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I. IDEALISTIC MONISM.

I do not care to prefix a rubric of titles of idealistic authors to this criticism, as could be very easily done after the pretentious and pedantic fashion of some review writers. I could cite quite a list, beginning with Fichte, Schelling and Hegel, down to Herbert Spencer, Kuno Fischer, of Heidelberg, and Paul Deussen, of Kiel, and could profess to give outlines of their several phases of Monism from histories of philosophy. But my object is to instruct students who are guided by common sense and their Bibles in the central doctrines of this pretended philosophy which are common to all its phases, and to expose their common errors. No two idealists are consistent with each other, nor even with themselves; hence the attempt to particularize their different schemes would be tedious and hopeless, and would disappoint my practical aim.

Idealism is, in plain terms, that doctrine which tells us that the whole universe, including ourselves, consists of ideas only, and contains no other perdurable substantive beings, material or spiritual, distinguishable from mere trains of ideas or actions. Monism is the doctrine which insists that there is no distinction of mind and matter, that both are one and that there is no true philosophy until all things are traced to one single principle of being. The monism of idealists is, that the universe exists for me only as my representation in thought. Thought and real being are identical. To think a thing is to give it existence, the only kind of existence which anything has. There is not, and cannot be, any creation *ex nihilo*, even if there were an almighty

V. THE GOSPEL AND THE REVELATION OF PETER.

FROM the paucity of reference thereto in its most representative journals, it is rightly to be inferred that the study of patristic literature is almost entirely, if not wholly, neglected in the Southern Presbyterian Church. The cause of such neglect is, perhaps, not far to seek: the failure of her seminaries to provide instruction, and the scarcity of pertinent volumes in her libraries, go far towards drawing the student to other fields of research. And yet a few notes on recent noteworthy discoveries in this important field of scholarly investigation cannot come wholly amiss. Deny it or not, most of us, like the Athenians of old, delight to hear or to tell some new thing, provided only it touch not our religion to the quick.

And new things are now the order of the day. The Tell El Amarna finds and the excavations in Egypt are causing the precious historic truths of inerrant record to shine as never before. After the lapse of centuries, the classic world reads again the *Mimes* of Herodas, the *Ἀθηναίων πολιτεία* of Aristotle, the *Antiope* of Euripides, a new oration of Hyperides, and finds many of its pet theories done to death by the unwelcomed presence of fresh facts. There seems to be no limit to what we may expect at any time. The tireless search of such men as Rendel Harris, F. G. Kenyon, Dom G. Morin, A. H. Sayce, and Flinders Petrie may at any time give us back the long-lost treasures of the literature of the early Christian centuries. In 1883-'84 the Christian world was fluttered by the publication of less than a dozen pages of an ancient Christian book from an Eastern library, for Bryennius gave us then the *Teaching of the Apostles*. Since then the recovery of the *Diatessaron* of Tatian has told us in unmistakable language that the Fourth Gospel is substantially a message from that disciple whom JESUS loved. The new works about to be mentioned will not make, as they have not made, the stir caused by Bryennius's find, but they will tell most effectually on the settlement of questions mooted in scholarly circles. The real im-

portance of writings and opinions is not, as Socrates observed some time since, to be judged by the effect produced on the multitude, but by the commendation and study they receive from the hands of competent authorities. Judged from its real utility, the *Teaching of the Apostles* is not to be mentioned by the side of the *Gospel According to Peter*, for that justly takes its place as most noteworthy among recent finds.

1. Seven years ago there was dug up from an old monk's tomb at Akhmīne, in upper Egypt, a parchment codex that now rests in the Gizeh Museum at Cairo. The French Archæological Mission have the honor of its discovery, of its identification, and of its tardy publication. For more than five years the manuscript waited until U. Bouriant, the director of the aforesaid mission, could find time to print it. And when it came, it came appended to a treatise on arithmetic, which was published in photo-fac-simile, while the old monk's treasure-trove had not a line to show the style of the handwriting, and its most important parts had no separate head-lines. But when once Bouriant's volume came into the hands of patristic students, the old monk's book received prompt and proper attention. Two fac-similes, numerous editions, translations, articles, and dissertations attest its value and the gratitude of scholars, while the mathematical treatise has apparently sunk back to its wonted silence. Captive to the car of Rome, France cares naught for the word of God, or for human writings that elucidate it.

The Akhmīne MS., $6x\frac{3}{4}$ inches in size, is written in uncial characters, in a sloping hand current in manuscripts of the seventh to the ninth century, and contains on 33 vellum leaves (66 pages) fragments of three works, all in wide use in the early church: the *Gospel According to Peter*, the *Revelation of Peter*, and the *Apocalypse of Enoch*. The *Enoch* we already had in an Ethiopic version, and it is of great value as showing the lines in which men's ideas moved in the days of Jesus of Nazareth. It is one of the books which influenced our Lord and his apostles, is supposed to be cited by Jude, is part of the bridge between Jesus ben Sirach, *Tobit*, and the *Talmud*, and is indispensable to students of Jewish pseudepigraphy. The phrase "Son of man,"

coined by Ezekiel and used by Daniel, is worked over in *Enoch* until it becomes ready for the fulness of its development in the very personal application made of it by Jesus of Nazareth; and on *Enoch*, likewise, is based, in large measure, that apocalyptic literature which culminates in the sublime compositions of Italian Dante. The fulness of its influence on early Christian thought cannot now be measured. When allowance is fully made for the Sibylline books, *Enoch* and others of the same ilk, we shall be ready to strike the line of originality in much that now passes for patristic genius. Neither can we estimate fully the value in days of old of the *Gospel According to Peter*." Origen, indeed, tells us that he had read it; Jerome and the Decree of Gelasius repudiate it as heretical; Theodoret attests its use among the sect of the Nazarenes; but it is to Eusebius, who seems to have divined by quasi-inspiration what would be most useful to latter-day students, that we owe the fullest account. In his *Ecclesiastical History*, VI., 12, he transcribes for us a letter of Serapion on its use in the churches. Serapion was Bishop of Antioch, and his letter was addressed to the church at Rhossus, on the coast just below Antioch. He, on a visit, found the church agitated over the use of this work in public service, and he permitted its use in order to end the quarrel. But afterwards he borrowed the book, read it, found that it contained traces of the Docetic heresy, and now writes to entirely prohibit its use. From this epistle the natural implication is, that it was no new thing, but that it had been for some time in use in the churches; and no one can well put its composition later than A. D. 170. Is it not earlier? That depends upon the question whether Justin Martyr used it; references and coincidences in his writings seem to imply that he did; Harnack, Lods and Martineau confidently assert that he did; it is denied by Swete and Zahn. If Justin did use it, the date of the work cannot be later than A. D. 130. Where it was written cannot now be determined; most probably it comes from Syria.

At any rate, the work is to be dated before 170 A. D., and we want to know what position the new Gospel holds to the four. Here lies the chief value of the writing—its use in the solution

of the synoptic problem. The author's acquaintance with our four Gospels is unmistakable. To him they all stand on the same footing; he uses, misuses and abuses them all as suits his purpose; neither is there any proof that he knew of an Urevangelium Logia, handed down by oral tradition, or any other gospel record than those the church pronounces canonical. If we take John's Gospel—which seems to be least used or abused of the four, owing, no doubt, to its unfathomable deepness—we find: "1, A very considerable number of verbal resemblances; 2, A certain number of incidents which occur in John alone of the canonical Gospels; 3, Resemblances to John in the order of the narrative; 4, Coincidence with John as to the date of the Passover and crucifixion." Now, since such writers are not given to direct references to their sources, this evidence is most valuable. Harnack wavers in regard to the use of the Fourth Gospel, but Robinson, Swete, Zahn and Schurer regard the use of all four as certain; and the case can be accepted as proven until unexpected evidence comes to the contrary. And, as Robinson puts it: "The new facts are just as they should be if the church's universal tradition as to the supreme and unique position of the four canonical Gospels is still to be sustained by historical criticism. The words of Irenæus are as true as ever to-day, and they have received a new and notable confirmation by our latest recovery: 'So strong is the position of our Gospels, that the heretics themselves bear witness to them, and each must start from them to prove his own doctrine. Since, therefore, those who contradict us lend us their testimony and use our Gospels, the claim we have made in their behalf is thereby confirmed and verified.'" At 130 A. D. the four Gospels were thus accepted by the church as canonical, equally inspired with the writings of the Old Testament of the blessed God.

The new Gospel is also to be set down as a valuable contribution towards the textual criticism of the New Testament. The cry of Jesus in section 5 of the text, "My Power, my Power, hast thou forsaken me?" is evidently to go on the list of witnesses that support *'Hlí* as against *'Elwí* in Matt. xxvii. 46 and Mark xv. 34, but the problem cuts deeper than that. The ques-

tion is that same one to which we owe the brilliant monographs of Dr. J. Rendel Harris, the origin of what Griesbach named the Western text of the New Testament. The peculiar readings of the Western text originate from a desire for completeness, and section 7 of the Gospel much resembles peculiar readings in the Codex Sangermanensis, the Curetonian Syriac, and perhaps in Tatian. Harnack examines the "Pericope of the Woman taken in Adultery," found in D. at John vii. 53-viii. 11, in ten cursives at the end of John, and in the "Ferrar Group" at the end of Luke xxi., and decides that it must have been taken originally from this Gospel. Perhaps, also, the singular addition in D. as to the man working on the Sabbath, and certainly severalagrapha in the *Didascalía*, the *Teaching of the Apostles*, Justin and Clement, of Alexandria. This being granted, and the reasons adduced seem sufficiently cogent, all these variations seem to find a natural place in Peter, and the inference is that Peter is responsible for some, at least, of the distinctive readings of the Western text. Had the old monk a perfect copy of the Gospel, we should have been at the bottom of the textual problem. As it is, we can definitely trace a few variant readings to its influence.

The fragment begins with that point in the trial of Jesus where Pilate rises to wash his hands of the blame for innocent blood, and follows the history down to the Resurrection. The condition of the MSS. favors the opinion that it was only a fragment the monk had to copy, though there is evidence in the two blank pages between the Gospel and the Revelation that the scribe intended to add something further. Whether the addition was to be made to the Gospel or not we cannot tell; but certain it is that there was little else to copy; whatever else there was could have been put on two pages. From the translation given by the present writer in *The Union Seminary Magazine*, Vol. V., No. 1, October, 1893, the purport of the whole writing can be easily gathered. It contains some new facts that can be taken as genuine truths, and legendary matter enough to demonstrate the unique preëminence of the four Gospels. The story that Jesus' head reached to heaven as he went from the tomb, that

the cross followed him and uttered intelligible words, will at once be dismissed as traditional. That the centurion's name was Petronius, that the Jewish elders watched also by the sealed tomb, that Peter and the rest grieved and fasted until the Sabbath, may well be credible. That the Jewish elders went about beating their breasts, denouncing woe on themselves, and looking for Jesus' disciples as malefactors who sought to burn the temple, may well be questioned; but it appears certain that Joseph of Arimathea was a friend of Pilate, and that crowds came from Jerusalem to see the tomb.

The position of the Jews and Pilate and Herod is quite different from that in the canonical Gospels; and, the Rev. John MacPherson to the contrary notwithstanding, it seems due to an anti-Jewish feeling on the part of the author, who has striven to vilify Herod and the Jews and to whitewash Pilate. Of course the four put the odium on the proper persons, but their way of doing so is somewhat different, the difference being largely due to later events in the history of the church. This anti-Jewish standpoint is in good consonance with the evident delight taken in the miraculous, and both point to a date of composition when the age of miracles was already past. But what especially strikes the reader is the occurrence of expressions capable of a Docetic signification. When Jesus was crucified "he was silent, as though he had no pain." On the cross our Lord cried: "My Power, my Power, hast thou forsaken me? And when he said it, he was taken up." A recent writer would have it that these words are due to interpolation; but we have it on the authority of Eusebius that the *Gospel According to Peter* was Docetic, and a disposition to cook documents in the aid of theory means untenableness of the theory in question. The best scholars are those who take ancient writings at their surface value, and these recognize the fragment as heretical in tendency. The departure from the norm may not be serious; yet it is a departure, and must be treated as such. And the view that underlies these statements and accounts for the singular omission of the words "I thirst" from section 5 is, that the divine Christ came down upon the human Christ at his baptism "as a dove, and abode upon him," and departed from him

when upon the cross. Irenæus, too, denounces those who assert "that one Christ suffered and rose again, and another flew up and remained free from suffering." To our author the words "I thirst" would have been inconvenient, and he removed them; and found room for the statement of Christ's painlessness in suffering by the omission of his prayer for those very Jews whom the author so cordially disliked. The gospel thus resolves itself into a tendency document, written to defend certain doctrinal views and to set forth the basis of heretical teaching. The omissions and additions are such as a Docetic writer would be bound to make. And we cannot see how the author of *Supernatural Religion* can say that, "If you cannot prove from this fragment that the so-called Gospel of Peter was earlier than the canonical Gospels, neither can you prove that it was later. They and it stand, in fact, on a level, both as to date and quality, and it was nothing but ill-luck that kept it out of the canon. For 'it is neither better nor worse than the more fortunate works which have found a safe resting-place within the canon of the church.'" Is not? Then the judgment of the author of *Supernatural Religion* is worthless in matters of religion. Perhaps he has never even read the canonical Gospels. For the merest tyro in patristic Greek, the merest ignoramus in Biblical Criticism can see for himself the great gulf fixed between the two. Had the new Gospel been written complete on its present scale it would have contained more matter than all four others, and that is enough to show that it belongs to the time of the legendary. The simplicity, directness, and conciseness of the four is gone; their doctrinal purity has departed; we are now in the realm of haggada. No; the four stand unparalleled, unrivalled, unequalled, immaculate in their simple grandeur and sublime beauty. The church of God has done wisely in refusing to canonize the *Epistle of Barnabas*, the *Shepherd of Hermas*, and the *Gospel According to Peter*.

2. With the *Apocalypse of Peter* we pass into another department of theological speculation and are reminded at once of the unfathomable deepness of Talmudic bosh; for the same ideas appear in it as are found in that thesaurus of rubbish, and it

needs no Vischer to tell us that the author was a Jew. The *Apocalypse of Peter* is a specimen of what real, genuine constructive criticism can do in the hands of sober-minded men. Seven years ago Mr. Montague Rhodes James, M. A., Dean of King's College, Cambridge, began to collect and study the fragments thereof preserved in the early church historians and dogmaticians. As he worked through those poor relics and fragments and most meagre citations, he began to see his way clear to a reconstruction of the general plan and purpose of that long-lost work, and to an estimate of its influence on later works of the same class, until finally his convictions were assured enough to lecture on the subject and to print his views in the edition of the *Testament of Abraham*. Hardly had he done so when Bouriart's volume came, and we know that he was right. The *Apocalypse* is what Mr. James said it would be; and so fully did he write about it when the fragment came that no one since has been able to approach his little book. Harnack confesses that he cannot follow him, and no doubt much of the parallel literature is but remotely connected with Peter; but the influence it once wielded was unmistakably great.

The *Apocalypse* is first mentioned in the well-known Muratorian Fragment dated about 170–200 A. D., with the implication that it was not in universal use at Rome. References also are made to it in Clement of Alexandria and Methodius of Olympus, so that at 300 A. D. it seems to have been in wide use in Lycia, Alexandria, and Rome. Eusebius of Cæsarea, the great church historian, assigns it to the list of such disputed works as were certainly spurious and yet not distinctly heretical; and Sozomen tells us that it was read in certain churches up to his time (440 A. D., say) "once a year on the Friday during which the people most religiously fast in commemoration of the Lord's Passion." From the lists of Nicephorus, and of the *Codex Claromontanus*, D₂ we gather that the whole writing contained from 270 to 300 lines, of which 131 survive, counting 36 letters to the line. But, short as it was, it made a great impression on the superstitious in the early church. We know it was widely current from history, and we infer more from comparison with other

writings of eschatological import. Robinson, James, and Harnack all agree that traces of it are to be found in Hippolytus *Concerning the Universe*, the *Passion of S. Perpetua*, and in *Barlaam and Josaphat*: "Blood-related with our Apocalypse are some sections in the second book of the *Sibylline Oracles* and in the *Shepherd of Hermas*"; and noteworthy parallels are to be found in the *Apocalypse of Baruch*, the *Ascension of Isaiah*, and the *First Book of Clement*. There are also striking resemblances to the canonical Second Epistle of Peter. It appears probable that the author designedly imitated the style of Second Peter to help out his forgery, and thus bear witness to its genuineness, while the use of his book shows how great a hold Jewish fancies had on Christian ideas. Much of Peter's matter reappears also in the *Acts of Thomas*¹ and the *Apocalypse of Paul*, which is a mosaic composed from earlier books. In the latter case the resemblances are quite marked, and Paul gives himself away by his utter failure to comprehend Peter's meaning; the result of all which is, that Enoch and Peter are the probable ultimate sources from which comes the great mass of speculation concerning hell and heaven current in the Middle Ages; and James even goes so far as to say that "when we sing in church of a land where

" 'everlasting spring abides,
And never-withering flowers,'

we are, very likely, using language which could be traced back with few gaps, if any, to an Apocalypse of the second century"!!

¹From the *Blickling Homilies*, A. D. 971, edited by R. Morris for the Early English Text Society, pages 208-10, I transcribe the following, as yet, to my knowledge, unnoticed, parallel to the Apocalypse, section 17, as edited by James: "As Saint Paul was looking towards the northern regions of the earth, from whence all waters pass down, he saw above the water a hoary stone; and north of the stone had grown woods very rimy. And there were dark mists; and under the stone was the dwelling-place of monsters and execrable creatures. And he saw hanging on the cliff opposite the wood many black souls with their hands bound; and the devils in likeness of monsters were seizing them like greedy wolves; and the water under the cliff was black. And between the cliff and the water there were about twelve miles (he means twelve miles from top of cliff to surface of water); and when the twigs brake, then down went the souls who hung on the twigs, and the monsters seized them. These were the souls of them who in this world wickedly sinned." Section 17 seems to be the germ from which this, by the aid of other similar writings, has grown.

Between the Gospel and the Apocalypse no relationship can be established, and the hypothesis that the Apocalypse once formed a part of the Gospel has no good foundation. There is a close connection between Second Peter and the Apocalypse; what, the critics have hesitated to say, mainly because the saying would be inconvenient for a certain critical theory as to Second Peter. To the writer it is clear that the author of the Apocalypse found eschatological statements in Second Peter, and that on them as a basis he built up, with materials gathered from the folk-lore fancies current around him, his own writings, consciously imitating the style and phraseology of Second Peter in order that his forgery might more readily be palmed off upon a gullible public eager for such superstitious papulum. The indications are that it was written during a period of persecution, or when the memory of one was still fresh in the minds of men, and when errors in doctrine were beginning to appear. That the author was a simple-minded Christian with little or no acquaintance with the outstanding facts of the Christian religion, the writer does not believe. Not all his materials were current among Christians of that date, though many of his ideas were, and to say that they were expressed then, "apparently for the first time," is to forget that there is a historic background to Christianity, and that the impressionable Jew came in contact with Zoroastrianism in Babylon and the *Ritual of the Dead* in Egypt. In Egypt, then, it is most probable, this Apocalypse originated; and from Egypt the ancient world got more than grain.

As to contents the fragment falls into three divisions, viz.: an eschatological discourse, a description of Paradise and another of Hades. Of the first division we have but a few lines indicating a revelation of the Lord Jesus to his twelve disciples. False prophets, he says, will arise and be sons of perdition. Then will God come to judge the sons of lawlessness. Then at the request of the Twelve the Lord shows them two inhabitants of the celestial land, whiter than any snow, redder than any rose, beautiful beyond description; and their land, a very great space outside this world, shining with light, full of ever-blooming flowers, sweet odors and trees of blessed fruit. The dwellers wore angel raiment, and their

raiment was like their land. "And the glory of the dwellers there was equal." But it is in the torments of Hades the author seems to have had most delight. Near to Paradise was the place of chastisement, very squalid, and the angels of torment had their raiment dark according to the atmosphere of the place. Commensurate with the guilt and kind of their sins is the punishment of the sinners: Blasphemers of the way of righteousness hung up by their tongues and biting their lips; perverters of righteousness pressed down by angels into a lake of flaming mire; adulterers hung by their feet and adulteresses hung by their hair over and in the sea of mire and filth; murderers smitten by reptiles, wallowing in torment, watched with glee by the souls of the murdered; women*who caused the abortion of their children, up to their throats in the common cesspool of hell where all its filth accumulated, and their children so born out of due time near them howling dismally; persecutors of righteousness scourged by evil spirits and having their entrails devoured by never-resting worms; false witnesses gnawing their tongues with flaming fire in their mouths; the wealthy who trusted in their wealth and pitied not the poor, here roll in filthy rags upon red hot pebbles sharper than any sword; they that lent money on compound interest standing up to their knees in a great lake full of pitch and blood and boiling mire; lewd sinners continually hurled down from a high cliff; men and women smiting each other with rods, burning and turning themselves and being roasted; these are the pictures over which our author gloats. But at best, 'tis but a sorry hell he has to delineate, and it was very little he knew about it; had he lived a century or so later his colors would have been deeper and the refinement of his torment more complete. Slime and mud and fire are about all the materials he had to build up tortures with, for the hell of mediæval glory was not yet come. This is but the beginning of Infernos, and the author has done his work well, with an artist's delight in it, with keen pleasure and enjoyment. And so his little book has moulded the superstitions of ages, and bids fair yet to give its unknown author glory.

This all too brief account will serve to show the reader the general character and evidential value of these newly-recovered

fragments. And as the writer studies these and other remnants of patristic lore he can but think, why should not the study of patristic literature be assiduously prosecuted in the Southern Presbyterian Church? Lo these four years this QUARTERLY has printed not a solitary item on this subject! And the reason — Well, Pearson's *Vindiciæ Epistolarum S. Ignatii* was a great book in its day, and its publication made John Pearson a bishop, and under its shadow the Church of England peacefully slumbered for near two hundred years; yet Dr. Cureton tells us: "In the whole course of my inquiries respecting the Ignatian epistles I have never met with one person who professes to have read Bishop Pearson's celebrated book; but I was informed by one of the most learned and eminent of the present bench of bishops (Kaye) that Porson had expressed to him his opinion that it was a 'very unsatisfactory work.'"

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