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NOTES ON THE CLEMENTINE ROMANCES

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INTRODUCTION

THE early Christian literature abounds in unsolved problems, enough in number and variety to exercise the ingenuity and tax the learning of a whole generation of scholars; some of them are of the first importance for Christian origins and Christian doctrine; if we could resolve them we should probably be some way further on the road to the knowledge of 'what God and man is'; others are of the nature of literary conundrums, as when we enquire curiously into the authorship and origin of an anonymous or pseudonymous writing, without any ulterior reference to orthodoxy or catholicity. Such problems are scattered over the whole area of the Christian tradition from its first inception, and they naturally attract the attention of those whose scholarship has not been bereft of its inquisitive side by an overdose of what is commonly, but erroneously, called reverence, which prohibits us from enquiring closer into Christian origins through a fear of what we perhaps may find. However, since it is now fairly certain that the early Christian Church was widely different from what its traditional interpreters have maintained, and since the existing Christian literature is, after all, best described as *Reliquiae Sacrae*, it is the privilege of those who have the handling of unsolved or half-solved problems to occupy themselves more earnestly than ever with the literary and historical enigmas of the Christian religion.

Amongst the problems to which we refer there is none that rivals in perplexity and obscurity the question of the origin of the so-called Pseudo-Clementine literature. For some reason or

other the name of Clement has drawn to it a mass of writings, beyond any other apostolic or sub-apostolic person. It was, of course, natural that fictions in literature, Acts, Epistles, Martyrdoms, Preachings and the like should attach themselves to the names of the greatest of the Apostles; that there should be Pastoral letters of Paul, an Apocalypse of Peter and the like; but that, when the question of the relative dignities and authorities of Peter, Paul and James are in debate, these protagonists of early Christian movements should stand aside, and more or less completely leave the stage to the shadowy form of Clement, is one of the initial surprises of the situation. It is certain that one side of the Pseudo-Clementine literature is the conflict between Paul and Peter; why this should be obscured by bringing into the front of the arena, not only Clement but his father, his mother and his twin brothers, is not easy to decide. The literature to which Clement's name has been attached is a product of a very wayward imagination; we stand and wonder why the author (whoever he was) wants us to go down this particular road.

The Clementines, then, of which we are speaking, might equally be called Paulo-Petrines or even Jacobo-Petrines; they profess to contain real Apostolic history, and to be an expansion and completion of the New Testament itself. Why, then, should the half-imaginary Clement and the wholly imaginary family be brought forward at all?

We have two leading forms in which the Clementine traditions have come down to us; the one is known as the *Clementine Homilies*, the other as the *Clementine Recognitions*, the former being preserved in Greek, the latter in a Latin translation from the Greek, by no less a person than Rufinus, the contemporary of Jerome. The *Homilies* are so called because they profess to give us the discourses of St. Peter on a journey which he is making through Palestine to N. Syria and Antioch, with the object of confuting a certain wicked magician, named Simon, who, from one point of view, is a disguise of St. Paul. Thus they are not Clement's *Homilies* but Peter's.

The *Recognitions* are so-called, because in the novel which the writer has constructed, the Clementine family lose one

another on the grand scale and then find one another again. Clement's father loses his wife and his twin sons; then the wife loses the boys also, and finally the father himself becomes lost. Clement's rôle is to go in search of them, successively to recover his long-lost brethren, his mother and finally his father, and so to reunite them all on a Christian basis in the entourage of St. Peter. They may therefore be properly called *Clementine Recognitions*. Between these two voluminous writings, the *Homilies* and the *Recognitions*, there is a close internal connection of agreement and difference, but no one has yet succeeded in explaining the connection. Are the *Homilies* dependent on the *Recognitions* or is the converse the truth? or do they both derive their widely extended forms from some earlier and simpler literary ancestor? No one seems to know. The scholarship of the problem has been, almost entirely, in the hands of the Germans; but when Harnack wrote on the subject in 1893 in his *History of Christian Literature to the time of Eusebius*, he erected very few landmarks in the midst of the waste, and merely laid down the conditions which had to be followed in the making of a new edition of the two forms in which the documents were found; as that the internal relations of the two forms should be carefully indicated in the printed texts; that the New Testament references and allusions should be carefully studied; that the Patristic parallels should be carefully noted, and that there should be adequate indices; all of which is good advice and implies that we are, as yet, only at the threshold of the enquiry into the problems of the Clementines. Harnack gave a very complete summary of all the literary parallels on the Patristic side, and his work is a standard of reference for those who approach the subject.

He made, however, one bad mistake in supposing, as others had done, that the *Recognitions* were quoted by Origen, thus determining a literary *terminus ad quem* for their composition; and it fell to the lot of Dr. Armitage Robinson to show that the supposed reference in the *Philocalia* of Origen was not Origen's at all, but was to be credited to the editorial hands of Basil and Gregory. The same mistake was made by Dr. Hort in his lectures on the subject, which were published after his death

under the editorial care of Dr. J. O. F. Murray. These lectures are the one important English contribution to the study of the Clementines, and they are, somewhat pathetically, disfigured by the attempts of the editor to get rid of Origen by double brackets and foot-notes. There the matter stands for the present. In the following pages we propose to make a discursive enquiry into the meaning and tradition of the *Clementine Romance*, as a kind of preliminary which may be useful to those who have more time and zeal to apply to the question than ourselves.

I

That the Clementine Romance has its Origin in Twin-Myths.

Our first observation is that the literature which we are studying has its nucleus in a folk-tale, and the folk-tale finds its origin in an ancient twin-myth.

It has been abundantly shown in recent years that among the principal fears that beset our primeval ancestors, two stand out with an overwhelming insistence, the fear of the Thunder and the fear of Twin-children. We have called them sometimes, for convenience, the great Rational Fear and the great Irrational Fear. That is to say, Rational and Irrational from our point of view: it is certain, however, that they are equally real to the savage mind, and we have shown elsewhere that there is an intimate connection between the Rational Fear and the Irrational Fear, in the fact that, over wide areas of human life in early times, the occurrence of twin children was supposed to be due to the action of the Thunder-god, Thunder-man or Thunder-bird. So that the Rational and the Irrational are near neighbours. The Fear expresses itself, as regards the tabooed twin-children, in various acts of what we should call cruelty, ranging from the actual murder of the Twin-mother, the murder or exposure of her children, up to various degrees of isolation and exile, with such modifications as are suggested by an increasing sense of humanity and relationship. This is not the place to re-write the

history of Twin-cults:¹ what we have to notice is that the exile of the mother or her degradation socially, and the exposure of the twins and their consequent disappearance from the family circle, has furnished a series of motives in mythology such as

The Insulting of the Twin Mother;
 The Recognition of the Twin Mother;
 The Avenging of the Twin Mother;
 The Recognition of the Twins:

and the like.

For example, when in the story of Thebes children are born to Antiope, named Zethus and Amphion, the twins are exposed; but they are rescued and brought up to manhood; and we find them coming back in search of their mother and taking vengeance upon her rival, Dirke, by binding her to the horns of a wild-bull, as in the magnificent group of statues at Naples by Tauriskos of Tralles. The reason for Dirke's appearance in the story, is, evidently, that the Twin-mother lost caste and became a slave in her own house. It is the insults upon their degraded slave-mother that the Twins avenge upon Dirke. We have in this Theban myth a very good example of the folk-tales that arise from the Twin customs. Not very dissimilar from the point of view of Recognition of the Twins and their Vengeance is the case of Romulus and Remus, who, when grown to manhood, bring their own exposure and their mother's death home to King Amulius in the way that poetical justice may suggest and perhaps history affirm.

Here is an illustration from the Middle Ages which brings the matter down nearly to historical times and our own day. It was not uncommon in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to find amongst the popular chap-books the story of Valentine and Orson. This tale relates how the sister of King Pepin of France, the lovely Princess Bellisant, was wedded to the Emperor of Constantinople. She became the object of the attentions of a wicked ecclesiastic who, when he had failed in his lawless

¹ We may refer to Reudel Harris. *Boanerges*, for a general study of the theme.

amours, endeavoured to blacken the lady's reputation, whereupon she fled to Paris to seek redress from her brother. Not far from Paris, in a wood near Orleans, she brought forth twins; one of them was promptly seized by a bear and taken to its den. While the unhappy mother sought to save it, King Pepin and his suite, riding through the forest, picked up the other child and took it to court. So one child became a bear-man and the terror of the woods, and the other a cavalier and the magnet of fair ladies. The unhappy mother was carried off to a castle in Portugal by a giant. Now everybody has lost everybody and the second part of the story begins. The brothers fight and recognise one another: they go in search of their mother, find her, and begin the acts of vengeance, and so on, until every inequality is rectified, and the princess goes back to Constantinople justified. One must read the whole story and note its parallels with the Esau and Jacob legend (with its twins rough and smooth) and other folk-tales. We refer to it because it has many parallels with the Clementine Romance.

Here we have again a Roman lady named Mattidia, the object of lawless affection on the part of her brother-in-law. To escape the toils she feigns a dream that Faustus, her husband, must send her and her twin-children, Faustinus and Faustinianus, to Athens. On the way they are shipwrecked, the mother is washed ashore at one spot,² the twins at another; nothing more is ever heard of them. The father seeks them far and wide, and in age and extreme misery, wanders about explaining that everything happens according to Destiny and the Stars. Clement alone, the youngest child, is left at Rome, and he now begins to move eastward to find in Palestine a new religion and old relations. A series of recognitions takes place, very prettily told with some dramatic force. Evidently, then, the Romance which we are studying belongs to a cycle of twin-tales. There is not a word of truth in it. Clement is added to the story in order to assist the discovery of the lost parents and brothers. It is a genuine novel, and not, in the first instance, a historical novel.

² We may compare the fate of Danae, with her Thunder-child, on the island of Seriphos, or Leto on Delos, or S. Tarnew, the mother of S. Kentigern, washed up on the shore of Fife.

The knowledge of this fact, our first literary discovery in the analysis of the legends, enables us to take a further step.

The opening of the story, both in the *Homilies* and the *Recognitions*, is a really beautiful passage. Clement tells his spiritual experience in brief but pregnant sentences, far superior to anything else in the book. Here is a fragment of it:

“I had a habit of reasoning, whence originating I know not, making cogitations concerning death; when I die, shall I neither exist, nor shall any one ever have any remembrance of me, while boundless time bears all things of all men into forgetfulness? And shall I then be without being, or acquaintance with those that are; neither knowing nor being known, neither having been, nor being? And has the world ever been made? And was there anything before it was made? etc. etc.”

Now that we know the foundation of the story in twin legend, we can see pretty clearly that this beautiful opening chapter has been culled from elsewhere: and I have hazarded the conjecture that it is the opening of one of the lost Christian Apologies which has been utilised. Whatever be the exact source, the style of the writing betrays that it is a loan; and if this happens on the first page of the book, we may as well prepare ourselves to read the book with our eyes open for variations in literary tone and temper, and especially to be on the look-out for incorporated documents.

So much, then, for the under-lying folk-tale, and what follows from its recognition. The reader who is familiar with modern Patristic research will recognise that we are in a situation something like that which was developed by Dr. Armitage Robinson, when he detected that the *Apology of Aristides* had been incorporated with the Romance of *Barlaam and Josaphat*. The parallel is an interesting one, for we find that *Barlaam and Josaphat* has also been making loans, either from the Clementine opening section or from the sources of the Clementine story. Like the hero of one romance, the central figure of the other is beset by speculative doubts which wear away his body, and the coincidence in the language which describes the symptoms betrays literary dependence.

II

A proof that the compilers of the Clementine Romances borrowed from good authors who have preceded them.

It has been long known that the *Recognitions* have incorporated a section taken directly from the work of Bardaisan *On Fate*. The discovery came to light through Eusebius' use of the same work of Bardaisan; Eusebius makes very nearly the same extract as the *Recognitions* in his great work on the *Preparation of the Evangel*. Traces of the same passages were also found in the *Interrogation* of Caesarius, the brother of Gregory of Nazianzus; and finally the actual work of Bardaisan was discovered among the Syrian MSS. from the Nitrian desert in the British Museum, and published by Cureton in his *Spicilegium Syriacum* in 1855. Those who are not able to compare for themselves the Syriac of Bardaisan and the Latin of Rufinus may be interested to compare the translations of these writers with the parallel in Eusebius as given by Gifford in his edition of the *Preparatio Evangelica*. We will take the opening chapter of the common extract which deals with the Laws of the Chinese.

Clementine
Recognitions
(Bk. IX. c. 19)
tr. by Dr. T. Smith.

Eusebius:
Preparatio.
(Bk. VI. c. 10)
tr. by Dr. Gifford.

Bardaisan: *on Fate or
The Laws of Countries*
tr. by Canon Cureton.

There are, in every country or kingdom laws imposed by men, enduring either by writing or simply through custom, which no one easily transgresses. In short the first Seres who dwell at the beginning of the world, have a law not to know murder nor adultery, nor whoredom, and not to commit

Men enacted different laws in every country, some written and some unwritten: of which I shall mention some according to what I know and remember, beginning from the beginning of the world. Among the Seres it is law that none should murder

Men have established laws in different places, by that freewill which has been given them by God. Because the gift itself is opposed to the fortune of the powers which assume for themselves that which has not been given to them, I will begin to speak as I remember from the east, the head of the whole world.

Clementine
 Recognitions
 (Bk. IX. c. 19)
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Eusebius:
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 tr. by Dr. Gifford.

Bardaisan: *on Fate or
 The Laws of Countries*
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theft and not to worship idols, and in all that country which is very large, there is neither temple, nor image, nor harlot, nor adulteress, nor is any thief brought to trial. But neither is any man ever slain there; and no man's liberty of will is compelled, according to your doctrine by the fiery star of Mars, to use the sword for the murder of man; nor does Venus in conjunction with Mars compel to adultery, although of course with them Mars occupies the middle circle of heaven every day. But amongst the Seres the fear of laws is more powerful than the configuration of *genesis*.

nor fornicate nor steal, nor worship graven images; and in that very great country you cannot see a temple, nor a harlot, nor a reputed adulteress, no thief dragged off to justice, no homicide, no murdered man. For among them no man's free-will was compelled by the fiery planet Mars in mid-heaven to kill a man with the sword, nor by the conjunction of Venus with Mars to consort with another man's wife, though of course Mars was in mid-heaven every day and Serians were being born every day and every hour.

The Laws of the Seres.
 The Seres have laws that they should not kill and not commit fornication and not worship idols. And in the whole country of the Seres there are no idols nor harlots, who killeth a man nor who is killed; while they too are born at all hours and at all days. And Mars the fierce where he is placed in the midst of the heavens, doth not force the free will of the Seres that a man should shed the blood of his neighbour with a weapon of iron. Nor doth Venus, when she is placed with Mars, force any one of the men of the Seres that he should have connexion with his neighbour's wife, or with another woman: but rich and poor and sick and healthy and rulers and subjects are there: because these things are given to the power of the Governors.

The specimen chapter will suffice to suggest to us not only the dependence of Eusebius on a Greek translation of Bardaisan, and the dependence of the *Recognitions* upon the same translation, but also the reason for the insertion of the Bardesarian extract. It was clearly a part of the original scheme of the novelist to make Clement's father defend astrology and declare the stars responsible for all the family troubles, and then to make Clement reply to him in the language of Bardaisan. But

that is not all that we discover. The *Recognitions* show us that the way was not only prepared for a debate on Fate, but for an oration on Providence, and for a pagan defence of the Greek gods, with proper refutation. We may see this in the following manner.

In the eighth book the twins and Clement begin to talk philosophy to the old gentleman. I am surprised, says he, that you should know my opinions before I have expressed them. No need to wonder, says Nicetas (one of the twin brethren); we are experts in philosophy, and could tell from what you did say what school you belonged to. I myself, says Nicetas, have frequented the school of Epicurus; my brother, Aquila, here prefers the disciples of Pyrrho; my other brother follows the Platonists and Aristotelians: you have an expert company to address. Indeed, says the old gentleman, you are right that I follow Epicurus, but I go further than he; I refer everything to the fateful influence of the stars, to genesis as I call it. This means that we are to have a general discussion of Stoic, Epicurean and Peripatetic positions, with special reference to astrology. From the fact that we have liberal quotations *De Fato*, we suspect similar treatment in other directions. So we find that Nicetas (it should have been one of the others) proceeds to reel off a splendid speech on Providence, which is only broken by an occasional ejaculation of approval on the part of the old gentleman. Now this is just as little from the pen of the author of the *Recognitions* as Bardesanes' *De Fato* is from his workshop. It is a Stoic tract on *Providence*, one of their favourite themes to which we are treated;³ and our business is to find out which of the doctors of the Stoic fur (as Milton would say) has been plundered. For there has certainly been burglary, flat burglary. Perhaps it is the lost treatise of Panaetius on *Providence*, which Cicero once asked for,⁴ or perhaps it is Poseidonius.⁵ At any rate, it stands for the present, dissected out of the *Recognitions* as
A Stoic tract on Providence;

³ There is a line of such writers from Chrysippus onwards.

⁴ Cicero: *Att.* XIII. 8 "Velim mihi mittas Παλαιου περί προνοίας."

⁵ Diog. Laert. VII. 138. "The world is regulated by mind and by providence, as Chrysippus in his fifth book on Providence, and Poseidonius in his third book on *the gods*."

and we must print it separately. It is not really a part of the *Recognitions*, and we have to find out the author. When this and the Bardaisan extract have been removed, the bulkiness of the book will be much reduced, and the nucleus of the romance will be more evident. Let us, then, set this tract on one side. It occupies the eighth book from c. 9 to the end of c. 35. It is, as we have said, a pagan product, but it is pagan on the very best side, where Hellenism and Christianity overlap.

We come now to a third treatise, apparently also of Greek origin, but much more difficult of exact limitation. The foregoing examination shows us that the author copied Bardaisan, with only an occasional remark; and the Stoic tract appears to be handled in the same way, with only a few interjections: but now we come to an actual defence of the Greek gods, which occurs both in the *Homilies* and in the *Recognitions*, but not in such a clear tradition as in the two previous cases. As it will require somewhat closer criticism than a mere description in English, we will make it the subject of a special chapter.

III

That the Clementine Romances had a Greek defence of the ancient Mythology.

In the *Homilies* we find that, after Clement has attached himself to St. Peter, and has made the recognition of his two brethren Nicetas and Aquila, who had previously been a part of the retinue of Simon the Witch, there appear upon the scenes another twin-like pair, whom Simon has left behind him to cover his retreat. They are called Appion and Annubion, Egyptian names formed from Apis and Anubis. Appion is an anti-Semite, and has written many books against the Jews; perhaps he is the *revenant* of the one whom Josephus writes to refute. At any rate he is an old friend of Clement or rather of Clement's father, and after some preliminaries, Clement and Appion sit down to discuss what Clement calls the scandalous myths of the Greeks.

Olympus is put on the film. It is not an edifying spectacle; not even a drastic censorship could make it so. Appion is angry; he begins to explain that Zeus is the same as Zēn, and indicates boiling substance; Kronos is the same as Chronos, and means time; Hera is, of course, air. It is very ancient stuff, this allegory; and we are promised more of it presently. So the session adjourns. Clement, meanwhile, bethinks him of a correspondence which he once had with Appion, and which he has happily preserved, in which Appion forged a letter in defence of human passion as imitating the gods, which Clement was to use upon a certain fair lady with whom he said he was in love. It was a mere ruse on Clement's part and provoked a suitable reply. Clement reads it to the multitude before Appion's arrival, and no doubt it was very edifying to see Appion walk into the trap once again, and make a defense of the indefensible gods whom he had once recommended as good copy for young men and maidens. Appion has to explain that he never meant to be taken seriously and he then discloses the meaning of the Olympian stories by the classic method of allegory, which he proceeds to develop at length. One can hardly read it without the suspicion that it is either an early Greek document which he is quoting, or else it is some recent pagan attempt to counter the derision with which the Christian Apologists never ceased to cover the traditional gods. We have again run up against a book, but it is extremely difficult to find its limits. The difficulty increases when we pass from the *Homilies* (V and VI) to the corresponding sections at the end of the *Recognitions* (X. 50. sqq.). Here we are again treated to an allegorical explanation of Greek theology, but it is clear that the matter has been much abbreviated, and occasionally Latin gods have been added to the Greek Chorus: even in Greek new philological derivations are introduced. We have not only the time-honoured Kronos and Rhea, but we have Zeus derived from ζάω as well as ζέω; we have him explained as *a vivendo* as well as *vis caloris*; we have Athene explained as the personification of immortality (from ἀ—θνήσκω) etc. And then comes an allegory on Venus which is obviously Latin, and must be Rufinus' own jesting or the work of a later transcriber: e. g.

*Venustas rerum quae ex aquis pulcrior apparuerat, Venus nominata est, quae aetheri tanquam fratri suo sociata, quod concupiscibile decus effecerit, Cupidinem genuisse memorata est.*⁶

Now this of Venus and Cupid was certainly not in the Greek document which Rufinus was translating; but whoever put it in had noted that allegorically Zeus was the aether. Then we come to the barbaric explanation of Apollo as *solem circumeuantem polum*, but this is also in *Homily VI. 10*.

When we come to the allegory of Hera we are told that "Hera id est Juno, aer iste medius, qui de caelo usque ad terram descendit". It is assumed that Zeus himself is the upper air, the incandescent part, but the writer omitted to state this.

Our perplexities increase as Clement demands from his brother the explanation of the banquet of Peleus and Thetis, the apple of Eris and the shepherd Paris. We are told that Juno is modesty (pudicitia), Minerva is fortitude, Venus is lustfulness and Paris the senses. On turning to the sixth Homily we find a similar tale (VI. 15) "Hera is dignity; Athena, manliness; Aphrodite, pleasure; Hermes, language which *interprets* thought; the shepherd Paris, unreasoned and brutish passion". The surprising thing is that the heroes and demi-gods are beginning to appear in the allegorisation.

When the author of the *Recognitions* comes to the case of Peleus and Thetis, he merely says that they represent the dry and moist elements, by whose commixture all material things exist. It would perplex any commentator to explain this if he had not the parallel in the *Homilies* vi. 14, to refer to, in which Peleus is connected with clay (*πηλός*) and Thetis, as a Nereid, is connected with moisture (*υγρός*). It seems then that the allegories in the *Recognitions* have been much abbreviated. The *Homilies* are often nearer the original. It is none the less fairly clear that we are dealing with a genuine Greek defence of polytheism, probably Orphic in character, and taking as its starting point the theogonies of Homer and Hesiod. The opening sentences are probably what we find Nicetas saying in *Recog.* (X. 50):

⁶ This is almost as bad as Arnobius, *adv. nationes*, iii. 33: "ac sensu, quod ad cunctos veniat, Venerem, et quod sata in lucem proserpunt, cognominatam esse Proserpinam".

“Omnis sermo apud Graecos, qui de antiquitatis origine conscribitur, cum alios multos, tum duos praecipuos auctores habet, Orpheum (? Homerum) et Hesiodum. Horum erga scripta in duas partes intelligentiae dividuntur, id est, *secundum litteram et secundam allegoriam* . . . Orpheus igitur est, qui dicit primo fuisse Chaos sempiternum, immensum, ingenitum, ex quo omnia facta sunt etc.”

We are dealing again with a book which the author is transcribing, and it cannot be a Christian book: it must be either a modern and contemporary production, or else it is a work which has come down out of the past and belongs to one of the great schools of Greek philosophy.

Can we get any nearer to the source upon which our Clementine author has been working? The allegorical method of apologising for the amours of the gods and their Homeric battles is said to be as old as Theagenes (sixth century B. C.); it has made its mark upon Plato and the Orphic literature is full of it. For example, when our Romancer tries to explain away the meaning of Pallas, or at least to get rid of her personality, he tells us that the heat which reaches the aether causes in it a ceaseless *palpitation*, and this gives rise to intelligence which they call *Pallas* (from *πάλλειν*): but we are very near to this in Plato, *Cratylus*:

p. 406. “We call her Pallas’
To be sure.

And we cannot be wrong in supposing that this is derived from armed *dances*. For the elevation of oneself or anything else above the earth or in the hands we call *shaking* (*πάλλειν*) or *dancing*.”

The parallel between Plato and the Clementines is obvious.

In the same way the Orphic hymns, whatever their date may be, confirm the nexus between Orpheus and allegory which we find in the Clementines: e. g. Johannes Diaconus commenting on Hesiod, *Theog.* 943. says,

μαρτυρεῖ δὲ καὶ ἐν τῇ μακροτέρῳ κρατῆρι Ὀρφεύς·
Ἑρμῆς δ’ ἑρμηνεύς, τῶν πάντων ἄγγελός ἐστιν.
Νύμφαι ὕδωρ, πῦρ Ἡφαιστος, σίτος Δημήτηρ.

and so on, where we note especially the explanations of Hermes and the nymphs (sc. Nereids) as in the Clementines. Moreover, it is quite clear that some of the favourite allegories, such as Chronos and Rhea, Zeus and Hera, are as old, almost, as Greek literature itself. Equally true is it that they are very long-lived; their traces are found in the Neo-Platonic writers, and they are challenged as contemporary forms of controversy by Arnobius and Augustine. How then shall we be able to find a personal or a written source for our Clementine matter? Two roads suggest themselves to us: first we must note the peculiar features of the Clementine allegorisation; next we must look for the author by preference, in the school of Epicurus. The last suggestion comes from the fact that we have already found a Stoic tract in our romance, and it is, therefore, Epicurus' turn to be represented. As to the peculiar traits of our mythology a careful examination both of the *Homilies* and the *Recognitions* shews that the allegories are to embrace heroes and their demi-gods as well as bona fide deities. For instance, there is Prometheus to be explained, and Achilles and Polyxena and Paris. Of these the funniest is Achilles, who is said to have been born full-grown, and never to have put his lips to the breast. As lips are χείλη, a derivation from α privative and χείλη is possible in the infancy of Greek philology, which certainly did not start full-grown. Prometheus is an easier case than Achilles and requires no subtlety.

But why should there be such eagerness to explain these people away? The answer is that they are engaged in intercourse and controversy with the great gods, and they occur in Homer. Then they must be got rid of: we cannot turn Hera into air and leave Herakles solid. Consider, for example, the case of Paris; in Homer he is described as θεοειδής. The Stoics had identified God and the world, and had proved to their own satisfaction that God had a perfect form and was σφαιροειδής.⁷ The Epicureans could not resist the temptation of suggesting

⁷ c. g. Diog. Laert. VII. 140:

ἵνα τὸν κόσμον εἶναι καὶ τοῦτον πεπερασμένον, σχῆμ' ἔχοντα σφαιροειδές· πρὸς γὰρ τὴν κίνησιν, ἀρμολιώτατον τὸ τοιοῦτον, καθὰ φησι Πουσιδῶνιος ἐν τῷ πέμπτῳ τοῦ φυσικοῦ λόγου, καὶ οἱ περὶ Ἀντίπατρον ἐν τοῖς περὶ κόσμου.

that, in that case, Paris also would be spherical in figure. One can see the joke on the lips of Metrodorus, the great Epicurean and the second founder of the sect, in *Volumina Herculanensia*, VI. p. 31.

ἡμεῖς λέγομεν οὐδὲ κόσμον Θεὸν οὐδ'
 ἠέλιον τ' ἀκάμαντα σελήνην τε πληθοῦσαν.
 Στωικῶ δὲ καὶ Περιπατηρικῶ τοῦτ' ἔξοστιν
 λέγειν, ὅπως Πάριδι ἀνέχει μορφὴν τὸ σφαιροειδές.⁸

So it is clear that Metrodorus and the Epicureans knew how to make sport of the half-fledged allegories of their opponents. But what of Metrodorus himself? Do we know anything of the allegorical element in his own theology? Suppose we turn to Tatian's address to the Greeks; we shall find him affirming that Metrodorus of Lampsacus was not content to explain away the great gods in terms of elemental substances, but in his treatise on Homer, he tells us the meaning of Hector and Achilles and Agamemnon, of Paris and Helen.⁹

Of these Achilles, Paris and Helen are explained in our romance.¹⁰

⁸ Scott in *Voll. Herc.* emends to πῶς γὰρ ἰδιαν ἔχει. But perhaps the Neapolitan editors were right.

⁹ Metrodorus' speculation upon Homer are alluded to in Plato, *Ion* p. 530 c., where Ion, explaining his skill as a rhapsodist, says that he knows Homer better than Metrodorus of Lampsacus. I have assumed that Tatian in the passage quoted means to refer the whole of the mythological series of explanations to Metrodorus, and does not imply that someone else has added the mortals as a supplement to the gods. For the mere allegorising of Zeus, Hera, and Athena, is much older than Metrodorus.

¹⁰ There was a special reason for explaining away Agamemnon. He appears in Homer as a kind of human Zeus, so when Zeus is rarified, Agamemnon must also be volatilized. The case is very well put in Smith's *Dict. of Myth.* as follows: "He lives above all the Greeks by his dignity, power and majesty (Il. iii. 166 etc.): and his eyes and head are likened to those of Zeus, his girdle to that of Ares and his breast to that of Poseidon (Il. ii. 477 etc.). Agamemnon is amongst the Greek heroes what Zeus is among the gods of Olympus. This idea appears to have guided the Greek artists, for in several representations of Agamemnon still extant there is a remarkable resemblance to the representations of Zeus".

The text of the passage of Tatian is as follows:

σέβειν δὲ τῶν στοιχείων τὴν ὑπόστασιν οὐτ' ἂν πεισθείην οὐτ' ἂν πείσῃμι τὸν πλησίον· καὶ Μητρόδωρος δὲ ὁ Λαμψακηνὸς ἐν τῷ περὶ Ὀμήρου λίαν εὐθως διείλεκται, πάντα εἰς ἀλληγορίαν μετέγων. οὔτε γὰρ Ἥραν οὔτε Ἀθηνῶν οὔτε Δία τοῦτ' εἶναι φησιν ὅπερ οἱ περιβόλους καὶ τεμένη καθιδρυσάντες νομίζουσιν, φύσεως δὲ ὑποστάσεις καὶ στοιχείων διακοσμήσεις· καὶ τὸν Ἔκτορα δὲ καὶ τὸν Ἀχιλλέα, δηλαδὴ καὶ τὸν Ἀγαμέμνονα καὶ πάντας ἀπαξᾶπλῶς Ἑλληνάς τε καὶ βαρβάρους σὺν τῇ Ἑλένῃ καὶ τῷ Πάριδι τῆς αὐτῆς φύσεως ὑπάρχοντας χάριν οἰκονομίας ἐρεῖτε παρεσιῆχθαι, οὐδενὸς ὄντος τῶν προειρημένων ἀνθρώπων.

Oratio ad Graecos. 21.

Here then we have the artist of our quest, and we may find from Diogenes Laertius (ii. 3.), that Metrodorus was the first to apply the conceptions of physics to the interpretation of Homer. It is the explanations of Metrodorus that underlie the Clementine text.

We may, then, suggest that the author of the Clementine Romances has incorporated matter from the writings of Metrodorus the Epicurean as well as from Bardaisan, from an unknown Stoic writer on *Providence*, and perhaps from one of the lost Christian Apologies.

Let us now see whether we can get any further clue to the Stoic writer on Providence.

In the course of his argument Nicetas turns aside to comment on the views of philosophers with regard to the origin of the world. He makes a catalogue of the various hypotheses that have been current, as that

Pythagoras	said the origin was numbers:
Callistratus	qualities
Alcmaeon	contrarieties
Anaximander	the indeterminate (τὸ ἄπειρον)
Anaxagoras	qualities of parts (ὁμοιομερίαι)
Epicurus	atoms
Diodorus	ἀμερῆ (indivisibles)
Asclepias	ὄγκους (tumours):

The Geometers	boundaries
Thales	water
Heraclitus	fire
Diogenes	air
Parmenides	earth
Zeno, Empedocles and Plato	the four elements.
Aristotle	the four plus a fifth which is <i>ἀκατονόμαστον</i> .

We find similar lists in those who write upon the tenets of philosophers, as for instance in Plutarch, in Cicero, in Sextus Empiricus, in Philo etc. From these it is not difficult to restore the Greek equivalents of the terms in the *Recognitions*: and at the same time it comes to light that the tabulated lists are not independent; they fall into groups and are evidently internally connected. For example, the series in Philo *De Providentia* is nearly the same as the one in Plutarch, *De placitis philosophorum*, and so on.

The tradition of these opinions regarding the origin of the world is discussed by Diels in his *Doxographi Graeci*, and he points out that the nearest neighbour to the table in the *Recognitions* is a catalogue in the writings of Sextus Empiricus and that their common ancestor was a Stoic work composed at some time between Seneca and the Antonines.¹¹

It is possible that we may find a closer identification by examining more carefully what the Stoic writers say on this favourite theme of theirs. Meanwhile we have gained ground in another direction. It becomes clear that the author or authors of the Clementines had a library of philosophical books, from which extracts were being made in the course of the composition. They have told us, almost in so many words, that this library comprised writers of all the great schools; that it contained Epicurean, Stoic and Pyrrhonian works, as well as some writers on Fate and the influences of the Stars. We are now going to show that the Clementine Homilist has transcribed a long section from the Epistles of Chrysippus the Stoic. The proof of this requires a chapter to itself, as follows.

¹¹ See Diels, *Doxographi*, p. 250; Sextus Empiricus *Hypotyposes*. iii. 6.

IV

**That the Clementine Homilist transcribed an epistle of
Chrysippus the Stoic.**

One of the perplexities of a critic who tries to unravel the literary structure of the Clementine literature is caused by the intrusion of the incidents connected with Appion and Annubis to which we have referred above. Appion is the leading figure of the pair, but both of them are followers of Simon Magus, and they are genuine pagans; Appion in particular, who is said to be an old friend of Clement's father, is a pronounced anti-Semite, who finds a literary parallel in the Appion against whom Josephus writes. For he, also, is said to have written many books against the Jews, as Josephus' antagonist had done. Appion undertakes the defence of the established religion, and is refuted by Peter and by Clement. It is not, however, a case such as we are commonly introduced to by Christian Apologists. We are not concerned with the arguments, on one side or another, to prove that the elements cannot be gods, nor the heavenly bodies: we are not limited to a recitation of the indecencies of the Olympians by Clement, with an explanation of the same by Appion. The curious feature in the story is that Appion plays two parts: on the one hand he takes Olympian amours for granted, and recommends them for imitation; on the other hand he uses the method of allegory, and leaves us nothing to imitate and nothing to blame.

Clement explains to the people during Appion's absence, that, when he was suffering much both in mind and body from religious perplexity and doubt, Appion had visited him, and, under the supposition that Clement's troubles were due to the pangs of despised love, undertook to write an erotic epistle, which should be given by Clement to the object of his supposed affection and secure her response to the same. The letter is annexed by the author of the Clementines. In parts it is so indecent as to make translation impossible. The worst vices are covered by the patronage of the gods on the one hand, and the philosophers on the other.

From what we already know of the literary method of the author of the Clementines, we are quite safe in saying that this letter is taken from a volume of erotic epistles. When Appion is brought face to face with this composition of his, he evades the condemnation which even an average Greek crowd would pronounce, by saying that he never meant it seriously, and then proceeds to give one of the many allegorical explanations of the nature and actions of the gods.

Who, then, was the author of this erotic epistle? The writer leaves the key in the lock for us; he tells us that *Chrysippus the Stoic*, in his erotic epistles describes an obscene statue of Zeus and Hera to be seen at Argos. It is natural to conclude that the letter of Appion is really one of Chrysippus' letters, in which a sentence like this, 'And I have myself seen at Argos, etc.' was corrected to 'And Chrysippus, in his erotic epistles, alludes to the statue at Argos' etc.

It is quite clear that Chrysippus offered the example of Zeus for imitation, and at other times explained Zeus away; but this is precisely what Appion does in the tale; so that for this part of the story we may say approximately that Chrysippus is Appion and Appion Chrysippus.

The early Christian fathers who had any acquaintance with Greek philosophy were not slow to point out the moral corruption of the early Stoic teachers, in matters of which St. Paul would say it was a shame even to speak.

Theophilus of Antioch, in his address to Autolyceus (III. 8) tells the same story that we have in the Clementines and Origen against Celsus has something of the same kind in the description of a shameful picture at Samos (apparently a variant of the Argos statue) which Chrysippus is said to have allegorised (*c. Celsum*. IV. 48).

Even Diogenes Laertius accuses Chrysippus of having written much indecent matter, and tells the same story of Zeus and Hera, referring it, however, not to the erotic epistles, but to a treatise on *the Early Physiologists* at the 600th line or thereabouts, which suggests that here also the indecency had been allegorised. The reference of Diogenes Laertius is exact, and tells us not only in what book to look for the Chrysiptean

statement, but at what part of the book: so we shall be obliged to admit that Chrysippus told the story twice, once in an erotic epistle, and once in a treatise which he calls *Physiology*, the explanation of the gods in terms of natural phenomena. The parallel with the discourses of Appion in the Clementines is very close. We need not be surprised at the repetition of the theme in Chrysippus: he was not only a voluminous writer, but one that was constantly repeating himself.¹²

At first sight it seems almost incredible that so great a name as Chrysippus could be so badly tainted; but it can easily be shown that all the early Stoics (and to some extent it is true even of Epictetus) regarded vice in its grosser forms as a matter of indifference. In this respect the teaching and practice of Zeno and Cleanthes is almost as bad as that of Chrysippus.

We conclude then, that an erotic epistle of Chrysippus has been borrowed, wholly or in part, by the author of the Clementines.

We have in the foregoing rapid sketch reduced the Clementine Homilies to a skeleton in the shape of a familiar folktale, clothed with flesh and form by the use of a series of Greek and Oriental philosophical writers. We found traces of Epicurean and Stoic hands, and a possible use of a lost Christian Apology. The study of the Clementine literature will become easier, when we have in our mind such writers as Metrodorus, Chrysippus, Bardaisan, and an anonymous Stoic writer on Providence.

¹² See v. Arnim *Stoic. Vet. Fragg.* p. IX.