

Fernando Person.



THE
ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY
OF THE
SECOND AND THIRD CENTURIES

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Second and Third Centuries

ILLUSTRATED FROM THE WRITINGS OF TERTULLIAN

BY

JOHN, BISHOP OF BRISTOL

MASTER OF CHRIST'S COLLEGE

AND

REGIUS PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE



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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.



SOON after the first edition of this work issued from the Press, I received a copy of a German work on the writings of Tertullian, published at Berlin in 1825, by Dr. August Neander, under the title of *Antignosticus Geist des Tertullians, etc.* As it is probable that few other copies have yet reached England, a short account of its object and contents may not be unacceptable to the reader.

The learned author states in his preface that he is engaged in writing an Ecclesiastical History of the first three centuries, a portion of which will be occupied by an inquiry into the different forms under which the Christian doctrine developed itself; in other words, into the different doctrinal and practical systems which arose during that period. The authors of those systems he divides into two classes, the Idealists and the Realists; the Idealists he again divides into the Ultra, from whom the Gnostics took their rise, and the Moderate, who formed the Alexandrian school. Of the Realists, he conceives Tertullian to be the proper representative. His object therefore is, by an analysis of Tertullian's writings, to present his readers with an accurate view of the Realist system. He had done the same with reference to the Gnostic system, in a work which I have not seen.

In pursuing this object, he classes the writings of Tertullian under three heads.

I. Those which were occasioned by the relation in which the Christians of Tertullian's day stood to the heathen, which were either composed in defence of Christianity and in confutation of heathenism, or referred to the sufferings and conduct of Christians in time of persecution, and to their intercourse with the heathen.

II. Those which related to the Christian life, and to the discipline of the Church.

III. Tertullian's dogmatical and polemical works.

I. Under the first head he mentions, as composed before Tertullian's secession from the Church—

The tract ad Martyres,
The tract de Spectaculis,¹
The tract de Idololatriâ,
The two books ad Nationes,

¹ I have classed the tracts *de Spectaculis* and *de Idololatriâ* among the works probably composed by Tertullian after he became a Montanist; nor do Dr. Neander's arguments appear to me of sufficient weight to establish a different conclusion. He supposes these tracts to have been occasioned by the public festivities which took place after the defeat of Niger and Albinus (pp. 14, 32); and contends that Tertullian, if he had been then a Montanist, would, instead of resorting exclusively to arguments drawn from Scripture, have also appealed to the authority of the New Prophecy (p. 26). But the references to passing events are of too general a character to warrant us in deciding positively upon the time when the treatises were written; and Dr. Neander himself admits (p. 112) that in the tract *de Spectaculis* Tertullian uses stronger language respecting the incompatibility of the military life with the profession of Christianity than in the tract *de Coronâ*, which was certainly composed after he became a Montanist. This single fact, in my opinion, outweighs all the arguments on the other side.

The Apology,¹
The tract de Testimonio Animæ;

as composed after Tertullian became a Montanist—

The tract de Coronâ,²
The tract de Fugâ in Persecutione,
Scorpiace,
The tract ad Scapulam.

II. Under the second head, Dr. Neander classes

The tract de Patientiâ,³
The tract de Oratione,⁴
The tract de Baptismo,
The tract de Pœnitentiâ,
The two books ad Uxorem,
The two books de Cultu Foeminarum,

among the works composed by Tertullian before he became a Montanist.

The tract de Exhortatione Castitatis,
The tract de Monogamiâ,

¹ Dr. Neander supposes the two books *ad Nationes* to have been anterior to the *Apology*, respecting the date of which he agrees with Mosheim (pp. 58, 76 note). He infers also (p. 79), from the answer to the charge of *unprofitableness* brought against the Christians by their enemies, that Tertullian could not have imbibed the ascetic spirit of Montanism when he wrote the *Apology*. But the validity of this inference may be questioned, as it is certain that Tertullian sometimes varied his language with his object.

² The largess alluded to in the tract *de Coronâ* was, according to Dr. Neander, that given to the military on account of the victories of Severus over the Parthians (p. 114). If this supposition is correct, we must assign the year 204 as the probable date of the tract.

³ Dr. Neander remarks that a comparison of the modes in which Tertullian applies the parables of the Lost Sheep and of the Prodigal Son in the tract *de Patientiâ*, c. 12, and in that *de Pudicitiâ*, c. 9, will prove the former to have been written before his secession from the Church (p. 168).

⁴ Dr. Neander considers the additional chapters of the tract *de Oratione* genuine.

The tract de Pudicitia,
 The tract de Jejuniis,
 The tract de Virginibus velandis,¹
 The tract de Pallio,²

among those written after he recognised the prophecies of Montanus.

III. Of the works which fall under the third head, Dr. Neander thinks that one only was written before Tertullian became a Montanist—the tract *de Præscriptione Hæreticorum*. The rest were written by him when a Montanist.

The five books against Marcion.

The tract adversus Valentinianos.

The tract de Carne Christi.

The tract de Resurrectione Carnis.

The tract adversus Hermogenem.

The tract de Animâ.

The tract adversus Praxeam.³

The tract adversus Judæos.⁴

¹ From the following passage in the second chapter of this tract (“Sed eas ego Ecclesias proposui, quas et ipsi Apostoli vel Apostolici viri condiderunt, et puto ante quosdam. Habent igitur et illæ eandem consuetudinis auctoritatem, tempora et antecessores opponunt magis quam posteræ istæ”), and from other incidental expressions, Dr. Neander infers that the custom against which it was directed prevailed in the Church of Rome.

² With respect to this tract, Dr. Neander interprets the expression, “Præsentis imperii triplex virtus, Deo tot Augustis in unum favente,” of Severus, Caracalla, and Geta, and supposes the tract to have been composed about the year 208. He conjectures also that Tertullian was induced, after the death of his wife, to adopt the ascetic mode of life, and, in consequence, to wear the pallium, the peculiar dress of the ἀσκηταί (p. 310).

³ Dr. Neander thinks with Blondel (p. 487) that the Bishop of Rome mentioned in the first chapter of the tract *against Praxeas*, was Eleutherus: Allix was disposed rather to fix upon Victor.

⁴ On this tract Dr. Neander has written a short dissertation, the object of which is to prove that the ninth and following chapters are spurious. In our remarks

Dr. Neander gives a more or less detailed analysis of each tract, and occasionally introduces (most frequently in considering the works included under the last head) the sentiments of other ecclesiastical writers on the points under discussion—a proceeding foreign from the plan which I had proposed to myself. He is always learned and ingenious, but not altogether free from that love of hypothesis for which the German writers are remarkable.

There is an appendix to the work, containing two dissertations,—one on the last part of the tract *adversus Judæos*; the other on Tertullian's doctrine respecting the Lord's Supper, which Dr. Neander supposes to be something intermediate between that of Justin and Irenæus, whom he asserts to have maintained (he does not allege any passages in proof of the assertion) the doctrine of consubstantiation, and the doctrine of Origen, who did not allow that any divine influence was united to the outward signs *as such*, but thought that the object of sense was the symbol of the object of the understanding, *only* to the worthy receiver; though, in addition to that symbolical relation, he conceived a sanctifying influence to be united with

upon Semler's theory respecting Tertullian's works, we stated that he grounded an argument on the fact that a considerable portion of the third book *against Marcion* is repeated in the tract *against the Jews*. Dr. Neander draws a different inference from this fact. He observes that many of the passages thus repeated, however suitable to the controversy between Tertullian and Marcion, are wholly out of their place in a controversy with a Jew. He concludes, therefore, that Tertullian, having proceeded as far as the quotation from Isaiah in the beginning of the ninth chapter of the tract *against the Jews*, from some unknown cause left the work unfinished; and that the remainder of the tract was afterwards added by some person, who thought that he could not do better than complete it, by annexing what Tertullian had said on the same passage of Isaiah in the third book *against Marcion*, with such slight variations as the difference of circumstances required. The instances alleged by Dr. Neander in proof of this position are undoubtedly very remarkable; but, if the concluding chapters of the tract are spurious, no ground seems to be left for asserting that the genuine portion was posterior to the third book *against Marcion*, and none consequently for asserting that it was written by a Montanist.

the *whole rite* in the case of those who are capable of receiving that influence. Dr. Neander thinks that *to eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ* meant, in Tertullian's view of the subject, *to appropriate to ourselves the divine λόγος who appeared in the nature of man, and to enter into a living union with Him through faith.* He thinks also that in the words, "Caro corpore et sanguine Christi vescitur, ut et anima de Deo saginetur," Tertullian intended to say that, while the body, in a supernatural manner, comes into contact with the body of Christ, the soul receives into itself the divine life of Christ. Dr. Neander justly remarks that on other occasions Tertullian speaks as if the bread and wine were merely representative signs of the body and blood of Christ. It may be doubted, therefore, whether, in arguing upon the above expressions, he has made sufficient allowance for the peculiarities of Tertullian's style. If, however, he is correct, Tertullian must be classed with those who maintain a real presence of Christ's body in the Eucharist, but in a spiritual, not in a gross corporeal sense. Dr. Neander appears himself to consider the bread and wine as mere symbols.

In the body of Dr. Neander's work are also two disquisitions,—one on a passage in the third chapter of the tract *de Coronâ*, where Tertullian speaks of various customs observed in the Church on the authority of tradition; the other on an obscure passage in the fourteenth chapter of the tract *de Jejuniis*, from which Dr. Neander infers that the practice of fasting on a Saturday already existed in the Western Church.

If the reader will compare Dr. Neander's classification of Tertullian's writings with that which I have ventured to suggest, he will find that the difference between us is not great; and with respect to some of the tracts on which we differ, the

learned author expresses himself with great diffidence. He was too well aware of the dubious character of the proofs on which his conclusions necessarily rest, to adopt a more decided language. I was myself restrained by similar considerations from hazarding any positive decision of many of the controverted points connected with Tertullian's life and writings. It would have been no difficult task to bring forward the different passages produced by preceding writers upon those points; to add others of equally, or more, doubtful application to the subject in debate; and after the parade of a formal discussion, to pronounce between the contending parties. Such a proceeding would have been very imposing, and have carried with it an appearance of great learning and profundity; but it would at last have been only solemn trifling. When the facts are not merely scanty, but susceptible of different interpretations,¹ it seems to follow as a necessary consequence, that the mind must remain in a state of suspense; and an author ought at least to escape censure for avowing doubts which he really feels. Diffidence may imply a defect both in the moral and intellectual character; but it is surely less offensive in itself, and less likely to be injurious in its consequences, than that presumptuous rashness which ventures to deliver peremptory decisions where there are scarcely materials even for forming an opinion.

I was naturally anxious to ascertain the opinion of Dr. Neander

¹ For instance, Dr. Neander asserts that Tertullian had once been a heathen, and produces, in support of the assertion, the first sentence in the tract *de Pœnitentiâ* (p. 3). "Pœnitentiam, hoc genus hominum, quod et ipsi retro fuimus," etc. He afterwards (p. 5) alludes to the passages in the tracts *de Exhortatione Castitatis*, c. 7, and *de Monogamiâ*, c. 12 ("Nonne et Laici Sacerdotis sumus?" and "Sed quum extollimur et inflamur adversus Clerum, tunc unum omnes sumus," etc.), which have been alleged, in order to disprove the fact of Tertullian's admission into the priesthood, but thinks that they do not disprove it. In both cases Tertullian speaks in the first person and in the plural number; yet in the former we are to suppose that he spoke in his own, in the latter in an assumed character. Surely there is something very arbitrary in these decisions.

respecting the instances of the exercise of miraculous powers mentioned by Tertullian, and the accounts of visions which occur in his writings. The learned author accounts for the story of the female who came back from the theatre under the influence of a demoniacal possession, by supposing that, being conscience-stricken, she returned the answer recorded by Tertullian, under the persuasion that she was possessed by an evil spirit who made use of her organs of speech.¹ The story of the man who was chastised in a vision because his servants had suspended garlands on his door in his absence, may, Dr. Neander thinks, be accounted for on psychological principles.² The view which he takes of the subject of visions is, that the fermentation at first produced by Christianity in the nature of man was accompanied by many extraordinary phenomena not likely to occur in a similar manner at all times. New powers were imparted to human nature, and those which had been before concealed were brought into action. Moreover, the necessities of the infant Church called for many unusual interpositions of Providence. Great caution would of course be requisite in forming a judgment respecting those phenomena, since it would be easy to confound that which was natural with that which was divine; and into this error the turn of Tertullian's mind would render him peculiarly liable to fall, by disposing him to regard all such appearances as divine revelations. In a subsequent part of his work, Dr. Neander mentions the story of a female to whom the soul was exhibited in a corporeal shape

¹ *De Spectaculis*, c. 26 (p. 31, note).

² *De Idololatriâ*, c. 15 (p. 54). I do not perfectly comprehend the meaning of this observation. It is very easy to conceive that a man of a superstitious temper might have been so affected on finding that his servants had complied with what he deemed an idolatrous practice, as to dream that he was severely chastised for their misconduct. But Tertullian's words convey the idea that the chastisement was real. "Scio fratrem per visionem eâdem nocte castigatum graviter quod januam ejus, subito annuntiatis gaudiis publicis, servi coronâssent." Are we to suppose that the impression made on the mind by the dream affected the body, and produced the same feeling of soreness as if the beating had been real?

—as an instance of Tertullian's readiness to consider visions as communications from heaven.¹ Although Dr. Neander has not expressed himself decidedly, I infer from the general tenor of his observations, that he objects altogether to the notion that the exercise of miraculous powers was intended to be confined to any particular persons or to any particular age. He supposes Tertullian to have asserted that the possession of the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit was the peculiar characteristic of an apostle, and regards this assertion as a proof of Montanism.² He speaks also of the impropriety of confining the *charismata* to the apostolic age. To what I have before said on this disputed subject I will now add, that we usually infer what *will be* the future course of the divine government from considering what it *has been*; and thus Christians living towards the end of the second century—who had either themselves conversed, or had heard the accounts of others who had conversed, with men who had witnessed the exercise of miraculous powers—could not be justly charged with credulity for expecting the continuance of the same powers in the Church. Centuries have since elapsed, during which no miraculous narrative deserving of credit can be produced. Our case, therefore, is widely different. They who contend that, because the first teachers of the gospel were endowed with miraculous powers in order to prove their divine commission, it is not unreasonable to suppose that similar powers would be imparted to those who in subsequent ages went forth to convert heathen nations, may fairly be called upon to produce an instance, subsequent to the times of the immediate successors of the apostles, in which such powers have been actually conferred.

¹ *De Animâ*, c. 9 (p. 465).

² The passage on which Dr. Neander builds this inference is in the tract *de Exhortatione*, c. 3: "*Proprie enim Apostoli Spiritum Sanctum habent in operibus prophetiæ, et efficacîâ virtutum, documentisque linguarum; non ex parte, quod cæteri,*" p. 242.

Dr. Neander's notions respecting the authority ascribed by the early Christians to tradition seem to coincide with my own. He says, "These two fountains of the knowledge of the doctrine of faith—the collection of the apostolic writings and oral tradition—sent forth streams, flowing by the side of each other through all communities which agreed in the essentials of Christianity, and especially through the communities which were of apostolic foundation. But as the stream of tradition necessarily became more turbid in proportion as the distance from the apostolic times increased, the writings of the apostles were designed by Providence to be an unadulterated source of divine doctrine for every age. Though on some occasions the Christians of those days might appeal solely to the authority of tradition, they uniformly maintained that the doctrine of Christianity in all its parts might be deduced from Holy Writ" (p. 312).

The spirit in which Dr. Neander's remarks on Tertullian are conceived is widely different from that in which it has been fashionable of late years to think and speak of the Fathers. M. Barbeyrac, whose views were directed to the systematic development of the principles of ethics, looking only at Tertullian's defects, regarded him as an author who was incapable either of thinking naturally, or preserving a just medium; who delivered himself up to the guidance of his African imagination, which magnified and confounded all the objects presented to it, and did not allow him to consider any one with attention; who, in short, had disfigured the morality of the gospel by his extravagances, and thereby inflicted a serious injury on Christianity itself. Dr. Neander, on the contrary, to whose mind the image of the Christian community, as it existed under the immediate superintendence of the apostles, appears to be continually present, discovers in Tertullian the working of that spirit which animated the early converts; and regarding him as a man whose

whole soul was absorbed in his desire to promote the practical influence of the gospel, is little disposed to speak with harshness of errors which arose from the overflowings of Christian zeal.¹ Looking rather to the internal feeling than to the terms in which it is expressed, he discerns matter for commendation in passages in which others have found nothing but extravagance and absurdity. The concluding passage of the tract *de Spectaculis*, which called forth Gibbon's animadversions, appears to Dr. Neander to contain a beautiful specimen of lively faith and Christian confidence; though he wishes that the vehemence of Tertullian's zeal had been tempered by a larger infusion of Christian love.² He ventures even to defend the celebrated

¹ I have, in the fourth chapter of the present work, examined certain passages of Tertullian's writings, from which it has been inferred that he did not recognise the distinction between the clergy and laity. Dr. Neander accounts (p. 204) for the apparent inconsistency in his language, by supposing that he stood on what may be termed the boundary mark of two periods,—the period of original simple Christianity, and the period of the establishment of a system of Church-authority. During the former period there was a perfect equality among Christians; no distinction of orders; all were priests. The separation of the clergy from the laity, and the gradation of ranks among the former, were subsequently introduced by injudicious attempts to transfer the institutions of the Mosaic to the Christian dispensation. This view of the subject frequently occurs in Dr. Neander's work; but I must confess my inability to reconcile it either with the statements contained in the Acts of the Apostles and in the Epistles, or with the natural course of things. If the Church of Christ on earth was *in fact* what it is *in theory*, the distinction between the clergy and laity would doubtless be unnecessary. But where are we to look for the period of original simple Christianity of which Dr. Neander speaks? Even the apostles found themselves under the necessity of appointing particular orders of men for the accomplishment of particular objects, and of making new regulations in order to correct the abuses which from time to time sprang up. The distinction, therefore, of the clergy from the laity, and of orders among the clergy, arose out of the necessities of what Dr. Neander elsewhere (p. 341) calls that frail compound of spiritual and sensual—human nature; not out of any designed imitation of the Mosaic institutions. After it had once been established, we might naturally expect to find the language of the Old Testament respecting the Jewish priesthood applied to the Christian: at first only in the way of analogy, but subsequently perhaps to promote the interested views of ambitious men. Dr. Neander has pointed out a remarkable instance of the application of the phraseology of the Old Testament to the celebration of the Eucharist in the tract *de Oratione*, c. 14 (p. 184, note).

² P. 34.

declaration, "Certum est, quia impossibile,"¹ which has contributed more than any other circumstance to bring Tertullian's writings into discredit; and says with great truth, that how strangely soever it may sound when separated from the context, yet when taken in connexion with what precedes, it is only an exaggerated mode of stating that a Christian readily admits, on the authority of Revelation, that which men, who rely solely on the conclusions of their own reason, pronounce impossible. There can be no doubt that Dr. Neander has entered more deeply into Tertullian's character, and has, in consequence, been enabled to form a juster estimate of his merits and defects, than the philosophical jurist or the sceptical historian. Yet there are, perhaps, occasions in which Dr. Neander himself has interpreted Tertullian's expressions too strictly; and, though aware of the difficulty of referring the opinions of a man on whom the feeling of the moment had so much influence, to general principles, he has not always been able to resist the temptation to generalize, and has in consequence extracted from Tertullian's words a train of thought of which he himself was probably never conscious.²

I will now proceed to mention the principal additions and alterations which have been made in this second edition.

In chapter i. p. 42, n. 1, the reader will find a passage disproving Semler's assertion that Eusebius has never mentioned Miltiades as a writer against the heretics. The passage is in the *Eccl. Hist.* l. v. c. 28.

In chapter iii. p. 88, I had given an erroneous account of the exordium of the tract *de Testimonio Animæ*, having

¹ *De Carne Christi*, c. 4, p. 394.

² P. 380.

substituted in the place of the argument there urged by Tertullian, that which he uses in the passage in the *Apology*, to which I had referred in the note. The error is now corrected.

In chapter v. p. 172, n. 2 (note 209, first edition), the reader will find an attempt to reconcile the apparent inconsistencies in Tertullian's language respecting the state of the soul during the interval between its separation from the body and the general resurrection.

In chapter vi. p. 226 (p. 453, first edition), I have inserted a note containing a reference to the custom which existed in Tertullian's time, of reserving a portion of the consecrated bread, and eating it at home before every other food. Dr. Neander thinks that this custom gave rise to the practice of administering the communion only in one kind. He observes also that the practice of daily communion appears from the writings of Tertullian to have then prevailed, at least in the African Church. See *de Idololatriâ*, c. 7.

There are some minor alterations which it is unnecessary to specify; and at the end of the volume will be found a list of addenda, some of which have been suggested to me by the perusal of Dr. Neander's work. Notwithstanding all the care which I have been able to bestow, the learned reader will doubtless discover additional errors and omissions. One mistake has, however, been imputed to me, of which I have not been guilty. I have never mentioned, incidentally or otherwise, that Stephen, Bishop of Rome, was contemporary with Tertullian.

In the introduction to the present work I have stated that *the*

object which I proposed to myself in my lectures on the writings of Tertullian was, to employ them, as far as they could be employed, in filling up Mosheim's outline of ecclesiastical history. After this explicit declaration, it may appear almost unnecessary to add that I never intended to compose *an Ecclesiastical History of the Second and Third Centuries.* My labours were directed to an humbler object—to assist in collecting materials for a future historian of the Church. My persuasion has always been, that a good ecclesiastical history of that or any other period will never be composed until the works of each writer who flourished during the period have been examined, and the information which they supply, collected and arranged under different heads. I did not mean to propose Mosheim's arrangement as the best which could be devised; I followed it because his history is that which is in most general use among theological students in this country. I deem it also most essential to the successful execution of such a plan, that the testimony of each author should be kept as distinct as possible. If I may form a judgment from Dr. Neander's preface, his view of the subject nearly coincides with my own. He there states that he has published a volume on the Gnostic system, which must necessarily include an examination of the work of Irenæus; a friend, at his request, is employed on the writings of Cyprian: in the volume of which I have now given a short account, we have the spirit of Tertullian, the representative of the Realists; there remain, therefore, for consideration only the Moderate Idealists of the Alexandrian school, whose opinions will be found in the writings of Clemens and Origen. Having thus prepared the way by analysing the works of the five principal authors of the second and third centuries, the learned author will proceed to the completion of his ecclesiastical history of that period. With the design of facilitating the composition of a similar history, I had, in the fulfilment of the duties of my office, before I lectured

on the writings of Tertullian, examined the writings of the Fathers who preceded him; whether I shall at any future period be able to lay before the public the result of the examination must depend upon the time which I can spare from other avocations.

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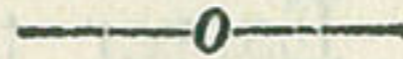
OF THE

SECOND AND THIRD CENTURIES.

INTRODUCTION.

THE following pages contain the substance of a course of lectures delivered by the author, as Regius Professor of Divinity, in the Lent and Easter terms of 1825. He had previously delivered two courses on the writings of the Fathers; and the plan which he then pursued was, first to give a short account of the author's life; next an analysis of each of his works; and lastly, a selection of passages, made principally with a view to the illustration of the Doctrines and Discipline of the Church of England. The peculiar character of the writings of the earlier Fathers pointed out this as the mode in which the information to be derived from them might be most clearly and usefully exhibited to the theological student. In proceeding, however, to the writings of Tertullian, the next in order of time to those whose works had been previously reviewed, it occurred to the author that a different mode might be adopted with advantage; and that they might be rendered subservient to the illustration of ecclesiastical history in general. They who have read Mosheim's work require only to be reminded that he divides the history of the Church into two branches, external and internal. Under the former he comprehends the prosperous and adverse events which befell it during each century; under the latter, the state of learning and philosophy, the government, doctrine, rites and ceremonies of the Church, and the heresies which divided its members and disturbed its tranquillity, during the same period. This

arrangement was not an original idea of Mosheim; the Centuriators of Magdeburgh had before adopted nearly a similar plan. His work is, moreover, of a very compendious character, designed to present his readers with a general and connected view of the history of Christianity from its first promulgation; and to assist their studies, by directing them to the sources from which, if they are so disposed, they may derive more particular and detailed information. The object, therefore, which the author proposed to himself in his Lectures on the Writings of Tertullian, was to employ them, as far as they could be employed, in filling up Mosheim's outline, by arranging the information which they supply under the different heads above enumerated. Still, it was necessary for him so far to adhere to his original plan as to prefix a brief account of Tertullian himself, in order that the student might be enabled accurately to distinguish the portion of ecclesiastical history which his writings serve to illustrate, as well as justly to appreciate the importance to be attached to his testimony and opinions.¹



CHAPTER I.

ON TERTULLIAN AND HIS WRITINGS.

THE following account of Tertullian² is given by Jerome:³—

“Tertullian a presbyter, the first Latin writer after Victor and Apollonius, was a native of the province of Africa and city of Carthage, the son of a proconsular centurion:⁴ he

¹ The edition of Tertullian's works, to which the references in the following pages are made, is that of Paris, 1675.

² He is called in the MSS. of his works Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullianus; and in the concluding sentence of the tract *de Virginibus Velandis* he calls himself Septimius Tertullianus. But whether that sentence is genuine may be reasonably doubted. The same remark applies to the concluding words of the tracts *de Baptismo* and *de Exhortatione Castitatis*. The final mention of Tertullian in the latter is omitted in the *Codex Agobardi*. Jerome calls him Septimius Tertullianus. *Ep. ad Fabiolam sub fine*.

³ *Catalogus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum*.

⁴ A proconsular centurion appears to have been a species of officer who was constantly in attendance upon the proconsul to receive his commands. See the note of Valesius in Euseb. *Eccl. Hist.* 1. ii. c. 2. This part of Jerome's account has been supposed to be founded on a passage in the *Apology*, c. 9: “Infantes

was a man of a sharp and vehement temper, flourished under Severus and Antoninus Caracalla, and wrote numerous works, which, as they are generally known, I think it unnecessary to particularize. I saw at Concordia in Italy an old man named Paulus. He said that, when young, he had met at Rome with an aged amanuensis of the blessed Cyprian, who told him that Cyprian never passed a day without reading some portion of Tertullian's works; and used frequently to say, 'Give me my master,' meaning Tertullian. After remaining a presbyter of the Church until he had attained the middle age of life, Tertullian was, by the envy and contumelious treatment of the Roman clergy, driven to embrace the opinions of Montanus, which he has mentioned in several of his works under the title of the New Prophecy; but he composed, expressly against the Church, the treatises *de Pudicitia*, *de Persecutione*, *de Jejuniiis*, *de Monogamia*, and six books *de Ecstasi*,¹ to which he added a seventh *against Apollonius*.²

penes Africam Saturno immolabantur palam usque ad proconsulatum Tiberii, qui ipsos Sacerdotes in iisdem arboribus templi sui obumbraticibus scelerum votivis crucibus exposuit, teste militiâ patriæ nostræ, quæ id ipsum manus illi proconsuli functa est." Rigault says that one MS. reads "Patris nostri."

¹ The six books *de Ecstasi* and the seventh *against Apollonius* are lost. Montanus pretended that he was frequently thrown into a species of rapture or ecstasy; and that, while in that state, he saw visions and received communications from the Spirit, which enabled him to foretell future events. This circumstance was urged by his opponents as an argument against the truth of his pretensions to inspiration; and Miltiades, of whom Tertullian speaks with respect, wrote a treatise to show that a prophet ought not to speak in ecstasy, *περὶ τοῦ μὴ δεῖν προφήτην ἐν ἔκστασι λαλεῖν*. Eusebius, *Eccl. Hist.* l. v. c. 17. Tertullian wrote his books *de Ecstasi* in defence of Montanus; and a passage in the fourth book *against Marcion*, c. 22, will put the reader in possession of his notions on the subject of prophetic inspiration. He is speaking of the Transfiguration, when, according to St. Luke, St. Peter knew not what he said; on which Tertullian observes, "Quomodo nesciens? utrumne simplici errore, an ratione quam defendimus in causa Novæ Prophetiæ, gratiæ ecstasin, id est, amentiam convenire? In Spiritu enim homo constitutus, præsertim quum gloriam Dei conspiciat vel quum per ipsum Deus loquitur, necesse est excidat sensu, obumbratus scilicet virtute divinâ, de quo inter nos et Psychicos (the name given by Tertullian to the orthodox) quæstio est." *Comp. adv. Marc.* l. i. c. 21, *sub fine*; l. v. c. 8, *sub fine*; *adv. Praxeam*, c. 15. In like manner Tertullian supposes that in the deep sleep or ecstasy (*ἔκστασις* in the Septuagint) into which Adam was thrown, when his rib was taken from him to form Eve, he was enabled to predict the perpetual union of Christ and the Church: "Nam etsi Adam statim prophetavit magnum illud Sacramentum in Christum et Ecclesiam" (the reference is to Ephesians v. 31). "Hoc nunc os ex ossibus meis et caro ex carne meâ. Propter hoc relinquet homo patrem et matrem, et adglutinabit se uxori suæ et erunt duo in carnem unam, accidentiam Spiritûs passus est; cecidit enim ecstasis super illum, Sancti Spiritûs vis, operatrix Prophetiæ." *De Animâ*, c. 11. Tertullian is very fond of this notion respecting the deep sleep or trance into which Adam was thrown; we find it again *de Virgin. Vel.* c. 5; *de Animâ*, c. 21, 45; *de Jejuniiis*, c. 3.

² Apollonius is mentioned as an opponent of Montanus by Eusebius, *Eccl. Hist.* l. v. c. 18.

He is reported to have lived to a very advanced age, and to have composed many other works which are not extant."

The correctness of some parts of this account has been questioned. Doubts have been entertained whether Tertullian was a presbyter. It is certain that he was married, for among his works are two treatises addressed to his wife. How then were the Roman Catholics to dispose of a fact which appeared to militate strongly against their favourite doctrine of the celibacy of the clergy? The easiest mode was to deny that he ever became a presbyter; and, in support of this opinion, two passages,¹ in which he appears to speak of himself as a layman, have been quoted from works supposed to have been written when he was far advanced in life. On these passages Allix remarks that the course of Tertullian's argument in some measure compelled him to speak in the first person;² and he opposes to them one from the treatise *de Animâ*,³ in which our author states that he remained in the church, or place of religious assembly, after the people were dismissed, for the purpose of recording and investigating the accounts given by a Christian female, to whom visions were vouchsafed, of what she saw in her spiritual ecstasies; an office which, in the opinion of Allix, would not have been assigned him had he not been a presbyter. It must, however, be confessed that this passage is by no means decisive of the controversy; and we must be content to receive the fact of Tertullian's admission to the priesthood, as the majority of Roman Catholic divines have received it, upon the authority of Jerome. We shall hereafter have occasion to notice the different conjectures proposed by them, in order to deprive their Protestant opponents of the argument which the example of Tertullian supplies in favour of a married priesthood.

Another question has been raised respecting the place where Tertullian officiated as a presbyter; whether at Carthage, or at Rome. That he at one time resided at Carthage may be

¹ "Vani erimus si putaverimus, quod Sacerdotibus non liceat, Laicis licere. Nonne et Laici Sacerdotes sumus? Scriptum est, regnum quoque nos et Sacerdotes Deo et Patri suo fecit." *De Exhort. Castit.* c. 7. Again, "Sed quum extollimur et inflamur adversus Clerum, tunc unum omnes sumus, tunc omnes Sacerdotes, quia Sacerdotes nos Deo et Patri fecit. Quum ad peræquationem disciplinæ Sacerdotalis provocamur, deponimus infulas, et impares sumus." *De Monogamiâ*, c. 12.

² *Dissertatio de Tertulliani Vitâ et Scriptis*, c. 2.

³ C. 9.

inferred from Jerome's account; and is rendered certain by several passages in his own writings.¹ Allix supposes that the notion of his having been a presbyter of the Roman Church owed its rise to Jerome's statement, that the envy and abuse of the Roman clergy impelled him to espouse the party of Montanus. Optatus² and the author of the work *de Hæresibus*, which Sirmond edited under the title of *Prædestinatus*, expressly call him a Carthaginian presbyter.³ Semler, however, in a dissertation inserted in his edition of Tertullian's works (c. 2), contends that he was a presbyter of the Roman Church. We know, he argues, that Tertullian visited Rome; for he speaks of the profusion of pearls and precious stones which he saw there.⁴ Eusebius tells us that he was accurately acquainted with the Roman laws,⁵ and on other accounts a distinguished person at Rome. He displays, moreover, a knowledge of the proceedings of the Roman Church with respect to Marcion and Valentinus,⁶ who were once members of it, which could scarcely have been obtained by one who had not himself been numbered among its presbyters. The question is of little importance, nor do the arguments on either side appear to be of so convincing a nature as to warrant a peremptory decision. Semler admits that, after Tertullian seceded from the Church, he left Rome and returned to Carthage.

Jerome does not inform us whether Tertullian was born of Christian parents, or was converted to Christianity. There are passages in his writings which seem to imply that he had been a Gentile:⁷ yet he may perhaps mean to describe, not his own condition, but that of Gentiles in general before their conversion. Allix and the majority of commentators understand them literally, as well as some other passages in which he speaks of his own infirmities and sinfulness.⁸

¹ *De Pallio*, c. 1. *Apology*, c. 9. *Scorpiace*, c. 6. *De Res. Carnis*, c. 42.

² *Adv. Parmenianum*, l. i.

³ C. 26.

⁴ *De Cultu Fæminarum*, l. i. c. 7. "Gemmarum quoque nobilitatem vidimus Romæ," etc.

⁵ *Eccl. Hist.* l. ii. c. 2. It should, however, be observed that Valesius, following Rufinus, understood the words τῶν μάλιστα ἐπὶ Ῥώμης λαμπρῶν to mean that Tertullian had obtained distinction among Latin writers.

⁶ *De Præscriptione Hæreticorum*, c. 30.

⁷ "Pœnitentiam hoc genus hominum, quod et ipsi retro fuimus, cæci, sine Domini lumine, naturâ tenus norunt." *De Pœnitentiâ*, c. 1. "Nobis autem et via nationum patet, in quâ et inventi sumus." *De Fugâ in Persec.* c. 6. "Et nationes, quod sumus nos." *Adv. Marc.* l. iii. c. 21. "Hæc et nos risimus aliquando; de vestris fuimus." *Apology*, c. 18.

⁸ *De Cultu Fæm.* l. ii. c. 1. *De Res. Carnis*, c. 59. *De Pœnitentiâ*, c. 4, 12.

His writings show that he flourished at the period specified by Jerome, that is, during the reigns of Severus and Antoninus Caracalla, or between the years 193 and 216; but they supply no precise information respecting the date of his birth, or any of the principal occurrences of his life. Allix places his birth about the year 145 or 150; his conversion to Christianity about 185; his marriage about 186; his admission to the priesthood about 192; his adoption of the opinions of Montanus about 199; and his death about 220: but these dates rest entirely upon conjecture.

As the most remarkable incident in Tertullian's life was his adoption of the errors of Montanus, it will be necessary to give some account of that heresiarch. We find in Eusebius¹ the statement of an anonymous author, supposed by Lardner and others to be Asterius Urbanus, who wrote it about thirteen years after the death of Maximilla, one of the prophetesses who accompanied Montanus. From this statement we learn that he began to prophesy at Ardabau, a village in that part of Mysia which was contiguous to Phrygia, while Gratus was proconsul of Asia; that many persons were induced to believe him divinely inspired, particularly two females, Maximilla and Priscilla or Prisca, who also pretended to possess the same prophetic gifts; that the fallacy of their pretensions was exposed, and their doctrine condemned; and that they were themselves excommunicated by different synods held in Asia. The same anonymous author adds that Montanus and Maximilla hanged themselves; and that Theodotus, one of the earliest supporters of their cause, was taken up into the air and dashed to pieces by the spirit of falsehood, to whom he had consigned himself under the expectation that he should be conveyed into heaven. The author, however, tells us that he does not vouch for the truth of either of these stories.

Considerable difference of opinion prevails respecting the exact period when Montanus began to prophesy. The date of the proconsulship of Gratus has not been ascertained; but in speaking of the persecution in which the martyrs of Lyons and Vienne suffered, Eusebius says,² that Montanus and his com-

De Patientiâ, c. 1. In the tract *de Idololatriâ*, c. 4, he says of himself, "Et quid ego modicæ memoriæ homo?"

¹ *Eccl. Hist.* l. v. c. 16.

² *Eccl. Hist.* l. v. c. 3. The martyrs addressed letters to the brethren in Asia and Phrygia, as well as to Eleutherus, bishop of Rome, respecting the New

panions then began to be spoken of as prophets in Phrygia. The seventeenth year of Marcus Antoninus, or the year 177, is assigned by Eusebius himself as the date of the persecution in Gaul. In speaking also of the works of Apollonius of Hierapolis, who flourished about the year 170, Eusebius says¹ that he wrote against the Cataphrygian heresy, of which Montanus then began to lay the foundations. Epiphanius² places the rise of this heresy in the nineteenth year of Antoninus Pius, or the year 157, in which date he is followed by Pearson and Beausobre; Baratier places it as early as 126. Lardner decides in favour of the date assigned by Eusebius, whose authority on chronological questions is more to be relied upon than that of Epiphanius.

It appears from the account given by the anonymous author already quoted, that the followers of Montanus were numerous and powerful.³ One of them, named Themiso, possessed sufficient influence to prevent Zoticus and Julian, the bishops of Comana and Apamea, from questioning the evil spirit by whom they supposed Maximilla to be inspired. The general opinion of Christians in those days, founded as they conceived on apostolic authority, was that the spirit of prophecy would remain in the Church until the second coming of Christ.⁴ They felt, therefore, a predisposition to lend an attentive ear to one who assumed the character of a prophet; and though the trances and ecstatic raptures and fanatical ravings of Montanus might disgust and repel the judicious and sober-minded, they would be regarded by the credulous and wondering multitude as the surest signs of divine inspiration.

From a long extract, given by Eusebius⁵ out of the writings of Apollonius against the Montanists, we collect that their leader was charged with recommending married persons to separate;

Prophecy. Irenæus does not expressly mention the Montanists, but is supposed to allude to them twice, l. iii. c. 11, p. 223; l. iv. c. 61. Clemens Alexandrinus twice mentions the Cataphrygians. *Strom.* l. iv. p. 511. *A.* l. vii. p. 765 c.

¹ *Eccl. Hist.* l. iv. c. 27.

² *Her.* 28 or 48.

³ We know from Tertullian that one of the bishops of Rome (learned men are not agreed respecting the particular bishop) was disposed for a time to recognise the prophetic character of Montanus. *Adv. Praxeam*, c. 1.

⁴ The anonymous author urges (c. 17) as an argument against the Montanists, that there had been no succession of prophets among them since the death of Maximilla. She appears from Epiphanius to have herself foreseen this objection, and to have furnished her followers with an answer by declaring that after her no prophetess would appear, but the end of the world would come.

⁵ *Eccl. Hist.* l. v. c. 18.

with laying down laws respecting fasts ;¹ with calling Pepuza and Tymium, villages of Phrygia, Jerusalem, to which he wished to gather all the nations of the earth. He seems to have established a regular body of preachers, to whom he assigned salaries, which he paid out of contributions raised from his followers, under the name of oblations. Of Maximilla and Priscilla, Apollonius relates that they left their husbands when they joined themselves to Montanus ; and he accuses the Montanists in general of converting religion into a source of profit, as well as of being licentious in their conduct. He confirms the statement of the anonymous writer respecting the attempt made by certain bishops to try the spirit in Maximilla whether it was of God ; and mentions Themiso as a man of great wealth, who wrote a catholic epistle in defence of Montanism. Of himself he says that he composed his work forty years after Montanus began to prophesy.

The account given by Epiphanius of the Montanists is² that they received both the Old and New Testaments, believed in the resurrection of the dead, and maintained the catholic doctrine of the Trinity. Their error consisted in supposing that Montanus, Maximilla, and Priscilla were divinely inspired ; and maintaining that the recognition of the Charismata, or spiritual gifts, announced by Montanus, was of absolute necessity. The larger portion of the account of Epiphanius is taken up in refuting the notions of Montanus respecting inspiration ; and proving that the prophets both of the Old and New Testaments, at the time when they delivered their predictions, were in a state of complete self-possession, and perfectly understood what they said. He gives some specimens of the prophecies of Montanus and his female associates, which are of the most extravagant character.³ In one of them Montanus says, "I am the Lord God who dwell in man." In another, "I am no angel or ambassador : I myself, God the Father, am come." Yet Epiphanius seems not to have understood these expressions as designed to convey the idea that Montanus represented himself to be God the Father. Otherwise he would scarcely have said that the Montanists agreed with the Catholic Church respecting the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. According to the anonymous author quoted by Eusebius, Maximilla predicted that wars and tumults—according to Epiphanius, that the end of the world—would closely follow her

¹ The expression is ἡ νηστείας νομοθετήσας. Montanus did not merely himself observe additional fasts, but enjoined the observance of them by others.

² *Her.* 28 or 48.

³ Sect. 4, 10, 11, 12, 13.

decease. The former observes, in confutation of her predictions, that in the interval of thirteen years which had elapsed between her death and the time at which he wrote, the world and the Church had enjoyed profound peace; the latter that, although she had been dead 220 years, the world still continued to exist. Epiphanius mentions also the respect entertained by the Montanists in his day for a desolate spot in Phrygia called Pepuza, once the site of a town, which had been levelled with the ground; and adds that they expected the heavenly Jerusalem to descend there. To the general head of Cataphrygians he refers a number of minor sects, called Quintilliani, Pepuziani, Priscilliani, Artoturitæ, and Tascodrugitæ.¹ The first three were so called in consequence of a vision seen by a female, of the name of Quintilla or Priscilla,² at Pepuza. The Artoturitæ derived their name from using bread and cheese in the celebration of Eucharist; and the Tascodrugitæ from their custom of putting the forefinger on the nose in the act of prayer; *τασκὸς* in the Phrygian language signifying a stake, and *δροῦγγος* a nose or beak.

The foregoing statements respecting the doctrines and opinions of Montanus are in great measure confirmed by the notices scattered over Tertullian's works. We find him, on the authority of the New Prophecy, enforcing the necessity of frequent fasts; if not actually condemning marriage, yet on all occasions giving a decided preference to a life of celibacy, and positively pronouncing second marriages unlawful; maintaining that favourite notion of enthusiasts in all ages of the Church, that the heavenly Jerusalem would descend on earth, and that the saints would reign there for a thousand years.³ We find him also uniformly asserting the orthodoxy of the Montanists upon the fundamental doctrines of Christianity; though with respect to the Trinity they appear to have introduced certain novel illustrations of the generation of the

¹ *Hær.* 29 or 49.

² Tertullian wrote his treatise *de Baptismo* against a female named Quintilla, who denied the necessity and efficacy of baptism. He describes her as belonging to the sect of Cainites (Caiani), wild and profligate fanatics, who called Cain their father, and regarded with particular veneration Esau, Corah, Judas, and all the characters noted in Scripture for their opposition to the will of God. Perhaps, therefore, Tertullian called Quintilla a Cainite from analogy only, because she set herself against a divine ordinance, not because she was actually a member of the sect.

³ In confirmation of this notion, Tertullian narrates a prodigy which occurred in Judea, and was witnessed by the army then on its march into the east. For forty successive days, early in the morning, a city was seen suspended from heaven. *Adv. Marcionem*, l. iii. c. 24.

Son from the Father.¹ We learn further from Tertullian that Montanus denied to the Church the power of granting absolution to persons guilty of flagrant offences—particularly to adulterers and fornicators—and maintained that Christians were not at liberty to avoid persecution by flight, or to purchase their safety with money.

Mosheim asserts,² on the authority of the work already quoted under the title of *Prædestinatus*, that among his other doctrines Montanus taught the approaching downfall of the Roman Empire, which would be followed by the appearance of Antichrist, and the second coming of our Lord to avenge the persecutions inflicted on His saints. The more judicious and sober-minded Christians would naturally take alarm at the open avowal of tenets, the necessary effect of which must be to render their religion obnoxious to the ruling powers, and to bring upon them fresh hardships and sufferings. We have seen that Maximilla predicted the speedy approach of those wars and tumults which were to precede the end of the world; and there are passages in Tertullian's works³ which lead to the suspicion that he entertained similar sentiments. He appears, however, to have felt the necessity of concealing them, and is betrayed by the struggle between his conviction and his prudence into occasional inconsistency of language. He sometimes speaks as if Christians ought, at others as if they ought not, to pray for the speedy consummation of all things.⁴

One question still remains to be considered—What was the precise nature of the pretensions of Montanus? The two passages, quoted by Epiphanius from his Prophecies, would at first sight lead us to suppose that he gave himself out to be God the Father. Some writers have thought that he pretended to be the Holy Ghost, who was incarnate in him, as the Word was in Jesus. Mosheim appears at different times

¹ "Protulit enim Deus Sermonem, quemadmodum etiam Paracletus docet, sicut radix fruticem, et fons fluvium, et Sol radium." *Adv. Praxeam*, c. 8.

² "De rebus Christianis ante Constantinum." *Sæculum Secundum*, c. 67.

³ See particularly the concluding chapter of the tract *de Spectaculis*, where Tertullian's exultation at the prospect of the approaching triumph of the Christians, and of the punishment of their adversaries, nearly gets the better of his discretion. "Quale autem spectaculum in proximo est adventus Domini jam indubitati, jam superbi, jam triumphantis?" See also *de Oratone*, c. 5.

⁴ Compare *Apology*, c. 32, 39; *ad Scapulam*, c. 2, with *de Oratone*, c. 5; *de Res. Carnis*, c. 22, *sub in*.

to have held different opinions on the subject. In his work *de Rebus Christianorum ante Constantinum*,¹ he thus speaks of Montanus: "Homo nullius nominis, minime malus, naturâ tristis, debilisque judicii, morbo quodam animi in tantam incidebat amentiam, ut *Spiritum Sanctum seu Paracletum illum qui animaverat Apostolos Jesu Christi, divinitus sibi obtigisse* contenderet ad res futuras maximi momenti prædicandas, et morum vitæque disciplinam, priori ab Apostolis traditâ sanctiorem et meliorem, tradendam." But in his *Ecclesiastical History*,² he gives the following account of the pretensions of Montanus: "Montanus pretended to be the Paraclete or Comforter, whom the Divine Saviour, at His departure from the earth, promised to send to His disciples to lead them into all truth. Neither have they," he adds, "who inform us that Montanus pretended to have received from above the same Spirit or Paraclete, which formerly animated the apostles, interpreted with accuracy the meaning of this heretic. It is therefore necessary to observe here that Montanus made a distinction between the Paraclete promised by Christ to His apostles and the Holy Spirit that was shed upon them on the day of Pentecost; and understood by the former a divine teacher, pointed out by Christ under the name of Paraclete or Comforter, who was to perfect the gospel by the addition of some doctrines omitted by our Saviour, and to cast a full light upon others which were expressed in an obscure and imperfect manner, though for wise reasons which subsisted during the ministry of Christ. This Paraclete, Montanus represented himself to be." It is scarcely necessary to observe that the former statement is directly at variance with the latter, which Mosheim professes to have collected from an attentive perusal of Tertullian's writings. As my own perusal of the same writings has conducted me to the conclusion that the former, not the latter, is the correct representation of the pretensions advanced by Montanus, I shall proceed to state the reasons on which my opinion is founded.

Mosheim refers to no particular passage. Let us first turn to the commencement of the treatise *de Virginibus velandis*, which contains the fullest and most connected account of Tertullian's notions respecting the Paraclete. Having laid down what he calls the immutable rule of faith respecting the Father and the Son, Tertullian goes on to say "that those parts of the

¹ *Sæculum Secundum*, c. 66.

² *Century ii.* c. 5, p. 237, note.

Christian dispensation which relate to the life and conversation of Christians admit of change and improvement. On this very account our Lord sent the Paraclete; to the end that, as the weakness of man's nature rendered him incapable of bearing the whole truth at once, the Christian rule of life might by degrees be carried to perfection by Him who was substituted in the place of the Lord, *i.e.* the Holy Spirit.¹ Man in his earliest state was directed by the fear of God implanted in his nature; under the law and prophets he was in his infancy; under the gospel, in his youth; but now, through the Paraclete, he has reached the state of perfect manhood." In this passage the Paraclete and the Holy Spirit are clearly identified.

We will now proceed to the tract *de Monogamiâ*, in which Tertullian is endeavouring to establish the superior sanctity of a life of celibacy, and contending that the apostle's words, "It is better to marry than burn," imply only a permission granted in condescension to the infirmities of human nature.² "Whether, then," he proceeds, "we look to the grounds on which the permission was granted, or to the preference given to a state of celibacy (in the preceding words of St. Paul, 'It is good for a man not to touch a woman'), the evident tendency of the apostle's reasoning is to do away the permission to marry. This being so, why may not *the same Spirit*, coming after the days of the apostles at the appropriate time (there being, according to the Preacher, a time for all things) for the purpose of leading Christians into all truth,—why may not, I say, *the same Spirit* have imposed a final and complete restraint upon the flesh, and called men away from marriage, not indirectly, but openly?—especially as St. Paul's argument, that 'the time is short,' is much more forcible now that 160 years have elapsed since he wrote his Epistle. Had such been the injunction of the Paraclete, ought you not thus to have reasoned with yourself? This is in truth the ancient discipline exhibited in the flesh and will of the Lord (who was not married), and afterwards in the

¹ "Ab illo vicario Domini, Spiritu Sancto." Tertullian's notion was that when our Lord ascended into heaven, He sent the Holy Spirit to carry on the gospel dispensation. Thus in the tract *de Præscriptione Hæreticorum*, c. 13: "Missime vicariam vim Spiritûs Sancti, qui credentes agat;" and again, c. 28: "Neglexerit officium Dei villicus, Christi vicarius."

² C. 3: "Igitur si omnia ista obliterant licentiam nubendi," etc. It should be observed that Tertullian's professed object, in the second and third chapters of the tract *de Monogamiâ*, is to show that although the injunctions of the Paraclete were new and burdensome to human weakness, Christ had prepared the minds of His followers to expect that such would be their character. Compare c. 14.

recommendations and examples of His apostles. This is the holiness to which we were originally destined. The Paraclete introduces no new doctrine; He now definitely enjoins that of which He before gave warning; He now requires that for which He has hitherto been content to wait. Reflect upon these observations, and you will easily be convinced that it was competent to the Paraclete to limit man to a single marriage; since He might (in perfect consistency with the doctrine of Christ and His apostles) have forbidden marriage altogether: and if you rightly understand the will of Christ, you will admit it to be credible that the Paraclete would curtail a liberty which might with propriety have been wholly taken away. Nay, you will acknowledge that, in this case also, the Paraclete is your advocate, since He has not imposed upon your weakness the obligation of absolute and undeviating continence." Surely the fair inference to be deduced from the comparison of this and the preceding passage is, not that Montanus pretended to be the Paraclete,¹ or made a distinction between the Paraclete promised by Christ to His apostles and the Holy Spirit that was shed upon them on the day of Pentecost; but that Montanus conceived himself to be inspired by the same Spirit as the apostles, though it was his peculiar office to close as it were the Christian revelation, and to place in a clear and refulgent light those sublime truths, those doctrines of perfection, which, during Christ's residence upon earth, His disciples had not been able to bear, but which had been in a progressive state of development since the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. To say that the Holy Spirit inspired the apostles, and the Paraclete Montanus, is to make a distinction only of words; if, as is evident from the general tenor of Tertullian's writings, he identified the Holy Spirit with the Paraclete.² It is true that Tertullian generally speaks of the New Prophecy as proceeding from the Paraclete; but this is not invariably the case. In the treatise *against Praxeas*, he calls it the prophecy of the Holy Spirit.³ He makes a dis-

¹ So far was Tertullian from supposing that Montanus was the Paraclete, that he did not even conceive the revelations of the Paraclete to have been confined to him. For in the tract *de Res. Carnis*, c. 11, he quotes some words, as spoken by the Paraclete through the prophetess Prisca: "De quibus luculenter et Paracletus per Prophetidem Priscam, 'Carnes sunt et carnem oderunt.'"

² He uses the word Paracletus to designate the Third Person in the Holy Trinity. "Ita connexus Patris in Filio, et Filii in Paracleto, tres efficit cohærentes, alterum ex altero." *Adv. Praxeam*, c. 25. And in the tract *de Jejunis*, c. 13, we find "Spiritus Sanctus—qua Paracletus, id est, advocatus."

³ "Hic interim acceptum a Patre munus effudit, Spiritum Sanctum, tertium

inction between the revelations vouchsafed to the apostles and to Montanus with respect to their different degrees of perfection; but none with respect to the source from which they were derived. For in the tract *de Præscriptione Hæreticorum*, he says that "the Paraclete was the Teacher of the apostles when they went forth to preach unto the Gentiles;"¹ and, in the tract *de Resurrectione Carnis*, that "the Holy Spirit, having previously allowed some doctrines to remain involved in a certain degree of obscurity in order to prove the faith of Christians, had now removed all ambiguities by a clear and explicit development of the whole mystery of the gospel, through the New Prophecy which had been poured out abundantly from the Paraclete."² My conclusion is, that the pretensions of Montanus were correctly represented by Augustine, when he said of him and his two female associates, "Adventum Spiritûs Sancti a Domino promissum in se *potius* quam in Apostolis fuisse asserunt;"³ and by Philaster, according to whom the Montanists held that the fulness of the Holy Spirit was not given to the apostles, but to Montanus.⁴ This is also the view taken by Lardner;⁵ who says that "the followers of Montanus supposed God to have made some additional revelations by him for the perfection of believers." But when Lardner, speaking of the comparative importance attached by the Montanists to the revelations made to their leader and to the apostles, contends that "they could not think this inspiration of Montanus equal to that of the apostles, as it did not relate to the great articles of faith, but chiefly to matters of external order and discipline," he certainly does not give an accurate representation of the opinions of our author; who ought perhaps so to have reasoned, but in fact reasoned otherwise. Tertullian, who believed that Montanus was commissioned to complete the Christian revelation, could not deem him inferior to the apostles, by whom it was only obscurely

nomen divinitatis et tertium gradum majestatis, unius prædicatorem monarchiæ sed et οἰκονοµίας interpretatorem, si quis sermones Novæ Prophetiæ *ejus* admisserit," c. 30.

¹ "Quod si nationibus destinati doctores Apostoli, ipsi quoque doctorem consecuti erant Paracletum," c. 8.

² "Sed quoniam nec dissimulare Spiritum Sanctum oportebat, quo minus et hujusmodi eloquiis superinundaret, quæ nullis hæreticorum versutiis semina subspargerent, imo et veteres eorum cespites vellerent, idcirco jam omnes retro ambiguitates et quas volunt parabolas apertâ atque perspicuâ totius sacramenti prædicatione discussit per Novam Prophetiam de Paracleto inundantem." *Sub fine.*

³ *Liber de Hæresibus*, c. 26.

⁴ *Hæres. Cataphryges.*

⁵ *History of Heretics.* Of the Montanists, c. 19.

and imperfectly developed; nor can Lardner's statement be reconciled with the distinguished appellation of πνευματικοὶ, or spiritual, which Tertullian confers on the Montanists; while he brands with the epithet of ψυχικοὶ, or animal,¹ those who, though they believed all the fundamental articles of the Christian faith, rejected the new revelation from the Paraclete.

Tertullian's works furnish presumptive proof that the effusions of Montanus and his female associates had been committed to writing. A passage has been already cited containing a saying of the prophetess Prisca;² and in the treatises *de Fugâ in Persecutione* and *de Pudicitâ* are citations from the discourses of Montanus.³ Yet the work, from which Epiphanius made his extracts, could not have been known to our author. Had he been acquainted with it, he could scarcely have failed in his treatise *against Praxeas* to give some explanation of expressions which appear at first sight to identify Montanus with God the Father.

Such were the tenets and pretensions of Montanus, as far as we can collect them from the writings of authors who lived near his time; and particularly of Tertullian, who appears to have adopted all his peculiar opinions. Some of his followers are said to have fallen into great errors both of doctrine and practice, though we may reasonably suspect that they were in many instances charged with crimes which existed only in the invention of their accusers. Montanus was evidently a man of weak intellects, who was induced partly by a superstitious temper, partly by the desire of distinction, himself to pursue, and to recommend to others, an ascetic course of life.⁴ The austerity of his doctrine and practice naturally gained him admirers and

¹ "Homines solius animæ et carnis." *De Jeuniis*, c. 17.

² Note 38.

³ "Spiritum vero si consulas, quid magis Sermone illo Spiritus probat? namque omnes pene ad Martyrium exhortatur non ad fugam, ut et illius commemoremur 'Publicaris, inquit: bonum tibi est. Qui enim non publicatur (παρὰδειγματίζεται) in hominibus, publicatur in Domino. Ne confundaris: justitia te producit in medium. Quid confunderis, laudem ferens? Potestas fit quum conspiceris ab hominibus.' Sic et alibi, 'Nolite in lectulis, nec in aborsibus et febris mollibus optare exire, sed in Martyriis, ut glorificetur qui est passus pro vobis.'" *De Fugâ in Persec.* c. 9. "Si et Spiritum quis agnoverit, audiet et fugitivos denotantem," c. 11. "Hoc ego magis et agnosco et dispono, qui ipsum Paracletum in Prophetis Novis habeo dicentem, 'Potest Ecclesia donare delictum,' sed non faciam, ne et alia delinquant." *De Pudicitâ*, c. 21.

⁴ The anonymous author in Eusebius imputes the conduct of Montanus to this motive.

followers; and he confirmed his empire over their minds by professing to see visions, and to receive revelations from heaven. Perhaps he had succeeded in persuading himself that he was divinely inspired. Fanaticism is for the most part combined with fraud in the character of the religious impostor; nor is it improbable that, in the state of exhaustion to which the body of Montanus was reduced by the length and frequency and severity of his fasts, his mind might occasionally become disordered, and he might mistake for realities the creations of a distempered fancy.

The notion that the doctrine of the gospel was not publicly delivered by the apostles in its full perfection, but that certain important truths were reserved which the minds of men were not yet able to bear, does not appear to have been peculiar to the school of Montanus. The Valentinians held a similar language, and supposed these mysterious truths to relate to their extravagant and unintelligible fancies respecting the Pleroma and the successive generations of Æons.¹ Even among the orthodox, a notion not altogether dissimilar very generally prevailed. The principal object of the *Stromata* of Clemens Alexandrinus is to point out the distinction between the Christian who is perfected in knowledge (*γνωστικός*), and the great mass of believers; and to lay down rules for the formation of this perfect character. He does not indeed, like Montanus, profess to communicate truths which he had received by immediate revelation from above, and of which the apostles were ignorant. He supposes them to have been revealed by Christ to Peter, James, and John, at the time of the Transfiguration, and to Paul at a subsequent period; and to have been by them orally transmitted to their successors in the superintendence of the Church.² When, however, we come to inquire into the nature of this sublime knowledge,³ we find that it consisted of subtle explanations of the doctrine of the Trinity and of other

¹ *De Præscriptione Hæreticorum*, c. 25.

² Eusebius says *after the resurrection*, *Eccl. Hist.* l. ii. c. 1. Compare Clem. Alex. *Strom.* l. i. p. 322, l. 18. p. 323, l. 23. p. 324, l. 26; l. vi. p. 771, l. 14. p. 774, l. 27. p. 802, l. 36. p. 806, l. 25. Ed. Potter. Mr. Rennell, in his *Proofs of Inspiration*, has inadvertently referred to the first of these passages as bearing testimony to the inspiration of the New Testament, p. 46.

³ Clemens says that he is not at liberty to disclose fully and openly wherein this *γνώσις* consists, as it is of too pure and spiritual a nature to be comprehended by Christians in general, l. i. p. 327, l. 41. The notion, if not originally suggested by certain passages in St. Paul's Epistles, was at least defended by a reference to them. *Strom.* l. v. p. 683, l. 18.

Christian doctrines; of allegorical and mystical interpretations of Scripture; and of moral precepts not widely differing from those, the observance of which was enjoined by Montanus, though carried to a less degree of extravagance. For instance, Clemens¹ does not pronounce second marriages positively unlawful, but says that a man who marries again after the decease of his wife falls short of Christian perfection. The notions of Clemens bear a close affinity to mysticism, and are calculated to form a sort of philosophic Christian, raised far above the sensible world, and absorbed in sublime contemplations; those of Montanus would lead men to place the whole of virtue in bodily austerities and acts of mortification: both may be justly charged with having assisted in paving the way for the introduction of the monastic mode of life.

There is nothing more flattering to the pride of man than the persuasion that he is the favoured depositary of knowledge which is unattainable by the generality of his fellow-creatures; that, while they are destined to pass their lives amidst thick clouds and darkness, he, with a select few, is permitted to bask in the meridian sunshine of divine truth. Both the philosophy and the religion of the Gentile world had their external and internal doctrines; and from them in an evil hour the distinction was introduced into the Church of Christ. Clemens Alexandrinus is the earliest Christian writer in whose works any allusion to it appears; and we say that he introduced the distinction in an evil hour, because on it and on the account which he gives of its origin, are founded the two principal arguments urged by Roman Catholics in defence of their doctrinal and other corruptions. When driven from every other point, they fly, as to a last refuge, to the *disciplina arcani* and to oral tradition; and though the writings of Clemens afford no countenance whatever to the particular errors which the Romish Church is anxious to maintain, yet it derives no small advantage to its cause from the statement of so early a writer—that Christ communicated important truths to the apostles, which were neither intended for the ear, nor adapted to the comprehension of the great body of believers, and which had come down to his own time through the medium of oral tradition.

But to return to Tertullian, his adoption of the opinions of Montanus has, without the slightest semblance of truth, been imputed by Pamelius and others to disappointed ambition. He

¹ *Strom.* l. iii. p. 548, l. 26.

was indignant, they say, because he was defeated in his pretensions to the see, either of Rome or Carthage. The true cause of his defection from the Church is to be sought in the constitution and temper of his mind; to which the austere doctrines and practice of the new prophet were perfectly congenial, and of which the natural warmth and acerbity were, as Jerome informs us, increased by the censures, perhaps by the misrepresentations, of the Roman clergy.¹

Before we quit this part of the subject, it will be necessary to obviate an objection, which the foregoing statement may possibly suggest. "What reliance, it may be asked, can we place upon the judgment, or even upon the testimony of Tertullian, who could be deluded into a belief of the extravagant pretensions of Montanus? or what advantage can the theological student derive from reading the works of so credulous and superstitious an author?" These are questions easily asked, and answered without hesitation by men who take the royal road to theological knowledge: who either through want of the leisure, or impatience of the labour, requisite for the examination of the writings of the Fathers, find it convenient to conceal their ignorance under an air of contempt. Thus a hasty and unfair sentence of condemnation has been passed upon the Fathers, and their works have fallen into unmerited disrepute. The sentence is hasty, because it bespeaks great ignorance of human nature, which often presents the curious phenomenon of a union of the most opposite qualities in the same mind; of vigour, acuteness, and discrimination on some subjects, with imbecility, dulness, and bigotry on others. The sentence is unfair, because it condemns the Fathers for faults which were those, not of the individuals, but of the age: of the elder Pliny and Marcus Antoninus as well as of Tertullian. It is, moreover, unfair, because the persons who argue thus in the case of the Fathers, argue differently in other cases. Without intending to compare the gentle, the amiable, the accomplished Fénelon, with the harsh, the fiery, the unpolished Tertullian, or to class the spiritual reveries of Madame Guyon with the extravagances of Montanus and his prophetesses, it may be remarked that the predilection of Fénelon for the notions of the mystics betrayed a mental weakness, differing in degree, rather than in kind, from that which led Tertullian to the adoption of Montanism. We do not, however, on account of this weakness in Fénelon, throw aside his works

¹ *Catalogus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum.*

as utterly undeserving of notice, or deem it a sufficient ground for questioning the superiority of his genius and talent; we regard with surprise and regret this additional instance of human infirmity, but continue to read Telemachus with instruction and delight. Let us show the same candour and sound judgment in the case of the Fathers; let us separate the wheat from the tares, and not involve them in one indiscriminate conflagration. The assertion may appear paradoxical, but is nevertheless true, that the value of Tertullian's writings to the theological student arises in a great measure from his errors. When he became a Montanist, he set himself to expose what he deemed faulty in the practice and discipline of the Church. Thus we are told indirectly what that practice and that discipline were; and we obtain information which, but for his secession from the Church, his works would scarcely have supplied. In a word, whether we consider the testimony borne to the genuineness and integrity of the books of the New Testament, or the information relating to ceremonies, discipline, and doctrines of the Primitive Church, Tertullian's writings form a most important link in that chain of tradition which connects the apostolic age with our own.

Attempts have been made to arrange Tertullian's works in chronological order; ¹ with how little success we may judge from the diversity of opinions which has prevailed among learned men respecting the date of a single tract, that entitled *de Pallio*.

¹ For the better understanding of the remarks upon Tertullian's writings, the dates of the principal events connected with the reign of Severus are inserted as given by the Benedictines in their learned work, *L'Art de Verifier les Dates*.

	A.D.
Commencement of the reign of Severus,	193
Defeat of Niger,	195
Taking of Byzantium,	196
Defeat of Albinus,	197
Caracalla associated in the empire,	198
War against the Parthians,	198
Severus returns from that war,	203
Celebration of the secular games,	204
Plautianus put to death,	204 or 205
War in Britain,	208
Wall built by Severus,	210
Death of Severus,	211
Caracalla born,	188
— called Cæsar,	196
— „ Augustus,	198
Geta born,	189
— called Cæsar,	198
— „ Augustus,	208

It appears that Tertullian had exchanged the Roman toga for the pallium, which was worn by the Greeks and by those who affected to be called philosophers. This change of dress excited the ridicule and censure of his fellow-citizens of Carthage; and he composed the treatise *de Pallio* in answer to their attacks. Pamelius, with whom Scaliger agrees, supposes that it is the earliest of Tertullian's works now extant, written immediately after his conversion to Christianity, on which occasion he put on the pallium, the garment then universally worn by Christians. Salmasius contends that the pallium was the dress, not of Christians in general, but of presbyters only; and that the tract was consequently written after the admission of Tertullian into that order. Allix¹ differs both from Pamelius and Salmasius, and affirms that the pallium was worn only by those Christians who adopted an ascetic course of life; he concludes, therefore, that the tract was written shortly after Tertullian openly professed himself a Montanist. Each of the three critics supports his opinions by quotations from the tract itself; and there is one passage which at first sight would lead the reader to hope that the date might be ascertained with a considerable degree of precision. Tertullian² says that three persons were then united in the administration of the empire, and that the world enjoyed profound peace. Unfortunately, the commentators cannot agree among themselves whether the three emperors were Severus, Antoninus Caracalla, and Albinus,³ or Severus, Antoninus Caracalla, and Geta;⁴ or whether the profound peace of which Tertullian speaks was that which followed the suppression of Niger's revolt, or that which the empire enjoyed during the latter years of the life of Severus. Semler⁵ leans to the former opinion, but admits that the question is involved in great obscurity. In fact, the style of the treatise is so declamatory and rhetorical, that no inference can be safely drawn from particular expressions. To me,⁶ however, it appears to have been

¹ *Dissertatio de Tertulliani vitâ et scriptis*, c. 6.

² "Quantum urbium aut produxit, aut auxit, aut reddidit præsentis Imperii triplex Virtus! Deo tot Augustis in unum favente, quot census transcripti!" etc., c. 2.

³ A. S. 196.

⁴ A. S. 208.

⁵ *Dissertatio in Tertullianum*, c. 1.

⁶ This inference I draw from the following passages:—"Enimvero quum hanc *primum* sapientiam vestit, quæ vanissimis superstitionibus renuit, tunc certissime pallium super omnes exuvias et peplos augusta vestis, superque omnes apices et titulos sacerdos suggestus; deduc oculos, suadeo, reverere habitum unius interim erroris tui renuntiatorem," c. 4, *sub fine*. And again, "Sed ista pallium loquitur. 'At ego jam illi etiam divinæ Sectæ ac Disciplinæ commercium confero.' Gaude pallium, et exulta; melior jam te Philosophia dignata est, ex quo Christianum vestire cœpisti," c. 6.

written as a defence of the general adoption of the pallium at that period by the Christians of Carthage; or perhaps of its adoption by himself in particular, because he deemed it more suitable to the Christian character.

The only work which supplies positive evidence of its date, is the first book *against Marcion*. In c. 15, Tertullian says that he is writing in the fifteenth year of the reign of the Emperor Severus, or the year 207.¹ There is also positive evidence in this book that the author was, when he wrote it, a believer in the prophecies of Montanus.²

In a passage from the tract *de Monogamiâ*,³ already referred to, Tertullian says, that 160 years had elapsed since St. Paul addressed his First Epistle to the Corinthians. Pamelius in consequence assigns the year 213 as the date of the tract, conceiving that the First Epistle to the Corinthians was written in 53. But in the first place, learned men are not agreed respecting the exact date of the Epistle, some fixing it as late as 59; and in the next, it is highly probable that Tertullian did not speak with precision, but used round numbers. In the first *Address ad Nationes* our author says, in one place that 250 years, in another that 300 years had not yet elapsed since the birth of Christ:⁴ it is evident, therefore, that in neither instance did Tertullian mean to express the precise number.

Unable to discover in the works themselves any marks by which their dates may be precisely ascertained, later critics have been content to divide them into two classes; those written before Tertullian adopted the errors of Montanus, and those written afterwards. But even on this point a diversity of opinions subsists, and the commentators are not agreed to which of the two classes each work belongs. Unless indeed the tract contains some allusion to the Paraclete or to the New Prophecy, we are not warranted in positively asserting that it was written by a Montanist; nor does the absence of all such allusion justify a contrary inference. The subject of the tract might afford its author no opportunity of disclosing his belief in the inspiration of Montanus; while, on the other hand, the mere

¹ "Ad decimum quintum jam Severi Imperatoris."

² "Sed etsi nubendi jam modus ponitur, quem quidem apud nos Spiritalis Ratio, Paraclete Auctore, defendit, unum in Fide matrimonium præscribens," c. 29.

³ C. 3. See page 12.

⁴ The first number occurs in c. 7, the second in c. 9.

fact that one of the tenets maintained by that heresiarch occurs in a particular work, is not of itself sufficient to prove that Tertullian, when it was written, was professedly a Montanist. There were in that age, as in most ages of the Church, two parties, the advocates of a milder and of a severer discipline. In the latter class would be many whose opinions respecting the course of life to be pursued by a Christian would not differ widely from those of Montanus, although they might give no credit to his pretended revelations from heaven. The natural disposition of Tertullian would incline him to the more rigid side; yet it is probable that a gradual change was effected in his sentiments, and that, as he advanced in years, they continually assumed a harsher and more uncompromising character. Such is the usual progress of opinion, and we know that on two points at least this change actually took place in his case,—the readmission of penitents into the Church, and the degree of criminality to be attached to a second marriage. As the inclination to the severe discipline of Montanus always existed in Tertullian's mind, and increased by slow and almost imperceptible degrees, it is scarcely possible, in the absence of all external testimony, to draw a well-defined line of separation between the works which were and those which were not composed before his secession from the Church. Having premised these observations respecting the difficulty of arriving at any certainty on the subject, I will proceed to state the result of my own examination of Tertullian's writings.

The tracts *de Pœnitentiâ*, *de Oratione*, and *de Baptismo* are allowed by the majority of commentators to have been written before Tertullian had become a follower of Montanus.

Erasmus doubted the genuineness of the tract *de Pœnitentiâ*, partly on account of its superiority in point of style to the acknowledged works of Tertullian, and partly because it contains opinions at variance with those which he has expressed in the tract *de Pudicitiâ*. In the former,¹ he expressly says that all crimes without exception committed after baptism may once, but only once, be pardoned by the Church upon repentance; in the latter,² he denies that adulterers, as well as idolaters and murderers, can ever be reconciled to the Church. But in the commencement of the tract *de Pudicitiâ*³ he himself alludes to

¹ See c. 7, 8, 9.

² See c. 5.

³ C. I. "Erit igitur et hic adversus Psychicos titulus, *adversus meæ quoque sententiæ retropenes illos societatem*," etc.

this change in his sentiments, which is also mentioned by Jerome;¹ and the necessary inference from a comparison of the passages is, that the tract *de Pœnitentiâ* is genuine, and that it was composed while Tertullian was yet a member of the Church.

A passage in the fifth chapter of Hilary's *Commentary on St. Matthew*² implies that Tertullian composed the treatise *de Oratione* before he quitted the communion of the Church. It is certain that he mentions the *Shepherd of Hermas*³ without bestowing upon it any of those opprobrious epithets which he employs in the treatise *de Pudicitia*,⁴ written after he became a Montanist.

Allix thinks that he discovers traces of a leaning to Montanism in the tract *de Baptismo*. He founds his suspicions on an allusion to the name of Pisciculi,⁵ which Tertullian applies to the Christians, and on the mention of Charismata.⁶ But with respect to the latter term, there appears to be no reason for restricting it to the revelations of Montanus; and with respect to the appellation of Pisciculi, though Allix may be right in supposing it to have been borrowed by Tertullian from the Sibylline verses, the work, according to him, either of Montanus or a Montanist, yet the majority of learned men are of opinion that the forgery of the Sibylline verses was prior to the rise of the heresy of Montanus. There is in my opinion a far more suspicious passage in this book,⁷ where Tertullian says that three persons compose a church; a notion which frequently occurs in

¹ Epistle to Damasus on the parable of the Prodigal Son: "Unde vehementer admiror Tertullianum in eo Libro, quem de Pudicitia adversum Pœnitentiam scripsit et sententiam veterem novâ opinione dissolvit, hoc voluisse sentire."

² "De Orationis autem Sacramento necessitate nos commentandi Cyprianus vir Sanctæ memoriæ liberavit. Quamquam et Tertullianus hinc volumen aptissimum scripserit; sed *consequens* error hominis detraxit scriptis probabilibus auctoritatem."

³ C. 12.

⁴ C. 10.

⁵ "Sed nos Pisciculi secundum *ἰχθῦν* nostrum Jesum Christum in aquâ nascimur," c. 1. Cicero says (*de Divinatione*, l. ii. c. 54, or 111) that the original Sibylline verses were acrostics; and in the eighth book of the spurious verses are some acrostics commencing with the initial letters of the words *Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς, Θεοῦ Υἱὸς, Σωτὴρ*, of which letters the word *ἰχθῦς* is composed; but, according to Lardner, there is no good ground to think that Tertullian has alluded to these acrostics. *Credibility of the Gospel History*, c. 29.

⁶ "Petite de Domino peculia, gratias, distributiones charismatum subjiciente," c. 20, *sub fine*.

⁷ "Quum autem sub tribus et testatio fidei et sponsio salutis pignerentur, necessario adjicitur Ecclesiæ mentio; quoniam ubi tres, id est, Pater et Filius et Spiritus Sanctus, ibi Ecclesia quæ trium corpus est," c. 6.

the works confessedly written after he became a believer in the New Prophecy.

Allix, in like manner, discovers a leaning to Montanism in the two treatises *ad Uxorem*; in the former of which Tertullian dissuades his wife, in case she should survive him, from contracting a second marriage; in the latter, fearful that she might be unwilling to impose upon herself so severe a restraint, he cautions her at least not to marry a heathen. This condescension to human weakness is so utterly at variance with the harsh language which he applied to second marriages after he became a Montanist, that I cannot assent to the opinion of Allix.

In the tract *ad Martyres* is an allusion¹ to a practice which then prevailed, of restoring penitents to the communion of the Church, at the request of persons confined in prison on account of their profession of Christianity. If we compare the tone of this allusion with the pointed condemnation of the practice in the tract *de Pudicitia*,² we must, I think, conclude that Tertullian was not yet a convert to Montanism when he wrote the tract *ad Martyres*. The death of the philosopher Peregrinus, which happened between the years 164 and 170, is mentioned in c. 4; and the concluding sentence has been supposed, with great appearance of probability, to relate to the numerous executions, particularly of persons of the senatorial order, which took place after the defeat and death of Albinus;³ though it may perhaps relate to the death of Plautianus.

A comparison of the different modes in which Tertullian speaks of flight in time of persecution, in the tracts *de Patientia*⁴ and *de Fuga in Persecutione*, will lead to the conclusion that the former was written while he was yet a member of the Church.

The treatise *adversus Judæos* is supposed by Pamelius to have been written in the year 198; by Allix (after Baronius) in 208. Allix grounds his opinion on the expressions respecting the state of the Roman empire which occur in c. 7, and which he con-

¹ C. 1. "Quam pacem quidam, in Ecclesiâ non habentes, a Martyribus in carcere exorare consueverunt. Et ideo eam etiam propterea in vobis habere et fovere et custodire debetis, ut si forte et aliis præstare possitis."

² C. 22.

³ A. S. 197.

⁴ C. 13. "Si fuga urgeat, adversus incommoda fugæ caro militat." The fair inference from these words appears to be that flight in time of persecution is allowable.

ceives to be applicable only to the latter years of the reign of Severus; but they are so general that no inference as to the date of the tract can be safely drawn from them.

Allix infers from the mention of Charismata in the tract *de Præscriptione Hæreticorum*,¹ that it was written after Tertullian became a Montanist. But, as was observed with respect to the tract *de Baptismo*, the context suggests no reason why we should restrict the word to the peculiar gifts of the Paraclete of Montanus. Allix also quotes a passage from the first book *against Marcion*, from which he argues that it was prior to the tract *de Præscriptione Hæreticorum*;² the context leads me to an opposite conclusion. Besides, had the tract been written by a Montanist, some mention of the Paraclete would probably have been introduced into the short summary of faith given in c. 13; as is the case in the first chapter of the tract *de Virginibus velandis*. The conclusion also warrants the inference that it was written before all the treatises against particular heresies.³ It was certainly prior to the tract *de Carne Christi*.⁴

It was also prior to the tract *against Hermogenes*,⁵ in the first chapter of which there is an allusion to it. Allix thinks that Tertullian was a Montanist when he wrote *against Hermogenes*, because he charges that heretic with marrying repeatedly;⁶ but I doubt whether the words are sufficiently precise to warrant the inference.

Great diversity of opinion prevails among the commentators respecting the date of the *Apology*. Allix appears to me to have shown satisfactorily that it was written, not at Rome, but at

¹ C. 29.

² "Sed *alius libellus* hunc gradum sustinebit *adversus Hæreticos*, etiam sine retractatu doctrinarum revincendos, quod hoc sint de Præscriptione Novitatis. Nunc quatenus admittenda congressio est, interdum, ne *compendium Præscriptionis ubique advocatum* diffidentiae deputetur, regulam Adversarii prius prætexam, ne cui lateat in quâ principalis quæstio dimicatura est," c. 1.

³ C. 45. "Sed nunc quidem generaliter actum est a nobis *adversus hæreses omnes*, certis et justis et necessariis præscriptionibus repellendas a conlatione Scripturarum. De reliquo, si Dei gratia annuerit, etiam specialiter quibusdam respondebimus."

⁴ C. 2. "Sed plenius ejusmodi præscriptionibus *adversus omnes hæreses alibi jam* usi sumus."

⁵ C. 1. "Solemus Hæreticis compendii gratiâ de posteritate præscribere."

⁶ C. 1. "Præterea pingit illicite, nubit assidue. Legem Dei in libidinem defendit."

Carthage;¹ and it was addressed, not to the Senate, but to the governors of Proconsular Africa.² He has not, however, been equally successful in proving that it was written so late as the year 217. I cannot discover in the passage in which Tertullian speaks of the reformation of the Papian laws any reason for thinking that Severus was then dead;³ I should rather infer the contrary. The allusion to the conspiracies which were daily detected at the very time when the book was written,⁴ as well as the enumeration of the barbarous nations which either then were, or had recently been, at war with Rome,⁵ correspond to the events which took place during the reign of Severus; and as the work contains internal testimony that the Christians were then suffering persecution, why may it not have been written soon after the promulgation of the law by which the Christians were forbidden to make proselytes, that is, about the year 204?⁶ The date assigned by Mosheim, in a tract written expressly on the subject, is 198. It was not to be expected that any marks of Montanism would appear in the *Apology*.

The two books entitled *ad Nationes* have come down to us in so imperfect a state that it is difficult to ascertain whether they were designed to be a distinct work from the *Apology*, or whether Tertullian at first wrought his materials into this form, which he

¹ Speaking of Rome, Tertullian says, c. 9, "Ecce in illâ religiosissimâ urbe Æneadum;" and in c. 21, *sub fine*, he thus addresses the Romans: "Ut ad vos quoque, dominatores gentium, aspiciam;" and again, in c. 35, "Ipsos Quirites, ipsam vernaculam septem collium plebem, convenio:" modes of expression which he would scarcely have used had the tract been written at Rome.

² In designating the persons to whom the *Apology* is addressed, he styles them in general Præsides; thus, "Veritatis extorquendæ Præsides," c. 2. "Ex ipsis etiam vobis justissimis et severissimis in nos Præsidibus," c. 9. "Hoc agite, boni Præsides," c. 50. In c. 2 he uses the expression, "Hoc imperium cujus ministri estis;" and from a passage in c. 45, "Deum non Proconsulem timentes," it may fairly be inferred that he was writing in a province governed by a proconsul.

³ "Nonne vanissimas Papias Leges, quæ ante liberos suscipi cogunt quam Juliæ matrimonium contrahi, post tantæ auctoritatis senectutem heri Severus constantissimus Principum exclusit?" c. 4.

⁴ "Unde Cassii et Nigri et Albini?" and again, "Sed et qui nunc scelestorum partium socii aut plausores quotidie revelantur, post vindemiam parricidarum racematio superstes," etc., c. 35. This passage appears to relate to the triumph of Severus after his return from the Parthian war, and to the conspiracy of Plautianus, which took place about the year 204.

⁵ C. 37. "Plures nimirum Mauri et Marcomanni ipsique Parthi."

⁶ The part taken by the Syrians of Palestine in favour of Niger greatly irritated Severus, and probably gave occasion to this law. *Ælii Spartiani Severus*, p. 902 C. From the words of the historian it might be inferred that the law applied only to Palestine. "In itinere Palæstinis plurima jura fundavit. Judæos fieri sub gravi poena vetuit. Idem etiam de Christianis sanxit," p. 904. Speaking shortly after of the inhabitants of Alexandria, he says, "Multa præterea *his* jura mutavit."

afterwards thought proper to change. The arguments are for the most part the same as those urged in the *Apology*, and are frequently expressed in the same words. Allix fancied that he found an allusion to the assumption of the title of Parthicus by Caracalla,¹ and concluded, therefore, that these books were written after the death of Severus; but I suspect that the allusion existed only in his own fancy.

The tract *de Testimonio Animæ* was subsequent to the *Apology*, to which it contains a reference. "Ut loco suo edocuimus ad fidem earum (Divinarum Scripturarum) demonstrandam," c. 5. The reference is to the nineteenth chapter of the *Apology*, in which Tertullian establishes the superior antiquity of the Hebrew Scriptures to the literature of the Gentiles.

The terms in which Tertullian speaks,² in his *Address to Scapula*, of the favour shown by Severus to the Christians, in consequence of the cure wrought upon him by one of their body named Proculus, lead to the conclusion that the work was composed after that Emperor's death. There is in this tract an allusion to the destruction of Byzantium, which took place in the year 196;³ as well as to a preternatural *extinction* of the sun's light, which occurred at Utica, and which Allix supposes to have been an eclipse of the sun that happened in the year 210. He agrees with Scaliger and Holstenius in thinking that this was one of the latest of Tertullian's works, and written about the year 217. In c. 4, Tertullian mentions Cincius Severus among the governors who treated the Christians with lenity. This governor was put to death by Severus after the defeat and death of Albinus.⁴ The tract contains no traces of Montanism, yet was probably written after the author became a Montanist.

The treatises in which we find positive allusions to the

¹ "Ita vero sit, quum ex vobis nationibus quotidie Cæsares, et Parthici, et Medici, et Germanici," l. i. c. 17. Allix drew his inference from a passage in the life of Caracalla which goes under the name of *Ælius Spartianus*. "Datis ad Senatum, quasi post victoriam, literis Parthicus appellatus est; nam Germanici nomen patre vivo fuerat consecutus," p. 930 D. The circumstance here alluded to occurred not long before the death of Caracalla in 217. But the titles of Parthicus and Germanicus had been so frequently conferred upon emperors that it cannot be affirmed with any degree of certainty that a particular allusion to Caracalla was intended.

² C. 4. The cure was performed by the use of oil. Severus laboured under an arthritic complaint. *Ælii Spartiani Severus*, p. 903 D.

³ C. 3. "Extincto pene lumine."

⁴ A.D. 198. *Ælii Spartiani Severus*, p. 902 A.

prophecies of Montanus are those—*de Coronâ*,¹ *de Animâ*,² *de Virginibus velandis*,³ *de Resurrectione Carnis*,⁴ against *Praxeas*,⁵ the first,⁶ third,⁷ fourth,⁸ and fifth⁹ books against *Marcion*, and the tracts *de Fugâ in Persecutione*, *de Monogamiâ*, *de Jejuniis*, and *de Pudicitâ*. The four last-mentioned tracts are stated by Jerome to have been composed by our author in direct opposition to the Church, and their contents fully confirm the statement. With respect to their order, we know only that the tract *de Monogamiâ* was prior to that *de Jejuniis*,¹⁰ which contains a reference to it.

Gibbon affirms it “to be evident that Tertullian composed his treatise *de Coronâ* long before he was engaged in the errors of Montanus.”¹¹ I am afraid that the historian was induced to adopt this opinion because it assisted him in transferring the sentiments expressed by Tertullian from the followers of Montanus to the primitive Christians in general; and thereby to confirm his representation of their rashness and extravagances. But the allusion to the New Prophecy in the first chapter affords a complete refutation of the assertion. Gibbon also supposes the event which gave occasion to the treatise to have happened at Carthage, when a donative was distributed to the soldiers by the Emperors Severus and Caracalla, and consequently before the title of Cæsar was conferred on Geta, that is, before the year 198. But should we allow the correctness of this date to be better ascertained than it really is, the only inference to be drawn from it would be, that even at that early period Tertullian had openly avowed his belief in the prophecies of Montanus. There is, moreover, in this tract an allusion to a tract on *Public Spectacles*,¹² which Tertullian composed in Greek; if it agreed with the Latin tract now extant, he was probably a Montanist when he wrote it. Tertullian appears in the tract *de Coronâ* to announce his intention of writing the *Scorpiace*.¹³

The second book against *Marcion* affords an example of the difficulty of accurately determining from the treatises themselves

¹ C. I. “Qui prophetias ejusdem Spiritûs Sancti respuerunt.”

² Cc. 9, 11, 55, 58. There is in this tract, c. 55, an allusion to the martyrdom of Perpetua, which is supposed to have happened about the year 203.

³ Cc. I, 17. ⁴ C. II. ⁵ Cc. I, 2, 8, 13, 30. ⁶ C. 29. ⁷ C. 24.

⁸ C. 22. ⁹ C. 16. “Ut docent Veteres et Novæ Prophetiæ.”

¹⁰ C. I. ¹¹ Chapter 15, note 49.

¹² “Sed et huic materiæ propter suaviludios nostros Græco quoque stilo satisfacimus,” c. 6, *sub fine*.

¹³ C. I. “Sed de quæstionibus confessionum alib docebimus.”

whether the author was a Montanist when he composed them ; for it contains no decisive marks of Montanism. The same remark is applicable to the tract *de Carne Christi*, though we find in it an express reference to the fourth book *against Marcion*,¹ and to the *Scorpiace*,² in which we also find a reference to the works *against Marcion*. Jerome, in his work *against Vigilantius*, c. 3, says that the latter tract was written against the Cainites, a branch of the Gnostics, who appear to have spoken contemptuously of martyrdom, and to have dissuaded Christians in times of persecution from exposing themselves to danger by an open profession of their faith ; contending that he was the true martyr, *μαρτυρς*, who bore testimony to the gospel by his virtuous life and conversation.³ Here, then, we might expect to find strong proofs of Tertullian's Montanism ; yet they do not occur. There is in the *Scorpiace* an allusion to the establishment of the Pythian games at Carthage, as if it had recently taken place.⁴

If the Proculus, whom Tertullian calls Proculus noster,⁵ and mentions with respect in his treatise *against the Valentinians*, was the same, to whose dispute or dialogue with Caius both Eusebius and Jerome refer,⁶ we may fairly conclude that Tertullian was a Montanist when he composed the treatise.

Allix infers that the tract *de Spectaculis* was written after Tertullian became a Montanist, because in enumerating the privileges of the Christian, he mentions that of asking revelations from heaven.⁷ The introduction of the New Jerusalem in the last chapter,⁸ when compared with the final chapter of the fourth book *against Marcion*, supplies in my opinion far more decisive proof of his Montanism. Allix has shown satisfactorily that it was written, not at Rome, but at Carthage.⁹ It was prior to the

¹ C. 7. "Audiatur et Apelles quid jam responsum sit a nobis Marcioni eo libello, quo ad Evangelium ipsius provocavimus." The reference is to c. 19.

² C. 5. "Longum est ut Deum meum bonum ostendam ; quod jam a nobis didicerunt Marcionitæ." The reference is to the second book. From c. 1 and c. 4 it appears that the *Scorpiace* was written during a time of persecution.

³ Compare Irenæus, l. iii. c. 20 ; l. iv. c. 64 ; and Clemens Alexandrinus, l. iv. c. 4, p. 571, l. 10.

⁴ "Adhuc Carthaginem singulæ civitates gratulando inquietant, donatam Pythico Agone post stadii senectutem," c. 6.

⁵ C. 5.

⁶ *Hist. Eccl.* l. vi. c. 20. *Catalogus Scriptorum Eccl. sub Caio.*

⁷ C. 29. "Quod revelationes petis."

⁸ "Qualis Civitas nova Hierusalem?"

⁹ "Quanta præterea Sacra, quanta Sacrificia præcedant, intercedant, succedant, quot Collegia, quot sacerdotia, quot officia moveantur, sciunt homines illius urbis

tract *de Idololatriâ*¹ and the first book *de Cultu Fæminarum*,² which contain references to it. These two tracts, therefore, were probably written after Tertullian became a Montanist, though they contain no decisive marks of Montanism. In the tract *de Idololatriâ*³ Allix fancies that he discovers an allusion to the festivities which took place at Carthage, when the birthday of Geta was celebrated in the year 203.

The notion that three persons compose a church has been already mentioned as indicative of Montanism.⁴ It occurs in the tract *de Exhortatione Castitatis*:⁵ yet I am led to infer, from a comparison of this tract with that *de Monogamiâ*, that Tertullian, when he wrote it, had not embraced the tenets of Montanus in all their rigour.

Perhaps we shall not deviate very widely from the truth, if we adopt the following classification of Tertullian's works, without attempting to arrange them in the order in which they are written.

Works probably written while he was yet a member of the Church:—

De Pœnitentiâ.
De Oratione.
De Baptismo.
The two books ad Uxorem.
Ad Martyres.
De Patientiâ.
Adversus Judæos.
De Præscriptione Hæreticorum.⁶

Works certainly written after he became a Montanist:—

First book against Marcion.
Second book against Marcion.⁷

(Romæ) in quâ Dæmoniorum conventus consedit," c. 7. "Proinde tituli: Olympia Jovi, quæ sunt Romæ Capitolina," c. 11. Observe also the use of the word Præsides in the last chapter.

¹ C. 13.

² C. 8.

³ C. 15.

⁴ P. 48.

⁵ C. 7. "Sed ubi tres, Ecclesia est, licet Laici." Compare *de Pudicitâ*, c. 21. Pamelius supposes that the three persons alluded to in the latter passage were Montanus, Maximilla, and Priscilla; but, as it appears to me, without sufficient grounds.

⁶ Referred to in the first book *against Marcion*, c. 1; *adv. Praxeam*, c. 2; *de Carne Christi*, c. 2; *adv. Hermogenum*, c. 1.

⁷ Referred to in the *Scorpiace*, c. 5. In the treatise *de Animâ*, c. 21, where the allusion is to c. 5. *De Res. Carnis*, cc. 2, 14.

De Animâ.¹
 Third book against Marcion.
 Fourth book against Marcion.²
 De Carne Christi.³
 De Resurrectione Carnis.⁴
 Fifth book against Marcion.
 Adversus Praxeam.
 Scorpiace.⁵
 De Coronâ Militis.
 De Virginibus Velandis.
 De Exhortatione Castitatis.
 De Fugâ in Persecutione.
 De Monogamiâ.⁶
 De Jejuniis.
 De Pudicitâ.

Works probably written after he became a Montanist:—

Adversus Valentinianos.
 Ad Scapulam.
 De Spectaculis.⁷
 De Idololatriâ.
 The two books de Cultu Fœminarum.

Works respecting which nothing certain can be pronounced: —

The Apology.
 The two books ad Nationes.
 The Tract de Testimonio Animæ.⁸
 De Pallio.
 Adversus Hermogenem.

¹ Referred to in the tract *de Res. Carnis*, cc. 2, 17, 45. Compare cc. 18 and 21.

² Referred to in the tract *de Carne Christi*, c. 7.

³ Referred to in the tract *de Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 2. See also the concluding words of the tract *de Carne Christi*.

⁴ Referred to in the fifth book *against Marcion*, c. 10.

⁵ In c. 4, Tertullian speaks as if he had already refuted all the heretics.

⁶ Referred to in the tract *de Jejuniis*, c. 1.

⁷ Referred to in the tract *de Idololatriâ*, c. 13, and in the first book *de Cultu Fœminarum*, c. 8. In the tract *de Coronâ*, c. 6, is a reference to the Greek tract *de Spectaculis*.

⁸ Subsequent to the *Apology*, see c. 5. Prior to the tract *de Carne Christi*, in the twelfth chapter of which it is quoted.