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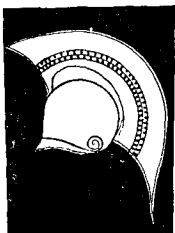
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Books of Special Interest

A Biblical Problem

THE GOSPEL OF MARK: its Composition and Date. By BENJAMIN WISNER BACON. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1925. \$5.

Reviewed by ALBERT J. EDMUNDS

MY FIELD is the Lower Criticism, so that I am compelled to pass lightly over the Higher, and confess my inability to visualize Q and the "Special Source" of Luke as literary entities. It was in July, 1875, half a century ago, that I first analyzed the Gospels, spending most of a summer vacation with paste-pot and scissors. Since then I have known my way about the Gospels as about the streets of a city, and can generally tell what story is told by all Four, what by three, two, or one alone. This is indispensable to any Gospel criticism at all. In spite of what I have said about Q (the common matter in Luke and Matthew which is not in Mark), the contents of that document which can be fixed by the paste-pot have long been part of my mental furniture. I firmly believe in the one-time existence of such a source, but every scholar knows that its exact contents have not been demonstrated. Streeter gives us a valuable caution against exaggerating its worth, and he also proposes other lost sources.

In 1890 I attacked the problem afresh, and for years worked through Abbott and Rushbrooke's Synopticon and also on the "canons and sections" in the margins of the manuscripts, from the Sinaitic downwards. Then I specialized for more years upon the problem of the Mark Appendices, and studied ancient Armenian so as better to interrogate the star witness in the case. Consequently the present essay must not be taken as a scientific critique but as a literary review, or the loose observations of an amateur upon a fascinating book.

Another thing. Ever since the first Society for Psychical Research was founded in 1882, I have been a student of their results, and have made some minor contributions of my own thereto. Consequently many things in the Gospels which are mythical to the average man are real to me. I have no need to relegate the Voice from heaven to the realm of midrash embellishment, as does Professor Bacon. I know that Fox, Swedenborg, and many more, down to date, have heard psychic voices.

The first thing that strikes the reader of Bacon's book is the title, "Gospel of Mark," without the "Saint." This is because the oldest manuscripts read: "According to Mark" (Vatican Codex, fourth century); "Gospel according to Mark" (Sinaitic Manuscript, fourth century); "Gospel of Mark," (oldest Syriac manuscript, fifth century). As Bacon says, the meaning is: "This Gospel represents the story of Peter not as recorded but as it used to be preached, by Mark." The second thing is, that one whole chapter is entitled: "Why Mark is Incomplete." Far beyond all the fascinating problems of date and authorship dealt with in this masterly monograph, is the cardinal one: Why is Mark truncated? Indeed it is the cardinal problem of the entire New Testament, for the Central Fact of the Christian Religion is bound up therewith: viz., the apparitions of Christ after death. Readers of modern translations, like the Twentieth Century New Testament and those of Moffatt and Goodspeed, are aware that Mark has a double ending. You can take your choice whether you will end him with the Longer Appendix ("Mark" XVI. 9—20, the one popularized by the cheap editions of the Bible Societies) or the Shorter Appendix.

The reason for this is, that the oldest manuscripts in Greek, Syriac, Armenian and Georgian (the oldest Latin ones are out of court, being torn off in Mark XV) have no ending at all, but break off at the most exciting place without further information: the women come to the grave, see a ghost, run off in a fright, and keep it quiet. Different ancient churches therefore adopted two rival conclusions to round out the Gospel. Bacon says, "The two second-century appendices to Mark attempt each to bring the mutilated Gospel into line with a different tradition, the one locating the appearances exclusively in Galilee, the other locating them exclusively in Jerusalem and its environs."

The whole problem of the ending of Mark will never have justice done it until scholars make more use of the Armenian Version. Their present use of it is generally confined to the quotation of one peculiar manuscript in Greek, Syriac, Armenian, and Longer Appendix to the presbyter Aris-
tides.

But the truth is, that the oldest Armenian manuscripts support the two oldest Greek ones, the Sinai Syriac and the Georgian by ending at XVI. 8:

"They said nothing to any one, for they were afraid of"

HERE ENDETH THE GOSPEL
ACCORDING TO MARK."

This colophon is always in red.

Now, while only the very oldest Greek, Syriac, and Georgian manuscripts end thus, the Armenians have kept up the fight for twelve hundred years longer than the first two and there is a whole family of their manuscripts, down to 1657, that end like this. The reason is, that Armenia was independent of the great centralized churches of Rome, Antioch, and Alexandria, which appear to have ordered the insertion of the Longer Appendix about the fifth century. Alone, among Christian nations, the Armenians kept up the first-century ending for further centuries, even after European printers were whipping that ancient Version into line with our Catholic and Protestant texts.

The greatest study in English on the endings of Mark is not quoted by Bacon. The author is Clarence Williams of Germantown, and his monograph was published at New Haven in 1921 (though dated 1915—delay due to the war). One misses also any allusion to the remarkable studies of Rendel Harris, especially his reconstruction of the Book of Testimonies, i.e. a lost manual of Old Testament prophecies fulfilled in the New.

Lake's great study of the Resurrection narratives is also neglected. Lake has proved conclusively, by comparison of the narratives of Matthew, John, and the "Peter" Gospel, that the Vatican Manuscript is right in keeping the women outside the sepulchre. The idea of entry is taken over from Luke, as Alford maintained. We must never forget Jerome's pregnant information about the manuscripts, which he knew so well: *they copied things from Luke into Mark*. I am inclined to extend this to the spices, for it is improbable that the anointing and the empty grave story originated with Mark, which was an apparitional Gospel, and therefore prized by the Docetists, as Bacon himself reminds us. Bacon also points out the Lucan origin of the empty grave story when he says: "All these details suggest an origin for the story of the Women at the Sepulchre in the Special Source of Luke which we have found reason in many passages to regard as utilized by Mark, a source in which to an extraordinary extent women are given the place of honor."

Apart from the all-absorbing topic of the apparitions of Christ, the most interesting problems dealt with are those connected with beliefs about judgment and the after-life (eschatology), and the date furnished by the attempt of Caligula to have his image erected in the Jerusalem temple in A. D. 40.

The World To-morrow

THE PASSING OF POLITICS. By WILLIAM KAY WALLACE. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1924. \$4.50.

Reviewed by WILLIAM MACDONALD

MR. WALLACE is not the first writer to insist that economics is displacing politics as the motive force in social organization and procedure, but he is one of the first to argue the point by a somewhat elaborate historical survey of the development of the idea of the state. A good deal of his exposition will probably strike the average reader as abstruse, and not a little of what he has to say seems irrelevant, or at least no more relevant to the subject in hand than it might easily be to other subjects. His book is distinctly one which does not carry its conclusion before it from the beginning, and not until the closing chapters are reached is it altogether clear how the story is to end. The book would have been better had it been half as long, at least twice as simple, and its expository trend considerably more obvious, for then it would have been assured of a reading from a far larger number of the men and women who ought to read and ponder it; but this is a council of perfection, and all that can be done, since Mr. Wallace is entitled to make any kind of a book that he pleases, is to say that the book, in spite of certain defects of form and content, is really a notable contribution to the understanding of things as they are, and as such ought to be widely known.

So much of Mr. Wallace's argument as deals with the nature and growth of politics as "the norm of theory in public affairs,

the theory of the state," is more or less familiar, notwithstanding that his definition of politics as "a method of regulating social intercourse without immediate recourse to force" has at least novelty of phrase. The dominance of the political age is traced no further back than the days of feudalism, and in that dominance feudalism, war, and religion are shown to have played leading parts. The breakdown of the political state began with the intrusion of democracy in the rise of a middle class. It was middle class democracy that overthrew the political power of aristocracies, secularized religion through the Protestant schism, and started constitutional government in England on its course. It was the same democracy that emphasized such individualistic ideas as liberty, justice, and duty, and at the same time developed the spirit and practice of nationalism and nourished the patriotism that led only too often to war.

Oddly enough as it may at first seem, it is the same democracy that, as Mr. Wallace sees it, is now destroying the political concept of the state, and with it the middle class which has been to the political state the chief source of strength. Democracy, in other words, has always been a disintegrating and subversive force. Where people once talked of personal liberty and individual right they now talk of equality by political ideas and methods, they are seeking a new social order in which economic interests, the only interests with which the average man is vitally concerned, shall hold the whip hand. Once the acquisition of property was a controlling motive, but now it is the equitable distribution of wealth that is the aim, and since the middle class has been the mainstay of the property idea, it is the middle class that is destined to disappear before the rising power of the proletariat.

Precisely what the form of the new state shall be when economics shall have ejected politics into space is not altogether clear from Mr. Wallace's pages, but it apparently will not be either socialistic or communistic as those terms are generally understood. Capital and labor both remain and will form the basis of new party alignments, but they will not exist as embattled hosts always ready to fight for their respective "rights," but rather as economic activities bound together by their impersonal character in a community of interest. The individual, on the other hand, must be prepared to sink himself in the mass, "to sacrifice his ethical values as an individual, and his metaphysical concepts of liberty, for new economic values and material advantages." To all such changes the middle class stands solidly opposed, and hence its elimination becomes the primary task of those who would help on the new order in which politics shall be no more.

Whether the revolution which Mr. Wallace sees advancing is to work to the full the drastic changes which he indicates is, of course, still an open question, and the organized forces of the propertied and the privileged may be counted upon to fight it tooth and nail. Of the soundness of Mr. Wallace's general exposition, however, there can be no reasonable doubt. The modern world has long been wearying of politics. The national "policies" which political government champions and the international controversies in which it engages have less and less interest for the citizen who is not on the inside, and neither nationalism nor patriotism makes any longer its accustomed appeal. Time was when men thought it a noble thing to die for what they conceived to be their country, but they are few to-day who would care to die for oil or even for the League. The hollowness of most political issues, of the issues, that is, with which present-day governments chiefly deal, has become apparent to the man in the street, and the demand for a nearer approach to economic equality is heard everywhere. It is this demand that Mr. Wallace, viewing it as the logical and inevitable outcome of a long historical evolution, hails as the force that is remaking the world.

The Book Club of California announces the publication of Richard de Bury's "The Philobiblon" in a limited edition of 250 copies for sale only to members of the Club. The volume is a folio, 15 by 10 inches, printed in two colors from 16 point Poliphilus type, in double columns, on Van Gelder handmade paper. It is bound in boards with cloth back and paper label. The ornamental initial letters throughout were designed especially for this edition. The volume was printed at the Grubhorn Press of San Francisco. No pains has been spared to make the edition one of distinction.