collecting and editing the remains of the prophets was hardly undertaken till the commencement of the second canon; and by this time, no doubt, many writings had been lost, others were more or less fragmentary, and the tradition of authorship was not always complete. It was, indeed, more important to have an oracle authenticated by the name of its author than to know the writer of a history or a Psalm, and many prophets seem to have prefixed their names to their works. But other prophecies are quite anonymous, and prophets who quote earlier oracles never give the author's name. (A famous case occurs, Isa. xv., xvi., where in xvi. 13, for *since that time* read *long ago*.) Now all the remains of prophecy, whether provided with titles or not, were ultimately arranged in four books, the fourth of which names, in separate titles, twelve authors; while the first three books are named after Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and actually mention no other names in the titles of the several prophecies of which they are made up. But is it safe to assume that every anonymous prophecy in these books must be by the author of the next preceding prophecy which has a title? Certainly any such assumption can only be provisional, and may be overthrown by internal evidence.

Internal evidence of date.

But internal evidence of date, it is said, cannot apply to prophetic books in which the author looks in a supernatural way into the future. The value of this argument must be tested by looking more closely at the actual contents of the prophetic books. The prophecies contain—1*st*, reproof of present sin; 2*d*, exhortation to present duty; 3*d*, encouragement to the godly and threatening to the wicked, based on the certainty of God's righteous purpose. In this last connection prophecy is predictive. It lays hold of the ideal elements of the theocratic conception, and depicts the way in which, by God's grace, they shall be actually realized in a Messianic age, and in a nation purified by judgment and mercy. But in all this the prophet starts from present sin, present needs, present historical situations. There is no reason to think that a prophet ever received a revelation which was not spoken directly and pointedly to his own time. If we find, then, that after the prophecy of Zechariah i.–viii., which is complete in itself, there begins at ch. ix. a *new* oracle, quite distinct in subject and style, which speaks of an alliance between Judah and Israel as a thing subsisting in the prophet's own time, which knows no oppressor later than Assyria and Egypt, and rebukes forms of idolatry that do not appear after the Exile;—if, in short, the whole prophecy becomes luminous when it is placed a little after the time of Hosea, and remains absolutely dark if it is ascribed to Zechariah, we are surely entitled to let it speak for itself. When the principle is admitted other applications follow, mainly in the book of Isaiah, where the anonymous chapters, xl.–lxvi., cannot be understood in a natural and living way except by looking at them from the historical stand-point of the Exile. Then arises a further question, whether all *titles* are certainly authentic and conclusive; and here, too, it is difficult to answer by an absolute affirmative. For example, in Isa. xxx. 6, the title, "The burden of the beasts of the south," interrupts the connection in a most violent way. This is not a solitary instance, but on the whole the titles are far more trustworthy in the prophecies than in the Psalms, and partly on this account, but mainly from the direct historical bearing of prophetic teaching, we can frame a completer history of written prophecy than of any other part of Old Testament literature. We have, on the one hand, a series of prophets—Amos, Hosea, and the anonymous author of Zech. ix.–xi.—who preached in the northern kingdom, but are not descendants of the school of Elisha, which had so decayed under court favour from the dynasty of Jehu, that Amos had to be sent from the wilderness of Judah to take up again the forgotten word of the Lord. In Judah proper we have the great Assyrian prophets, Isaiah with his younger contemporary Micah, the powerful supporters of the reformation of Hezekiah, labouring one in the capital, the other in the country district of the Philistine border. To the Assyrian period belongs also Nahum, who wrote, perhaps, in captivity, and foretold the fall of Nineveh. Then comes Zephaniah about the time of the Scythian ravages, followed by the prophets of the Chaldean period; first Habakkuk and then Jeremiah and Ezekiel, men of a heavier spirit and less glowing poetic fire than Isaiah, no longer upholding the courage of Judah in the struggle with the empire of the East, but predicting the utter dissolution of existing things, and finding hope only in a new covenant—a new theocracy. In the period of Exile more than one anonymous prophet raised his voice; for not only the "Great Unnamed" of Isa. xl.–lxvi., but the authors of other Babylonian prophecies, are probably to be assigned to this time. In the new hope of deliverance the poetic genius, as well as the spiritual insight of prophecy, awakes to fresh life, and sets forth the mission of the new Israel to carry the knowledge of the Lord to all nations. But the spirit of the new Jerusalem had little in common with these aspirations, and in Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, prophecy retains not much of its old power except an uncompromising moral earnestness. The noble poetry of the old prophets, which even in the time of Ezekiel had begun to give way to plain prose, finds no counterpart in these latest oracles; and imaginative power is shown, where it still exists, in the artificial structure of symbolic visions. No important new ideas are set forth, and even the tone of moral exhortation sometimes reminds us more of the rabbinical maxims of the fathers in the Mishna, than of the prophetic teaching of the 8th century. And as if the spirit of prophecy foresaw its own dissolution, Malachi looks not to the continued succession of prophets, but to the return of Elijah as the necessary preparation for the day of the Lord. In this sketch of the prophetic writings we find no place for the book of Daniel, which, whether composed in the early years of the Persian empire, or, as modern critics hold, at the time of the Maccabee wars, presents so many points of diversity from ordinary prophecy as to require entirely separate treatment. It is in point of form the precursor of the apocalyptic books of post-canonical Judaism, though in its intrinsic qualities far superior to these, and akin to the prophets proper.

The latest prophets.

Daniel.

Further History of the Old Testament Canon in the Jewish Church.—Under this head we confine ourselves to points which lead up to the reception of the Old Testament by Christendom. These are mainly two:—(1), the history of the Hebrew text, which we now possess only in the recension established by Jewish scribes at a time later than the Christian era; (2), the history of those versions which arose among Jews, but have influenced Christendom.

The Text of the Old Testament.—Semitic alphabets have no full provision for distinguishing vowels, and the oldest writing, before orthography became fixed, was negligent in the use even of such vowel-letters as exist. For a long time, then, not only during the use of the old Phœnician character, but even after the more modern square or Babylonian letters were adopted, the written text of the Bible was *consonantal only*, leaving a certain scope for variety of pronunciation and sense. But even the consonantal text was not absolutely fixed. The loose state of the laws of spelling and the great similarity of several letters made errors of copying frequent. The text of Micah, for example, is often unintelligible, and many hopeless errors are older than the oldest versions. But up to the time of the Alexandrian version, MSS. were in circulation which differed not merely by greater or less accuracy of transcription, but by presenting such differences of recension as

The consonantal text.

could not arise by accident. The Greek text of Jeremiah is vastly different from that of the Hebrew Bible, and it is not certain that the latter is always best. In the books of Samuel the Greek enables us to correct many blunders of the Hebrew text, but shows at the same time that copyists used great freedom with details of the text. For the Pentateuch we have, in the copies of the Samaritans, a third recension, often but not always closely allied to the Greek. The three recensions show important variations in the chronology of Genesis; and it is remarkable that the *Book of Jubilees*, a Jewish treatise, which cannot be much older than the Christian era, perhaps not much older than the destruction of the Jewish state, sometimes agrees with the Samaritan or with the Alexandrian recension. Up to this time, then, there was no absolutely received text. But soon after the Christian era all this was changed, and by a process which we cannot follow in detail, a single recension became supreme. The change was, no doubt, connected with the rise of an overdrawn and fantastic system of interpretation, which found lessons in the smallest peculiarity of the text; but Lagarde has made it probable that no critical process was used to fix the standard recension, and that all existing MSS. are derived from a single archetype, which was followed even in its marks of deletion and other accidental peculiarities. (Lagarde, *Anmerkn. zur griech. Uebersetzung der Prov.*, 1863, p. 1; *cf.* Nöldeke in Hilgenfeld's *Zeitschr.*, 1873, p. 445.) Then the received text became the object of farther care, and the Massorets, or "possessors of tradition" with regard to the text, handed down a body of careful directions as to the true orthography and pronunciation. The latter was fixed by the gradual invention of subsidiary marks for the vowels, &c., an invention developed in slightly divergent forms in the Babylonian and Palestinian schools of Jewish scholarship. The vowel points were not known to Jerome, but the system was complete before the 9th century, presumably several hundred years before that time. All printed Bibles follow the Western punctuation, but old Karaite MSS. with the Babylonian vowels exist, and are now in course of publication. It is from the Massoretic text, with Massoretic punctuation, that the English version and most Protestant translations are derived. Older Christian versions, so far as they are based on the Hebrew at all (Jerome's Latin, Syriac), at least follow pretty closely the received consonantal text.

Jewish Versions.—Versions of the Old Testament became necessary partly because the Jews of the Western Dispersion adopted the Greek language, partly because even in Palestine the Old Hebrew was gradually supplanted by Aramaic. The chief seat of the Hellenistic Jews was in Egypt, and here arose the Alexandrian version, commonly known as the Septuagint or Version of the LXX., from a fable that it was composed, with miraculous circumstances, by seventy-two Palestinian scholars summoned to Egypt by Ptolemy Philadelphus. In reality there can be no doubt that the version was gradually completed by several authors and at different times. The whole is probably older than the middle of the 2d century B.C. We have already seen that the text that lay before the translators was in many parts not that of the present Hebrew. The execution is by no means uniform; and, though there are many good renderings, the defects are so numerous that the Greek-speaking Jews, as well as the large section of the Christian church which long depended directly or indirectly on this version, were in many places quite shut out from a right understanding of the Old Testament. Nevertheless, the authority of the version was very great, its inspiration was often asserted, and its interpretations exercised a great influence on Jewish and Christian thought, though among the Jews it was to a certain extent displaced by the version of the proselyte Aquila (2d century of our era), which followed with slavish exactness the letter of the Hebrew text.

Among the Jews who spoke Aramaic, translations into the vernacular accompanied, instead of supplanting the use of the original text, which was read and then orally paraphrased in the synagogues by interpreters or Methurgemanim, who used great freedom of embellishment and application. This practice naturally led to the formation of written Targums, or Aramaic translations, which have not, however, reached us in at all their earliest form. It used, indeed, to be supposed that the simple and literal Targum of Onkelos on the Pentateuch was earlier than the time of Christ. But recent inquirers have been led to see in it, and in the linguistically cognate Targum on the Prophets (Targum of Jonathan), products of the Babylonian schools, in which the freedom of the early paraphrastic method was carefully avoided. Upon this view the date of these Targums is some centuries after the Christian era. On the other hand, an older style of paraphrase is preserved in the Palestinian Targums, which nevertheless contain in their present form elements later than the Babylonian versions. The Targum of Pseudo-Jonathan on the Pentateuch is apparently the latest form of the free Palestinian version, full of legendary adornments and other additions to the text. Other fragments of Palestinian translation, known as the Jerusalem Targum, and referring to individual passages of the Pentateuch and Prophets, probably represent an earlier stage in the growth of the Aramaic versions. There are also Targums on the Hagiographa, which, however, have less importance, and do not seem to have had so changeful a history. The Targums as a whole do not offer much to the textual critic. They are important, partly from the insight they give into an early and in part pre-Christian exegesis, partly from their influence on later Jewish expositors, and through them on Christian versions and expositions. In some cases the literal or Babylonian Targums have a text differing from the Massoretic. But it is not unlikely that if we had a satisfactory text of the Targums (towards which almost nothing has hitherto been done), these variations would find their explanation in the Eastern text and the Assyrian punctuation.

NEW TESTAMENT.—*Relation of the Earliest Christianity to the Literary and Intellectual Activity of the Age.*—In the literature of Palestine at the time of Christ we distinguish a learned and a popular element. The learned class or scribes were busy on their twofold structure of Halacha, or legal tradition and inference, supplementing and "hedging in" the Pentateuchal law, and Haggada, or fantastic exegesis, legendary, ethical, or theosophic, under which the religious directness of the Old Testament almost wholly disappeared. The popular religious literature of the day seems again to have been mainly apocalyptic. (See APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE.) The people never wearied of these mysterious revelations couched in strange symbolic and enigmatic forms, and placed in the mouths of ancient patriarchs and worthies, which held forth golden visions of deliverance and vengeance in a shape which, because crassen and earthlier, was also more palpable than the spiritual hopes of the old prophets. Beyond the limits of Palestine thought took a wider range. In adopting the Greek language the Hellenistic Jews had also become open to the influences of foreign speculation, and the schools of Alexandria, whose greatest teacher, Philo, was contemporary with the foundation of Christianity, had in great measure exchanged the faith of the Old Testament for a complicated system of metaphysico-theological speculations upon the Absolute Being, the Divine Wisdom, the Logos, and the like, which by the aid of allegorical interpretation were made to appear as the true teaching of Hebrew antiquity.

To these currents of thought the relation of the earliest Christianity, entirely absorbed in the one great fact of the manifestation of God in Christ crucified, risen, and soon to return in glory, was for the most part hostile, when it was not merely superficial. With the spirit of the scribes Jesus had openly joined issue. In the legal tradition of the elders he saw the commandment of God annulled (Matt. xv.) It was His part not to destroy but to fill up into spiritual completeness the teaching of the old dispensation (Matt. v.); and herein He attached himself directly to the prophetic conception of the law in Deuteronomy (Matt. xxii. 37, *ff.*) And not only in His ethical teaching but in His personal sense of fellowship with the Father, and in the inner consciousness of His Messianic mission, Jesus stood directly on the Old Testament, reading in the Psalms and Prophets, which so vainly exercised the unsympathetic exegesis of the scribes, the direct and unmistakable image of His own experience and work as the founder of the spiritual kingdom of God (*cf.* especially, Luke xxiv. 25, *ff.*) Thus Jesus found His first disciples among men who were strangers to the theological culture of the day (Acts iv. 13), cherishing no literature but the Old Testament witness to Christ, and claiming no wisdom save the knowledge of Him. At first, indeed, the church at Jerusalem was content to express its new life in simple exercises of faith and hope, without any attempt to define its relation to the past dispensation, and without breaking with the legal ordinances of the temple. But the spread of Christianity to the Gentiles compelled the principles of the new religion to measure themselves openly with the Judaism of the Pharisees. In the heathen mission of Paul the ceremonial law was ignored, and men became Christians without first becoming proselytes. The stricter Pharisaically-trained believers were horror-stricken. The old apostles, though they could not refuse the right hand of fellowship to workers so manifestly blessed of God as Paul and Barnabas, were indisposed to throw themselves into the new current, and displayed considerable vacillation in their personal conduct. Paul and his associates had to fight their own battle against the constant efforts of Judaizing emissaries, and the rabbinical training acquired at the feet of Gamaliel enabled the apostle of the heathen to meet the Judaizers on their own ground, and to work out the contrast of Christianity and Pharisaism with a thoroughness only possible to one who knew Pharisaism from long experience, and had learned the gospel not from the tradition or teaching of men but by revelation of Jesus Christ (Gal. i. 12).

The relation of the first Christians to the current apocalyptic was of a different kind. The Messianic hopes already current among the first hearers of the gospel were unquestionably of apocalyptic colour. And though the contents of Christian hope were new, and expressed themselves in a revival of prophetic gifts (1 Cor. xii. 10; Acts xi. 27, &c.), it was not a matter of course that apocalyptic forms should be at once dropped, especially as Old Testament prophecy itself had inclined in its later stages towards an increasing concreteness in delineating the Messianic kingdom, and so had at least formed the basis for many apocalyptic conceptions. The apocalyptic books continued to be read, as appears from the influence of the book of Enoch on the epistle of Jude; and after the new spirit of prophecy had died away a Christian apocalyptic followed the Jewish models. But the way in which a genuine Christian prophecy, full of "the testimony of Jesus" (Rev. xix. 10), retained not a little of the apocalyptic manner (mainly, it is true, in dependence on the book of Daniel), appears clearly in the Revelation of John, which, whether we accept the prevalent tradition of its apostolic authorship, or, with some ancients and many moderns, ascribe it to a different John, is at least an undisputed monument of the prophecy of the apostolic age (according to modern critics, *earlier* than the fall of Jerusalem).

The influence on Christianity of Hellenistic philosophy, and, in general, of that floating spirit of speculation which circulated at the time in the meeting-places of Eastern and Western thought, was for the most part later than the New Testament period. Yet the Alexandrian education of a man like Apollos could not fail to give some colour to his preaching, and in the epistle to the Hebrews, whose author, a man closely akin to Paul, is not a direct disciple of Jesus (Heb. ii. 3), the theological reflection natural to the second generation, which no longer stood so immediately under the overpowering influence of the manifestation of Christ, is plainly affected in some points by Alexandrian views. In the case of other books the assertion of foreign speculative influences is generally bound up with the denial of the authenticity of the book in question. That the gospel of John presents a view of the person of Christ dependent on Philonic speculation is not exegetically obvious, but is simply one side of the assertion that this gospel is an unhistorical product of abstract reflection. In the same way other attacks on the genuineness of New Testament writings are backed up by the supposed detection of Orphic elements in the epistle of James, and so forth.

Motives and Origin of the first Christian Literature.—We have seen that the earliest currents of Christian life and thought stood in a very secondary relation to the intellectual activity of the period. The only books from which the Apostolic Church drew largely and freely were those of the Old Testament, and the Christian task of proclaiming the gospel was not in the first instance a literary task at all. The first writings of Christianity, therefore, were of an occasional kind. The care of so many churches compelled Paul to supplement his personal efforts by epistles, in which the discussion of incidental questions and the energetic defence of his gospel against the Judaizers is interwoven with broad applications of the fundamental principles of the gospel to the whole theory and practice of Christian life. In these epistles, and generally in the teaching of Paul and his associates, Christian thought first shaped for itself a suitable literary vehicle. It was in Greek that the mission to the Gentiles was carried on, for that language was everywhere understood. Already in the mouths of Hellenistic Jews and in the translation of the Old Testament the κοινή, or current Greek of the Macedonian period, had been tinctured with Semitic elements, and adapted to express the ideas of the old dispensation. Now a new modification was necessary, and soon in the circle of the Pauline churches specifically Christian ideas became inseparably bound up with words which to the heathen had a very different sense. Whether the epistolary way of teaching was used upon occasion by the older apostles before the labours of Paul is not clear; for most scholars have declined to accept the ingenious view which sees in the epistle of James the earliest writing of the New Testament. The other epistles are certainly later, and the way in which several of them are addressed, not to a special community in reference to a special need but to a wide circle of readers, seems to presuppose a formed custom of teaching by letter which extended from Paul not only to so like-minded a writer as the author of Hebrews (Apollos or Barnabas?) but to the old apostles and their associates.

Besides epistles we have in the New Testament a solitary book of Christian prophecy and a fourfold account of the gospel history, with a continuation of the third gospel in the Acts of the Apostles. The origin and mutual relations of the gospels form at the present moment the field of numerous controversies which can only be dealt with in separate articles. We must here confine ourselves to one or two points of general bearing.

Jewish disciples were accustomed to retain the oral teaching of their masters with extraordinary tenacity and verbal exactness of memory (Mishna, *Aboth*, iii. 8; *Edaioth*, i. 3), and so the words of Jesus might for some time be handed down by merely oral tradition. But did the gospel continue to be taught orally alone up to the time when the extant gospels were written? or must we assume the existence of earlier evangelical writings forming a link between oral tradition and the narratives we now possess? The earliest external evidence on this point is given in the prologue to Luke's gospel, which speaks of many previous essays towards a regularly digested evangelical history on the basis of the tradition (whether exclusively oral or partly written is not expressed) of eye-witnesses who had followed the whole course of Christ's ministry. It seems to be implied that if the eye-witnesses wrote at all, they, at least so far as was known to Luke, did not compose a regular narrative but simply threw together a mass of reminiscences. This understanding of the words of the evangelist agrees very well with the uniform tradition of the old church as to the second gospel, viz., that it was composed by Mark from material furnished by Peter. This tradition goes back to Papias of Hierapolis, about 150 A.D., but it is a fair question whether the second gospel as we have it is not an enlarged edition of Mark's original work. On the other hand ecclesiastical tradition recognizes the apostle Matthew as the author of the first gospel, but does so in a way that really bears out the statements of Luke. For the tradition that Matthew wrote the first gospel is always combined with the statement that he wrote in Hebrew (Aramaic). But from the time of Erasmus the best Greek scholars have been convinced that the gospel is not a translation. Either, then, the whole tradition of a directly apostolic Aramaic gospel is a mistake, caused by the existence among the Judaizing Christians in Palestine of an apocryphal "Gospel according to the Hebrews," which was by them ascribed to Matthew, but was, in fact, a corrupt edition of our Greek gospel; or, on the other hand, what Matthew really wrote in Aramaic was different from the book that now bears his name, and only formed an important part of the material from which it draws. The latter solution is naturally suggested by the oldest form of the tradition; for what Papias says of Matthew is that he wrote τὰ λόγια, *the oracles*,—an expression which, though much disputed, seems to be most fairly understood not of a complete gospel but of a collection of the words of Christ. And if so, all the earliest external evidence points to the conclusion that the synoptical gospels are non-apostolic digests of spoken and written apostolic tradition, and that the arrangement of the earlier material in orderly form took place only gradually and by many essays. With this the internal evidence agrees. The three first gospels are often in such remarkable accord even in minute and accidental points of expression, that it is certain either that they copied one another or that all have some sources in common. The first explanation is inadequate, both from the nature of the discrepancies that accompany the agreement of the three narratives, and from the impossibility of assigning absolute priority to any one gospel. For example, even if we suppose that the gospel of Mark was used by the other two authors, or conversely that Mark was made up mainly from Matthew and Luke, it is still necessary to postulate one or more earlier sources to explain residuary phenomena. And the longer the problem is studied the more general is the conviction of critics, that these sources cannot possibly have been merely oral.

It appears from what we have already seen, that a considerable portion of the New Testament is made up of writings not directly apostolical, and a main problem of criticism is to determine the relation of these writings, especially of the gospels, to apostolic teaching and tradition. But behind all such questions as the relative priority of Matthew or of Mark, the weight to be assigned to the testimony of Papias, and so forth, lies a series of questions much more radical in character by which the whole theological world is at present agitated. Can we say of all the New Testament books that they are either directly apostolic, or at least stand in immediate dependence on genuine apostolic teaching which they honestly represent? or must we hold, with an influential school of modern critics, that a large proportion of the books are direct forgeries, written in the interest of theological tendencies, to which they sacrifice without hesitation the genuine history and teaching of Christ and his apostles? There are, of course, positions intermediate to these two views, and the doctrine of tendencies is not held by many critics even of the Tübingen school in its extreme form. Yet, as a matter of fact, every book in the New Testament, with the exception of the four great epistles of St Paul, is at present more or less the subject of controversy, and interpolations are asserted even in these. The details of such a controversy can only be handled in separate articles, but a few general remarks may be useful here.

The arguments directed by modern critics against the genuineness or credibility of New Testament books do not for the most part rely much on external evidence. Except in one or two cases (particularly that of 2d Peter) the external evidence in favour of the books is as strong as one can fairly expect, even where not altogether decisive. We shall see when we come to speak of the canon that, towards the close of the 2d century, the four gospels, the Acts, thirteen epistles of Paul, the first epistles of Peter and John, and the book of Revelation, were received in the most widely separated churches with remarkable unanimity. Before this time the chain of evidence is less complete. All our knowledge of the period that lies between the apostles and the great teachers of the Old Catholic Church towards the close of the 2d century is fragmentary. We possess but scanty remains of the literature, and the same criticism which seeks to bring down many New Testament books into this period questions the genuineness of many of the writings which claim to date from the first half of the 2d century, and so are appealed to by conservative writers. But on the whole, what evidence does exist is of a kind to push back all the more important writings to an early date. The gospel of John, for example, is one of the books which negative critics are most determined in rejecting. Yet the fairest writers of the school (Hilgenfeld, Keim) admit that it was known to Justin Martyr in the middle of the 2d century, though they think that besides our four gospels he had a fifth of apocryphal character. But references of an earlier date can hardly be denied; and the gospel may be traced almost to the beginning of the century by the aid of fragments of the Gnostic Basilides and of the epistles of Ignatius. The Tübingen school, indeed, maintain that the fragments preserved by Hippolytus are not from Basilides, but from a later writer of his school, and utterly reject the Ignatian epistles. But it cannot be said that they have proved their case beyond dispute. They have at most shown that, if the gospel *must on other grounds* be taken as spurious, the external evidence may be pushed aside as not absolutely insuperable. On the other hand they try to bring positive proof that certain books were unknown in circles where, if genuine, they must have circulated. But such a negative is in its very nature difficult to prove. Probably the strongest argument of the kind is that brought to show that Papias did not know the gospel of John. But we know Papias only through Eusebius; and though the latter

is careful to mention all references to disputed books, it does not appear that it was part of his design to cite testimony to a book so universally allowed as John's gospel. And Papias does give testimony to the first epistle of John, which is hardly separable from the gospel. On the whole, then, we repeat that, on the most cardinal points, the external evidence for the New Testament books is as strong as can fairly be looked for, though not, of course, strong enough to convince a man who is sure *a priori* that this or that book is unhistorical and must be of late date.

The strength of the negative critics lies in internal evidence. And in this connection they have certainly directed attention to real difficulties, many of which still await their explanation. Some of these difficulties are not properly connected with the Tübingen position. The genuineness of 2d Peter, which, indeed, is very weakly attested by external evidence, was suspicious even to Erasmus and Calvin, and no one will assert that the Pauline authorship of 1st Timothy is as palpable as that of the epistle to the Romans. So, again, it is undeniable that the epistle to the Colossians and the so-called epistle to the Ephesians differ considerably in language and thought from other Pauline epistles, and that their relation to one another demands explanation. But in the Tübingen school all minor difficulties, each of which might be solved in detail without any very radical procedure, are brought together as phases of a single extremely radical theory of the growth of the New Testament. The theory has two bases, one philosophical or dogmatical, the other historical; and it cannot be pretended that the latter basis is adequate if the former is struck away. Philosophically the Tübingen school starts from the position so clearly laid down by Strauss, that a miraculous interruption of the laws of nature stamps the narrative in which it occurs as unhistorical, or, at least, as more cautious writers put the case, hampers the narrative with such extreme improbability that the positive evidence in favour of its truth would require to be much stronger than it is in the case of the New Testament history. The application of this proposition makes a great part of the narrative of the Gospels and Acts appear as unhistorical, and therefore late; and the origin of this late literature is sought by regarding the New Testament as the monument of a long struggle, in the course of which an original sharp antagonism between the gospel of Paul and the Judaizing gospel of the old apostles was gradually softened down and harmonized. The analysis of the New Testament is the resurrection of early parties in the church, each pursuing its own tendency by the aid of literary fiction. In the genuine epistles of Paul on the one hand, and in the Revelation and some parts of Matthew on the other, the original hostility of ethnic and Jewish Christianity is sharply defined; while after a series of intermediate stages the Johannine writings present the final transition in the 2d century from the contests of primitive Christianity to the uniformity of the Old Catholic Church. This general position has been developed in a variety of forms, more or less drastic, and is supported by a vast mass of speculation and research; but the turning points of the controversy may, perhaps, be narrowed to four questions—(1.) Whether in view of Paul's undoubted conviction that miraculous powers were exercised by himself and other Christians (1 Cor. xii. 9, *f.*; 2 Cor. xii. 12) the miracle criterion of a secondary narrative can be maintained? (2.) Whether the book of Acts is radically inconsistent with Paul's own account of his relations to the church at Jerusalem, and whether the antithesis of Peter and Paul is proved from the epistles of the latter, or postulated in accordance with the Hegelian law of advance by antagonism? (3.) Whether the gospel of John is necessarily a late fiction, or does not rather supply in its ideal delineation of Jesus a necessary supplement to the synoptical gospels which can only be understood as resting on true apostolic reminiscence? (4.) Whether the external evidence for the several books and the known facts of church history leave time for the successive evolution of all the stages of early Christianity which the theory postulates?

The Christian Canon of the Old and New Testaments.—We have already seen that the Apostolic Church continued to use as sacred the Hebrew Scriptures, whose authority derived fresh confirmation from the fulfilment of the prophecies in Christ. The idea that the Old Testament revelation must now fall back into a secondary position as compared with inspired apostolic teaching was not for a moment entertained. Still less could the notion of a body of New Testament Scriptures, of a collection of Christian writings, to be read like the Old Testament in public worship and appealed to as authoritative in matters of faith, take shape so long as the church was conscious that she had in her midst a living voice of inspiration. The first apostolic writings were, as we have seen, occasional, and it was not even matter of course that every epistle of an apostle should be carefully preserved, much less that it should be prized above his oral teaching. Paul certainly wrote more than two epistles to the Corinthians, and even Papias is still of opinon, when he collects reminiscences of apostolic sayings from the mouths of the elders, that what he reads in books cannot do him so much good as what he receives "from a living and abiding voice." Nay, the very writers who are the first to put Old and New Testament books on a precisely similar footing (*e.g.*, Tertullian) attach equal importance to the tradition of churches which had been directly taught by apostles, and so were presumed to possess the "rule of faith" in a form free from the difficulties of exposition that encumber the written word. In the first instance, then, the authoritative books of the Christian church were those of the Old Testament; and in the time of the apostles and their immediate successors it was the Hebrew canon that was received. But as most churches had no knowledge of the Old Testament except through the Greek translation and the Alexandrian canon, the Apocrypha soon began to be quoted as Scripture. The feeling of uncertainty as to the proper number of Old Testament books which prevailed in the 2d century is illustrated by an epistle of Melito of Sardis, who journeyed to Palestine in quest of light, and brought back the present Hebrew canon, with the omission of the book of Esther. In the 3d century Origen knew the Hebrew canon, but accepted the Alexandrian additions, apparently because he considered that a special providence had watched over both forms of the collection. Subsequent teachers in the Eastern Church gradually went back to the Hebrew canon (Esther being still excluded from full canonicity by Athanasius and Gregory of Nazianzus), distinguishing the Alexandrian additions as ἀναγιγνωσκόμενα—books used for ecclesiastical lessons. In the Western Church the same distinction was made by scholars like Jerome, who introduced for merely ecclesiastical books the somewhat incorrect name of Apocrypha; but a laxer view was very prevalent and gained ground during the Middle Ages, till at length, in opposition to the Protestants, the Council of Trent accepted every book in the Vulgate translation as canonical.

We turn now to the New Testament collection. The idea of canonicity—the right of a book to be cited as Scripture—was closely connected with regular use in public worship, and so the first step towards a New Testament canon was doubtless the establishment of a custom of reading in the churches individual epistles or gospels. The first beginnings of this custom must have been very early. The reference to Luke in 1 Tim. v. 18 is disputed, and

2 Pet. iii. 16 is usually taken as one of many arguments against the genuineness of that epistle; but a citation from Matthew is certainly referred to as Scripture in the epistle of Barnabas. But such recognition of an individual gospel is a long way removed from the recognition of an apostolic canon. The apostolic writings continued to be very partially diffused, and readers used such books as they had access to, often failing to distinguish between books of genuine value and worthless forgeries. For most readers were very uncritical, and there was an enormous floating mass of spurious and apocalyptic literature, including recensions of the gospel altered by heretical parties to suit their own views. It was perhaps in contest with the heretics of the 2d century that the necessity of forming a strict list of really authoritative writings came to be clearly felt; and it is remarkable that heretics, generally hostile to the Old Testament, seem to have been among the first to form collections of Christian writings for themselves. Thus Marcion, in the middle of the 2d century, selected for himself on dogmatical grounds ten Pauline epistles, and a gospel which seems to have been based on Luke. Up to this time perhaps no formal canon of sacred writings had been put forth by the Catholic Church. But in the second half of the century the notion of an authoritative New Testament collection appears in full development, and there is an amount of agreement as to the contents of the canon, which implies that, in spite of the loose way in which apocryphal books circulated side by side with genuine works, the church had no great difficulty in drawing a sharp line between the two classes when this was felt to be necessary. At the time of the great teachers of the close of the 2d century (Irenæus, Tertullian, Clement) we find a twofold collection, *the Gospel* and *the Apostles*. The Gospel comprises the four evangelists; and this number was already so absolutely fixed as to admit of no further doubt.

Quite beyond dispute were also the main books of the *Apostolicon*, the Acts, thirteen epistles of Paul, 1st Peter, 1st John, and the Apocalypse. The Muratorian fragment which contains a list twenty or thirty years older than the 3d century omits 1st Peter, but adds Jude, 2d and 3d John (?), and (as a disputed book) the Apocalypse of Peter. The Shepherd of Hermas might also be read, but it is pointed out that it is of quite recent date and not of prophetic or apostolic authority. From this time forward, then, the controversy is narrowed to a few books, occupying a middle position between the large mass of our present New Testament, which was already beyond dispute, and the spurious literature which was quite excluded from ecclesiastical use. Absolute uniformity was not at once attainable, for various churches had quite independent usages; and, as we see from the Muratorian canon, a book might receive a certain ecclesiastical recognition without being, therefore, viewed as strictly canonical. This dubious margin to the canon was of very uncertain limits, and Clement of Alexandria still uses many apocryphal books which found no acknowledgment in other parts of the church. Gradually the list of books which have even a disputed claim to authority is cut down. In the time of Eusebius the Shepherd of Hermas was still read in some churches, and several other books—the Epistle of Barnabas, the Acts of Paul, the Revelation of Peter, the Teachings of the Apostles—appear as controverted writings. But all these are plainly on the verge of rejection, while, on the other hand, 2d and 3d John, Jude, James, and 2d Peter are gradually gaining ground. This process continued to go on without interruption till at length the whole class of disputed books (*antilegomena*) melted away, and only our present canon was left on the one hand, and books of no authority or repute upon the other. Thus the Council of Laodicea was able wholly to forbid the ecclesiastical use of uncanonical books (360 A.D.) and the only uncertain point remaining in the tradition of the Eastern Church was the position of the Apocalypse, which had gradually fallen into suspicion, and was not fully reinstated till the 5th century. The Western Church, on the other hand, was long dubious as to the epistle to the Hebrews, which was received without hesitation in the East, as the Apocalypse continued to be in the West. The age of Augustine and Jerome saw the close of the Western canon.

Transmission and Diffusion of the Bible in the Christian Church before the Invention of Printing.

Under this head we have to speak—1st, of the transmission of the original text; 2d, of the ancient versions.

1. The Original Text—*Old Testament.*—The rapid spread of Christianity among the Gentiles of the West made Greek the sacred language of Christendom. Not only is Greek the language of the New Testament, but it was in the Septuagint version that the Old Testament was first circulated in the most important Gentile churches. Hebrew was almost unknown even to learned Christians, and in fact the current (Jewish as well as Christian) doctrine of the inspiration of the Septuagint, and a suspicion that the Hebrew text had been falsified by the Jews, made the study of the original appear unprofitable. A juster view of the value of Hebrew studies was formed by the two greatest scholars of the patristic period, Origen and Jerome. But the Septuagint continued to enjoy an authoritative place in the Eastern Church; and the Latin Church, though it finally adopted Jerome's translation from the Hebrew in place of the older translation from the Greek, was not led by this change to take any interest in further study of the original. The Hebrew Bible continued to be the peculiar possession of the Jews, of whose labours in fixing and transmitting a standard text we have already spoken. It was not till the beginning of the 16th century that Christian scholars began to take a lively interest in the "Hebrew verity;" and what has been done since that time to repair so many centuries of neglect belongs to the history of the printed text or of exegesis.

New Testament.—The original copies of the New Testament writings were probably written on papyrus rolls, and were so soon worn out by frequent use, that we do not even possess any historical notice of their existence. They must, however, have been written in *uncial* or large capital letters, without division of words or punctuation, without accents, breathings, &c., and probably without any titles or subscriptions whatever. The earliest transcripts comprised only portions of the New Testament, the gospels being oftenest copied, and the Pauline oftener than the catholic epistles. Even after the canon became fixed, MSS. of the whole New Testament, or of the whole Greek Bible, were comparatively rare. The order of the several books was not quite fixed; but the catholic epistles generally followed the book of Acts. It may also be noted that in the oldest MSS. the epistle to the Hebrews precedes the pastoral epistles. In course of time various changes were introduced in the externals of the written text. Parchment and vellum took the place of papyrus, and form the material of the oldest extant copies. The uncial character held its ground till about the 10th century, when the use of a *cursive* or running hand became general. Attempts to indicate the punctuation go back as far as the 4th or 5th century. The oldest MSS. use for this purpose an occasional simple point, or a small blank space in the line. Another system was to write the text in short lines (στίχοι) accommodated to the sense. The author of this *stichometry* was Euthalius of Alexandria in the second half of the 5th century, who applied it to the epistles and Acts. The same plan was afterwards extended to the gospels; but vellum was too costly to allow of its general adoption. The present system of punctuation was first used in printed books. Breathings and accents were not in common use down to the end of the 7th century; but occasional traces of them seem to occur considerably earlier.

Another device for the more convenient use of the New Testament was the division of the text into sections of various kinds. The gospels were divided by Ammonius of Alexandria (220 A.D.) into short chapters (Ammonian sections, κεφάλαια), constructed to facilitate the comparison of corresponding passages of the several gospels. These sections are marked on the margin of most MSS. from the 5th century onwards; and in general a reference is also given to the so-called canons of Eusebius, which are a kind of index to the sections, enabling the reader to find the parallel passages. Another division of the gospels into larger sections (τίτλοι, breves) is also found in MSS. of the 5th century, and a similar division of the other books into chapters (κεφάλαια) came into use not much later. The chapters of the Acts and the catholic epistles were the work of Euthalius. Our present chapters are much later. They were invented by Cardinal Hugo of S. Carus in the 13th century, were first applied to the Latin Bible, and are still unknown in the