shepherd* have been frequently pointed out, and occasionally used to draw unwarranted conclusions regarding the church of the time. There is not a single quotation from the Old or the New Testament. There is no direct reference to any of the events of our Lord's life, or to any of his teachings. The words "Jesus", "Christ", "Jew", "Israel", "Christian", "Gospel", "baptism", "Eucharist", "resurrection", are all absent, and the word "grace" though found is not used in the Christian sense. ¹⁷⁶ Had these omissions been fewer or less striking, it might be possible to refer them to accident or ignorance, but the matter is important enough to demand an explanation which will account for them all. Is it possible to conceive of a Christian work, written as late as the middle of the second century, intended, not for outsiders, but for the Christians themselves, from which all these words—some of them catch-words of universal familiarity—are excluded? To say that the author was ignorant of them would be absurd. To say he was not interested in them is scarcely less tenable. In most cases the idea is present and only the familiar designation absent. There can be no doubt of his knowledge both of the Old Testament and

¹⁷⁴ *Vis.* iii, 10 f.

¹⁷⁵ *Sim.* ix, 33.

¹⁷⁶ To say that the absence of quotations from the New Testament proves that this was not yet on a par with the Old (e. g. Holtzmann, *Einführung in d. NT.* p. 110) is merely frivolous. To explain the absence of any citation (except that from the book of Eldad and Modat) on the theory that revelation needs no other authority to support it (Weinel in Hennecke, *Neutest. Apokr.*, pp. 228 f.) or that Hermas was commanded to tell what he had seen not what he had read (Zahn, *Hirt. d. Hermas*, p. p. 393), might suffice if this were the only striking omission. And yet may not the *Shepherd* have appealed to Scripture quite as really by suggestion (see even Holtzmann's view, note 178) as if he had formally cited it?

of part of the New.¹⁷⁷ The idea of grace is found in his frequent references to the mercy of God in forgiving sins, and sending repentance. Jesus Christ moves all through the work under the title of "Son of God". Baptism appears frequently, only without the name. We are forced to the conclusion that these omissions were deliberate and intentional—a thing practically impossible if the *Shepherd* be the naïve record of the experience of a vacillating though devout prophet, but which finds a simple and natural explanation if it is an allegory. For an allegory is of the same nature as a puzzle and has the same sort of charm. The truth is concealed behind unusual words and images, and the reader has the same satisfaction in searching for it, as in solving a rebus or an acrostic. It appeals to one of the strongest of human passions—curiosity, and it has the merit of presenting truth in a new and interesting guise. Of course the puzzle may be easy or difficult to solve, the veil of the allegory easy to lift or almost impenetrable. This will depend upon the author and his estimate of his readers. John Bunyan frequently quotes the Bible verbatim. The *Shepherd* never does, but he frequently suggests passages in such a manner that we wonder how he escaped doing so.¹⁷⁸ But whether easy of solution or heavily veiled, an allegory to be an allegory must make some pretense of being an enigma, and this we think is the most natural explanation of these remarkable omissions.

It is not our purpose here to discuss the merits of the *Shepherd* either as a Christian book of instruction or as an allegory. The part it played in the early church is sufficient proof that the author understood his contemporaries. What we do wish to point out afresh is that in interpreting it we must begin, not with the exceedingly human Hermas who lives so delightfully on every page, but with the author who could delineate such a character, and use it in correcting the

¹⁷⁷ See *The New Testament in the Apostolic Fathers*, pp. 105 ff. Zahn, *op. cit.*, pp. 391 ff. and notes to critical editions.

¹⁷⁸ "Wenn er fast ermüdende Umschreibungen von Jac. i, 6-8 (*Mand. ix*) und Jac. iv, 7-12 (*Mand. xii, 2-6*) gibt, ohne dass es ihm in den Sinn käme die betreffenden Stellen selbst zu citieren." Holtzmann, *Einl. in d. NT.* p. 110.

faults and failings of his own times. The *Shepherd* was written from above down, and not the reverse.¹⁷⁹ This is supported by the testimony of the *Muratorii Fragment* as to its authorship, and by the fact—fact at least so far as we can judge—that it was always regarded by the Roman church as suitable for edification. On the other hand, we must remember its undoubted resemblance to the popular pseudo-apocalypses of the time, and its possible relation to the Hermetic literature. This coupled with its lack of prominence in the literature of the Roman church for some decades after its publication suggests that it was intended for the lower classes. In it they received more wholesome teaching in the style of the popular religious literature of the day. It is in the form of a revelation but it roundly condemns those that seek revelations.¹⁸⁰ It is an imitation of apocalypses, but it cries out in horror at anyone wishing to pierce the mystery to whose solution the other apocalypses were devoted.¹⁸¹ It reminds us of the Hermetic literature but it prohibits all attempts to understand the mysteries which called this class of literature into being.¹⁸² This consideration immediately brings into prominence the word-banding that forms no inconsiderable portion of the work, and the many accusations of foolishness and stupidity take on real meaning. Rome already was requiring implicit obedience of her humbler members. The Hermas that wishes to solve mysteries, asks questions, has his opinions, dares to dispute with his guide, is cried down, snubbed and held up to ridicule. When he timorously doubted his ability to keep the commandments the Church could swell with anger and forbid such impious thoughts,¹⁸³ when he was troubled over his unknown sin of evil desire, she could smile—it was a little sin—and assure him that God was not angry with him for that.¹⁸⁴ Just so we treat little children.

We may venture now to state positively what seems to be the theory of the origin and early fortunes of the *Shepherd*

¹⁷⁹ This is the unexpressed assumption back of Prof. Lake's article in the *Harvard Theological Review*, Jan. 1911, pp. 25 ff.

¹⁸⁰ *Vis.* iii, 3, 10, 13; *Sim.* v, 4 f.

¹⁸¹ *Vis.* iii, 8.

¹⁸² *Sim.* ix, 1 f.

¹⁸³ *Mand.* xii, 3 f.

¹⁸⁴ *Vis.* i, 1 ff.

most consonant with the available evidence. It was written by a certain Hermas, who was the brother of Pius, bishop of Rome, and so presumably close to the leaders of the church. In the words of the Church and the Shepherd and the other heavenly messengers we are to see the official teaching of the church of Rome. It was intended chiefly for the edification of the lower class of church members, who are typified in the figure of Hermas within the story. It is in the form of a revelation in order to compete with the popular apocalyptic and cryptic literature of the time, to the teachings and attitude of which it is opposed. There is no evidence that the author intended it to be taken for revelation, nor that the Roman church did so mistake it. Its immediate popularity is indubitable for it soon was known far beyond the place of its origin. In the West it circulated chiefly among the common people, for it appears very rarely in the better literature, and in Africa anyway was regarded with superstitious reverence by the masses, who were sharply rebuked by their leader. The correspondence of the author's name with that of a contemporary of St. Paul, and the literary form of the work, easily suggested an erroneous view of its origin and nature. In Alexandria even the church leaders accepted it as a genuine revelation, one of them definitely ascribing it to St. Paul's friend. The real usefulness of the book was imperilled by such extravagant claims, and the Roman authorities, as represented in the *Muratorii Fragment*, speaking out of full knowledge of the matter, attempted to restore it to its original place and function in the church.