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ARTICLE II.

THE FOURTH GOSPEL A GENUINE NARRATIVE.

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I.

THE purpose of this paper is to raise the question, whether the claim made by the author of the First Epistle of John in the first paragraph refers to the Fourth Gospel, and, if so, whether it is to be taken literally or not. When the author says, "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you" (1 John i. 3), does he mean that he has been able to witness part of those incidents narrated or that he has narrowed his report down to those events in Jesus' life which he witnessed personally and the words he heard? No writer of note has made a special effort to discover whether this is a genuine narrative or not, even if he has contended that the Gospel was written by the Apostle John. The question we will raise is, whether it is reasonable to suppose that John was present and able to witness all he has recorded in the Fourth Gospel or not.

I realize that it will not be an easy task to answer this question. It will be especially hard, since the author keeps himself continually out of sight, so to speak. But the test applied will be of such character that we may have positive knowledge of what we lay claim to. The test used will be applied to other writings, and the conclusion will be based on this comparative study.

In the first place, the author must have been present at the time and place when and where the incident narrated took place or the words recorded were spoken. And, in the second place, conditions must have been such that he could have seen and heard what he has narrated. Since it would be impossible to state definitely where the author was at the time referred to in the Gospel, we will investigate for the possibility or probability of his presence. If there is not a good reason for concluding that he could not have been present, we will assume that he witnessed what he has recorded. This may seem unfair. But when we apply the same test to other writings, and judge by comparative results, the test will be fair.

Let me briefly illustrate the test to be applied. If we accept the theory commonly held, that Peter was the authority for Mark's Gospel, we may raise the question, whether Peter was present to witness what is herein recorded. If we turn to the death of John the Baptist, we conclude that he could not have been present in the castle of Machærus at the time of his execution. But it must be granted that we have no positive evidence for the claim that he was not there. But, on the other hand, we will consider that the work of John the Baptist, and the baptism of Jesus as recorded by Mark, were witnessed by Peter, since the fact that Peter's brother was one of John's disciples (John i. 40) leaves a probability that he was present.

But the author may have been present at the time when the event narrated took place, and still the conditions have been such that he was unable to narrate what happened. Though Peter was present when Jesus healed the man sick of palsy, he could not have heard what "certain of the scribes" were "reasoning in their hearts" (Mark ii. 6, 7); nor could

Peter have reported what took place in the garden of Gethsemane while he slept, even if Jesus was only a stone's throw away.

There are three distinguishing features seen in the narrative which are not found in history or fiction. The first is a definite point of view; the second is a clear, continuous thread of narrative, which does not always, nor generally, follow the most interesting events; and the third is, when the author and the character he is describing are separate, the thread of narrative will follow the author.

To illustrate these earmarks of the narrative, I have selected three accounts of the assassination of Lincoln, — the one an historical account by Miss Tarbell, the other two narratives by Seaton Munroe and Gideon Welles.

We will not give the full account of the assassination as given by Miss Tarbell, since it is too long. We will give merely the account of the shooting:—

“One man did watch him. He knew him, and watched to see who in the presidential box it could be that he knew well enough to call on in the middle of the act. If any attendant saw him, there was no question of his movements. He was a privileged person in the theater, having free entrance to every corner. He had been there in the course of the day; he had passed out and in once or twice during that evening.

“Crowding behind some loose chairs in the aisle, the man passed out of sight through the door leading into the passage behind the President's box. He closed the door behind him, paused for a moment, then did a curious thing for a visitor to a theater party. He picked up a piece of stout plank which he seemed to know just where to find, and slipped one end into a hole gouged into the wall close to the door-casing. The plank extended across the door, making a rough but effective bolt. Turning to the door which led from the passage to the box, he may have peered through a tiny hole which had been drilled through the panel. If he did, he saw a quiet party intent on the play, the President just then smiling over a bit of homely wit.

“Opening the door so quietly that no one heard him, the man entered the box. Then if any eye in the house could but have

looked. If one head in the box had been turned, it would have been seen that the man held in his right hand a Derringer pistol, and that he raised the weapon and aimed it steadily at the head of the smiling President.

"No eye saw him, but a second later and every ear heard a pistol shot."

We fail to get a definite point of view in this account. In fact we are told that the man "passed out of sight," that "no one heard him," "no eye saw him." Still we are following Mr. Booth as he nears the President and finally shoots him. In order to get the effect of the second point — the following of the thread of greatest interest — the full account given by Miss Tarbell should be read.¹ Every event of special interest is reported, and we expect that it should be. Since we have no way of deciding who the authority is for these facts, we cannot consider the third point — the direction of the thread of narrative when the author and the character described are separate.

We will now compare this historical account with the narrative by Seaton Munroe.²

"The following simple narrative of events and incidents connected with the assassination of President Lincoln is intended to be confined to the knowledge and personal experience of the writer. . . .

"On the evening of the 14th of April, 1865, a few minutes after 10 o'clock, I was in company with a friend walking on Pennsylvania Avenue, when a man running down 10th Street approached us, wildly exclaiming: 'My God, the President is killed at Ford's Theater!' Calling to my friend to follow me I ran to the theater, two blocks away, perceiving as I neared it increasing evidences of the wildest excitement, which reached its climax in the auditorium. How it was that I worked my way through the shouting crowd that filled the house, and found myself over the footlights and on the stage, I am unable to describe.

"The first person to whom I addressed a rational word was a

¹The Life of Abraham Lincoln, vol. iv. pp. 33-40.

²"Recollections of Lincoln's Assassination." North American Review, vol. cixii. pp. 424-425.

detective, now one of the oldest in the city. I asked him who had done the shooting. When he mentioned the name of Wilkes Booth I scouted the idea; but others insisted that Booth had been recognized as the man who leaped from the President's box and rushed across the stage. Excited crowds during the war were nothing new to me, but I had never witnessed such a scene as was now presented. The seats, aisles, galleries, and stage were filled with shouting, frenzied men and women, many running aimlessly over one another; a chaos of disorder beyond control, had any visible authority attempted its exercise. The spot upon which the eyes of all would turn was the fatal upper stage box, opposite to which I now stood. Access to it was guarded, but presently a man in the uniform of an army surgeon was assisted by numerous arms and shoulders to climb into the box to join the medical men already there.

"I was told that Laura Keene, immediately after the shot was fired, had left the stage and gone to the assistance of Mrs. Lincoln, and I soon caught a glimpse of the unhappy lady who had apparently arisen from her husband's side. She stood in view for a moment, when throwing up her arms, with a mournful cry, she disappeared from sight of the stage.

"I now made my way towards the box exit to await the descent of Miss Keene, hoping to learn from her the President's condition. I met her at the foot of the staircase leading from the box, and alone. Making a motion to arrest her progress, I begged her to tell me if Mr. Lincoln was still alive. 'God only knows!' she gasped, stopping for a moment's rest. The memory of that apparition will never leave me. Attired, as I had so often seen her, in the costume of her part in 'Our American Cousin,' her hair and dress were in disorder, and not only was her gown soaked in Lincoln's blood, but her hands, and even cheeks where her fingers had strayed, were bedaubed with the sorry stain! But lately the central figure in the scene of comedy she now appeared the incarnation of tragedy. Preparations were now being made to remove the President to the neighboring house where he breathed his last about seven o'clock the next morning, and the theater was soon cleared and left in possession of the troops which had arrived."

It will be seen that here we have a definite point of view. We could take our stand with the author and see all that is reported. And still we feel that this account is very incomplete. We do not even see the stricken President. The main events in this tragedy are not mentioned. And were you to

ask the writer to explain his reason for omitting these events from his account, he would simply state that he was not present, hence he had not recorded them.

Since the thread of narrative does not get to Lincoln in this account, we have no good illustration of the third point in the characteristic features of the genuine narrative. But since this is, to my mind, the most conclusive sign of the narrative, we will consider the account of this event given by Gideon Welles in his diary. We will merely give the part which illustrates our point.¹

"About six A. M. I experienced a feeling of faintness, and for the first time after entering the room, a little past eleven, I left it and the house, and took a short walk in the open air. It was a dark and gloomy morning, and rain set in before I returned to the house, some fifteen minutes [later]. Large groups of people were gathered every few rods, all anxious and solicitous. Some one or more from each group stepped forward as I passed, to enquire into the condition of the President, and to ask if there was no hope. Intense grief was on every countenance when I replied that the President could survive but a short time. The colored people especially, and there were at this time more of these people than of whites, were overcome with grief.

"Returning to the house, I seated myself in the back parlor where the Attorney-General and others had been engaged in taking evidence concerning the assassination. Stanton, and Speed, and Usher were there—the latter asleep on the bed. There were three or four others also in the room. While I did not feel inclined to sleep, as many did, I was somewhat indisposed—I had been so for several days. The excitement and bad atmosphere from the crowded rooms oppressed me physically.

"A little before seven I went into the room where the dying President was rapidly drawing near the closing moments. His wife soon after made her last visit to him. The death struggle had begun. Robert, his son, stood with several others at the head of the bed. He bore himself well, but on two occasions gave way to overpowering grief and sobbed aloud, turning his head and leaning on the shoulder of Senator Sumner. The respiration of the President became suspended at intervals, and at last it entirely ceased at twenty-two minutes past seven."

¹ Atlantic Monthly, vol. clv. pp. 589-590.

It will be seen that in this case when Mr. Welles is away from the dying President we are away from him, and when he returns, we return. If in place of using the first personal pronoun we use the third person and the name of Welles, we might see what this point would mean in case of a narrative where the author does not want to appear as the writer.

II.

It should be clearly borne in mind that all we shall seek to discover is, whether it is probable or possible for John to have been present to witness what is recorded in the Fourth Gospel. I will assume that John is the author, and also that the unnamed disciple is John. According to the Gospel accounts, he had a home in Jerusalem (John xix. 27), and still he carried on a fishing business on the Sea of Galilee (Mark i. 19-20). Before he became Jesus' disciple, he had been the disciple of John the Baptist. These facts should be borne in mind as we try to trace him in the narrative of the Gospel.

If we start with the narrative portion of the Gospel (i. 19), we see that it is reasonable to assume that John was with John the Baptist, and with Jesus that day when Peter was named, and that he accompanied Jesus as he went to Cana, from there to Capernaum, and then to Jerusalem. Jesus was probably with John at his home when Nicodemus called. He probably was "a Jew" (iii. 25), and so witnessed this debate. He remained with Jesus when "his disciples were gone away into the city to buy food" (iv. 8).¹ But he probably did not witness what is recorded in iv. 29, 42. John accompanied the nobleman to Capernaum when he left Jesus for his home, for John was anxious to get back to his work.

¹ On this see John xx. 19, 20, where "the disciples" does not include Thomas. See also *The Criticism of the Fourth Gospel*. Sanday, p. 86.

John was with Jesus when he went to the unnamed feast (v. 1), and witnessed the cure of the impotent man. He followed the man for a while rather than Jesus. But he probably did not witness what is recorded in v. 15. Then they went back to Galilee (chap. vi.). He probably witnessed all that is recorded in this chapter but vi. 22-24. John went to Jerusalem to find out if Jesus could safely return to the city after his life had been threatened the last time he was there (vii. 1). While he was in Jerusalem with Jesus, he mingled with the crowd so as to be able to report the sentiment of the people to Jesus and keep him on his guard. He could have witnessed all of chapter viii., and if we consider that he followed the blind man to the pool of Siloam, a reasonable thing to suppose, then he witnessed all of chapter ix., and the first part of chapter x. John may have been among "the Jews" when they argued concerning Jesus (x. 19-21). He was with Jesus at "the feast of the dedication" (x. 22), and accompanied him to the place "beyond the Jordan." He probably witnessed all of what is recorded in chapter xi., with the exception of verses 28, 29, 31. He may have been present at the council of the chief priests and Pharisees (xi. 47-53), and have been the one who reported the nature of this council to Jesus so that he left for Ephraim (xi. 54). And John may have gone up to Jerusalem ahead of Jesus to see if it was safe for him to return (xi. 55-57).

In chapters xii. and xiii. there are only two verses recording facts he could not have reported as a witness (xii. 10, 19). Though the multitude did not hear the voice from heaven (xii. 28), John may have heard it. The four following chapters offer no difficulty as to the possibility of John's having heard what is recorded, though it is considered improbable that John should have been able to reproduce this from mem-

ory seventy years later. But if we suppose that John reported these addresses and this prayer shortly after Jesus' death, and continued repeating them through his active ministry, we will see how these words of Jesus became part of his mental life. They were probably not verbatim reports, but the main thoughts expressed may have been reproduced.

When we come to the closing scene of Jesus' life we are on Synoptic ground, and also in the most interesting period of Jesus' life. I will go into details here more than I have up to this point.

The fact that the Synoptic Gospels do not mention the presence of John at the trial and crucifixion does not prove that he was not present. John claims to have been there, and we will accept his testimony.

We are not surprised to find no record in John's Gospel of the struggle of Jesus in Gethsemane, since John was asleep (Mark xiv. 37) while the struggle went on. But he was awake to see the company coming to take Jesus. He probably left him for a while when Jesus was arrested, but when he saw Peter following him, at once he, too, followed. John entered the court without trouble because he "was known to the High Priest." But Peter could not enter until John had spoken to the doorkeeper. When he entered, he was challenged as one of the disciples of Jesus by this maiden. When Peter had made the first denial, John went into the room where Jesus had been taken by the soldiers.

I prefer to accept the account which follows as it stands. The narrative given in xviii. 19-23 is an account of the trial before Annas, as is clearly stated. Annas and Caiaphas may have had the same court and each his own home; or Annas may have had his office in the same house with Caiaphas. It is true that here the mention is made of the High Priest when

apparently speaking of Annas. But the title which he once held may have clung to him.¹ Since the Roman soldiers had arrested Jesus, the Jews' knowledge of the Romans' demand for fairness before the law would not permit them to shut out Jesus' friends from the trial, whatsoever that trial might have been. John therefore went into the room where Jesus was taken since the soldiers were present, and it would not be well for his enemies to close the doors (xviii. 19-23). But Jesus' enemies were desperate by this time. They had failed so often. They would not have Jesus' friends present to protect him. This taking him to Annas was merely to give him a mock trial until they could be rid of the soldiers, when they would take him to their secret gathering of the Sanhedrin, where they would not allow Jesus' friends to enter. Edersheim is right, I think, when he says that this "was no formal, regular meeting of the Sanhedrin." This accounts for the fact that there is not a word in our Gospel about the trial before Caiaphas. And yet this trial is referred to when the Jews, being desperate because of Pilate's hesitation to crucify him, said, "We have a law, and by that law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God" (xix. 7). Edersheim claims that this passage refers to the trial before Caiaphas, because, "if vv. 19-23 refer to an examination by Annas, then St. John has left us absolutely no account of anything that passed before Caiaphas — which in view of the narrative of the Synoptists would seem incredible."² But if we accept the statement of John, that he is reporting only that which he has seen and heard, then we should not expect him to have reported this trial. For, even if my suggestion

¹ Cf. Luke iii. 2, Acts iv. 6, and Hastings, *Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. 1. p. 100a.

² *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, vol. ii. p. 548, note.

is not based on fact, still it seems reasonable to conclude that this trial before Caiaphas was not open to the public.

John remained in the court watching the place where Jesus was tried, knowing that if they were to put him to death they must take him to the Roman Procurator. While in the court watching for Jesus, where he remained for nearly one hour (Luke xxii. 59), he heard the last two denials by Peter. When Jesus was led into the Prætorium, John entered. He was not scrupulous about being clean for the Passover (xviii. 28). If this examination had been a secret one, the statement in verse 28 would have been meaningless. John was also in a position to hear what was being said by the crowd without.

While the trial was in progress, John, feeling sure that no judgment would be passed for some time, hastened out to tell Jesus' friends, and especially his mother, what had been done to Jesus. It may be that some of the women, those who, for instance, were at the cross, insisted on accompanying John to the judgment hall. This would account for the presence of the women with John at the cross, and also for the omission of some of the trial.

John and the women went out to Calvary. The crucifixion scene would have been too terrible to have been witnessed by those who loved Jesus so much. This company of Jesus' closest friends stood, therefore, a short distance from the place where Jesus was crucified. As soon as they could, they went to the cross. Jesus realizing the awfulness of the scene as witnessed by his mother asked John to take her to his home. This he did "that hour" (xix. 27). John must therefore have missed the first words of Jesus on the cross, and when he took Jesus' mother home he missed more of that

scene. He returned in time, however, to hear the last two utterances.

John stayed at the cross to watch Jesus, lest some of the Jews should come and steal his body. He could not have witnessed the Jews going to Pilate to ask that the legs of the people on the cross might be broken (xix. 31); but here again we find that this is but an explanation of how it happened that the soldiers came so soon to end the lives of the sufferers. John was at the cross when the soldier pierced Jesus' side, and "blood and water" came out (xix. 34, 35).

The question may be raised as to who witnessed the burial of Jesus. In Mark xv. 47 we are told that "Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses beheld where he was laid." The first mention of the women at the cross is in John xix. 25, where we see four women with John at the cross. Then at "the ninth hour" Mark tells us that there were three women at the cross (xv. 40). These seem to be the three left after Jesus' mother had gone. It would be reasonable to suppose that, as soon as Jesus died, his mother's sister went to notify her sister of his death. This would leave the two women and John to witness the burial (xix. 38-42).

John was not present to witness Mary Magdalene's early visit to the grave (xx. 1). But this was told him as soon as Mary could reach him, and was the cause of the hasty visit by him and Peter to the tomb. When they had gone home again, Mary saw Jesus at the grave (xx. 11-17). Jesus told her to go and tell the disciples, which she did (xx. 17, 18). This is the first and only complete narrative given in this Gospel which was not witnessed by John. And the way it happened to be recorded is told. It is as much as to say, Mary told me this.

Since Jesus appeared to "the disciples," John was probably

present to report what is given in xx. 19-29. He was also present to report the events recorded in the last chapter.

Omitting the Prologue, and vii. 53-viii. 11, we have 849 verses in this Gospel. According to our examination, what is reported in twenty verses could not have been witnessed by John. Of these there are nine incidents reported which are used as explanatory parts of larger incidents witnessed by John: (1) iv. 29; (2) iv. 42; (3) v. 15; (4) vi. 22-24; (5) xi. 28, 29, 31; (6) xii. 10; (7) xii. 19; (8) xix. 31; (9) xx. 1; and there is one incident which is complete in itself (xx. 11-17).

If we assume that the Apostle Matthew was the authority for the Gospel which bears his name, we see, without a careful study of this book, that this our test would not begin to give the results we have gained from our study of John's Gospel. This is because the First Gospel begins with the birth of Jesus and treats of his early life, and also because Matthew was not as close to Jesus as was John. But Mark's Gospel should offer a fairly parallel case if we accept the commonly accepted theory that Peter is the authority for this book. We will compare results with Mark's Gospel, but we can only give the results of the study of the Second Gospel with this point in view.

I find in this Gospel ten incidents recorded which could not have been witnessed by Peter which form merely explanatory notes of larger events narrated: (1) i. 35; (2) ii. 6, 7; (3) iii. 6; (4) v. 14; (5) v. 20; (6) v. 28-30; (7) vi. 46-48; (8) vii. 30; (9) xi. 31, 32; (10) xii. 12. I also find nine incidents which are complete in themselves which could not have been witnessed by Peter. These are: (1) The Temptation (i. 12, 13); (2) The Death of John the Baptist (vi. 14-29); (3) The Sons of Zebedee Seeking Promotion (x.

35-40); (4) The Council to Kill Jesus (xiv. 1, 2); (5) Judas selling Jesus (xiv. 10, 11); (6) The Trial before Caiaphas (xiv. 55-65); (7) The Trial before Pilate (xv. 1-20); (8) The Burial of Jesus (xv. 42-47, cf. ver. 47¹); (9) The Resurrection Scene (xvi. 1-8). We have in Mark's Gospel (excluding xvi. 9-20) 666 verses. Of these what is reported in 89 verses could not have been witnessed by Peter.

Not only are these comparative results favorable to the Fourth Gospel as a genuine narrative, but the omissions in the Gospel of such events as the transfiguration scene and the soul struggle of Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane, where the disciples were asleep, are in favor of this theory.

III.

We will now study the Gospel to discover whether we will find the distinguishing features of the narrative, i.e. has the Gospel a definite point of view, does the line of narrative follow Jesus closely, and when Jesus and John are separate does the narrative follow John? We will here make a comparative study of the Second and the Fourth Gospel.

1. We will study only a few incidents to get the point of view. These represent the narratives where we know the position of both parties. The question raised will be whether we could see what is reported if we were to take our stand with the author.

The incident where John meets Jesus gives us the position of both parties (i. 29-42). If John were with John the Baptist that first day (i. 29), as we think he was, we have the point of view from him to Jesus, "On the morrow he seeth Jesus coming," etc. (i. 29). And the next morning we know that he was present with John the Baptist. Here we have,

¹ This verse had not been added, had the author been present.

"And he looked upon Jesus as he walked," etc. (i. 36). There is no question here as to the point of view.

Compare this with the account of Peter meeting Jesus as given in Mark. Here Peter is in a boat on the Sea of Galilee fishing and Jesus is walking on the shore. Here Jesus "saw Simon and Andrew" (i. 16). Here the point of view is from Jesus to Peter. The same is true in the account of this event in Matthew's Gospel (iv. 18-20).

Again take an event similar to this in the Fourth Gospel—the scene on the Sea of Galilee after the resurrection (xxi. 1-9). Here we are looking from the boats to the shore. Jesus is on the shore, but the disciples do not recognize him until they have made the big catch of fish.

Then we have the parallel account in these two Gospels of the walking on the sea. Here we know that Jesus was on the shore alone, and the disciples in the boat. In John's Gospel we are with the disciples in the boat, and see nothing of Jesus until we behold him "walking on the sea" (vi. 19). In Mark we are with Jesus on the shore and look out on the sea and see the disciples "distressed in rowing" (vi. 48).

2. The biographer who writes as an historian follows closely the character he describes. He may depart from the character, but usually returns in a short time, and often to the same time and place from which he departed. The narrator is not always present to give these accounts. He leaves the main character often to take up the narrative connected with him later.

We find that the line of narrative in Mark runs parallel to the historical line of Jesus' life most of the way. Seldom are we away from Jesus. We depart from him a moment to hear the scribes and Pharisees making objections to Jesus' disciples because their Master was eating with publicans and

sinners (ii. 16), then we are in the council room with the Pharisees and Herodians (iii. 6), then we follow the healed demoniac to Decapolis (v. 20). We are at the castle of Machærus to witness the death of John the Baptist (vi. 14-29), we go with the Syrophœnician woman to her home (vii. 30), and we are with the two disciples who get the colt for Jesus (xi. 4-6). We are with Jesus' enemies as they plot to kill him (xiv. 1, 2), and with Judas as he sells Jesus (xiv. 10, 11), and we leave Jesus to see the disciples preparing the last supper (xiv. 16). We remain in the court when Jesus goes to be tried before Caiaphas, and hear Peter denying his Master (xiv. 66-72), and we go with Joseph of Arimathæa to Pilate (xv. 42-45). There are 39 verses given in the Gospel where the narrative departs from Jesus.

We will take only a few of the passages in the Fourth Gospel to illustrate how the thread of narrative departs from Jesus. In the seventh chapter the line of narrative follows a zigzag line from Jesus to the crowds and back again. The following are the verses which record events away from Jesus in this chapter: vii. 10-13, 15, 25-27, 31, 32, 35-36, 40-44, 45-52. In the eighth chapter the narrative follows Jesus closely all the time. This offers a strange phenomenon in literary composition. Why are we back and forth so much in the seventh, and remain so close to Jesus in the eighth chapter? A plausible explanation presents itself. When Jesus returned to Jerusalem for the first time after he had left for fear of the Jews, he had one of his disciples, most likely John because of his knowledge of the city, act as a spy. He mingled with the crowd and heard the comments made about Jesus, which he reported to him. That is how Jesus found out what the people said about him.

But when the Pharisees tried to take Jesus, they found

that the officers they sent to arrest him became his disciples. They also found that even in the Sanhedrin he had friends. When John learned these facts, he ceased being a spy, since he felt that there was little danger of the Jews doing anything. He therefore remained close to Jesus to hear his debate with the people as it is reported in the eighth chapter.

The account of the restoring of sight to the man born blind is very interesting in this connection. John was evidently with Jesus when they saw this man. Jesus ordered the blind man to go to the pool of Siloam. As soon as he left Jesus we leave him, only to return when he has been unsynagogued. Then Jesus heard about this and looked him up. Of the 41 verses in the chapter only 13 follow Jesus. This is simple, however. We would not expect Jesus to send a blind man to find a certain place by himself when he had disciples with him. And since John knew the city he was the one chosen. When the man was unsynagogued, John hastened to tell Jesus (ix. 35). This is nearly parallel to the account given by Gideon Welles, only here the first personal pronoun does not appear.

In this Gospel we have 161 verses recording events which happened away from Jesus. It will be seen, therefore, that the fact that John was able to report nearly all of the Gospel as witnessed by him is not due to the fact that he clung closely to Jesus. On the other hand, Mark clings closely to Jesus, but is unable to witness nearly as much of what he has recorded as is John.

3. We will here study the same events which we considered in the first point of characteristic features of the narrative. But while there we asked about the point of view, here we will consider the thread of narrative. The last mentioned incident above may be studied profitably in this connection;

but since we are not told of the position of the author, we will not include it under this head.

In the account of the calling of Peter and Andrew in Mark i. 16-18 we have Jesus on the shore and Peter in the boat. But we find that the thread of narrative follows Jesus in place of Peter. The same is true in Matthew's account of this incident. The story of Jesus walking on the sea reveals the same fact (Mark vi. 45-52). Here Jesus sends his disciples away in the boat, and he goes into the mountain to pray, and we follow him into the mountain, and as he walks out to his disciples. We know that Peter is in the boat, but our thread of narrative follows Jesus. The same may be said of the account in Matthew, but the line of narrative is not as distinct there.

In John's Gospel we find the thread of narrative following the author. When we study the account of John's meeting with Jesus, we approach him in company with John. We first hear Jesus speaking when he turns around to speak to the disciples.

The incident on the Sea of Galilee in chapter xxi. gives us the same fact. The events in the boat are narrated until the boat with the disciple whom Jesus loved arrives. Even the meeting of Peter and Jesus is not recorded. But when John lands, then he sees that there is a breakfast in preparation. "But when they got out upon the land, they see a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread" (xxi. 9).

But the most interesting event narrated which bears on this point is that of the escape from the 5,000. I quote here the passage so that we may consider it carefully (vi. 16-21):—

"And when evening came, his disciples went down unto the sea; and they entered into a boat, and were going over the sea unto Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. And the sea was rising by reason of a great wind that

blew. When therefore they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they beheld Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the boat: and they were afraid. But he said unto them, It is I; be not afraid. They were willing therefore to receive him into the boat: and straightway the boat was at the land whither they were going."

Here it is clearly seen that the thread of narrative follows the boat. Nothing is told of Jesus from the time the disciples enter the boat until they see him "walking on the sea." It gets dark for the people in the boat, they are anxiously waiting for Jesus, and then, to add to their trouble, a storm is rising. Jesus has gone along the shore until he is only a short distance from Capernaum when he goes out to them. But we are told nothing of what happened to Jesus on this his journey.

It is commonly considered that only the twelve disciples were in the boat. Jesus, we are told by the Gospel accounts, was alone on the shore. If the author of the Fourth Gospel was writing from the position of an historian and not a narrator, and he had, as is reasonable to suppose, the Synoptic Gospels to refer to, what good reason can be given for his changing their order? It seems an insignificant thing. But it is by such evidences that verdicts have been reached. This change in the narrative adds nothing of real importance to the story. It is, however, the most natural thing to do if John, the Apostle, wrote the Gospel. There may be other satisfactory explanations for this change in the thread of narrative from the Synoptic Gospels to this; but until such explanation is offered this evidence will bear strong testimony to the autoptic character of the Fourth Gospel.

The question may be raised as to how it came to be that the account in Mark gives the line of narrative as following Jesus in place of Peter if he is the authority for this Gospel. It

may be said, in answer to this question, that here Peter is acting more as the historian than the narrator, or that Mark has worked over the account given him.

IV.

I have gathered together some of the characteristic marks of the genuine narrative, and tested these on various writings, and found them fairly dependable. The fuller study of the other writings, and the applications made of these tests, cannot be entered into in this paper. The five points considered are as follows: (1) presence of author; (2) conditions right for him to have witnessed what is reported; (3) definite point of view; (4) the thread of narrative not commonly following the main character, and being clearly visible; (5) where the author and the main character are separate, the thread of narrative following the author.

There may be other earmarks of the genuine narrative, but I have not found or applied them. I have not tried to find some marks which would fit my theory of the authorship of the Gospel. These marks were first worked out—one at a time—outside the Fourth Gospel, and then applied to it. And the results of these tests, one after the other testifying to the autoptic character of the writing, led me to believe more and more in the Johannine authorship until it seemed almost a demonstrated fact.

I have not considered the external evidences bearing on the authorship of the Fourth Gospel. This cannot be done in this paper. But since the problem is still unsettled, the facts recorded without this Gospel which have a bearing on this problem do not preclude the possibility of accepting the conclusion reached in this paper. And the internal evidences

which seem to be against the Johannine authorship are by no means insurmountable barriers.

It may be seen that the conclusion reached is not based on one theory which has worked well. It is the combination of evidences all pointing in the same direction which makes this test so satisfactory.

We have found that the author may have been present to witness practically all he has reported. In fact, the part which could not have been so witnessed is almost negligible. Any narrator will insert explanatory clauses which may mention events he has not witnessed.¹

In the Synoptic Gospels there are many references to what Jesus and the people thought, and their thought-words given as if they had been spoken. There is also recorded what happened while the disciples were sleeping. We have nothing of this in John's Gospel.

The point of view is clear and from the author. It is true that we have not considered all of the Gospel on this point; but where we know the position of the author, and of Jesus in reference to him, there we have this point of view. This is not true of the other Gospels.

The line of narrative does not follow Jesus anywhere near as closely in the Fourth as in the other Gospels. And we can follow the line of narrative clearly in the narrative portions. In this, too, it differs from the other Gospels.

In those places where we know that Jesus and John are separated the line of narrative follows the author. In this, too, this Gospel is unique.

If we add to this the fact that most of the interesting events omitted from the Fourth Gospel which appear in the Synop-

¹ Cf. last sentence of the quotation from Seaton Munroe, given above.

tics are events which John could not have seen, we have these omissions as another testimony to the Johannine authorship.

Some of these facts may be stated in proportionate form to bring out the test applied more distinctly, and to reveal our results more clearly. I have applied the test to the narrative portion of the books of Ruth, Esther, and John, besides the two Gospels. I have not considered the problem of the authorship of either book, but selected the person in each book who could have witnessed most of what is recorded. I have also considered the possibility of some unnamed person having reported these events more fully than the characters mentioned. In neither case could anyone else have reported more than the characters after whom the books are named. The results of this application of our test are as follows: In Ruth what is narrated in 1 verse in 4 could not have been witnessed by the author; in Esther 2 in 5; in Jonah 1 in 12 (but it should be borne in mind that Jonah is practically the only character herein mentioned); in Mark 2 in 15; and in John 1 in 43. In the Old Testament books it will be seen that the proportion of the writings away from the author to that which follows him will be the same as that which he could not have witnessed is to that he could have witnessed. But this is not true with the Gospels. In these what is reported in 1 verse in 17 in Mark is away from Jesus, while in John's we have 1 in $5\frac{1}{3}$. In neither one of the Biblical books studied do I find the characteristic features of the genuine narrative.

All these evidences point in the same direction. It may be possible that these are merely characteristic traits of the writings of this author, but this is hardly thinkable. Should it be argued that he wrote in this way to create the impression that he was the Apostle, we would say that no school existed at that time which would put his writing to this test. It would

have been natural for a witness of these events to write as this author wrote, but unnatural for the historian who had not been present to see and hear these things.

And it seems unreasonable to suppose that anyone else besides one of the disciples could have been a witness of these events. To claim that an obscure man followed Jesus as closely as this would plunge us into a problem much more difficult than the present problem of the Fourth Gospel. It would seem, therefore, that the claim made by the author of the First Epistle of John in the first paragraph of that Epistle refers to the Fourth Gospel and is to be taken literally, for I can see no satisfactory reason for ascribing the authorship of the Fourth Gospel to anyone besides John, the son of Zebedee, the Apostle of Jesus.