THE HISTORICAL SETTING OF THE SECOND AND THIRD EPISTLES OF ST JOHN.

IN his ingenious and often suggestive study of the above subject in two recent numbers of this JOURNAL, Dom Chapman says, *à propos* of one main problem for which he seeks the solution, 'If others disagree with my results, I trust they will continue the search for a better'. I certainly disagree very widely from his results, while thinking him to have called attention to one or two points generally overlooked in the consideration of the problems connected with these epistles. And I desire to set forth the results to which a fresh study of them in the light of Dom Chapman's papers has led me, with a like hope that others may follow up the scent, till all the available data have been made to yield us their true and full meaning. In so doing I must begin by a running criticism of certain parts of our author's exegesis and of the historical inferences drawn therefrom, before proceeding to a fresh synthesis which appears to me at present to cover all the relevant facts.

First, then, Dom Chapman errs in referring the news that Gaius 'was walking in truth' to his practice of 'St John's favourite virtue of charity', and to any one special occasion. For the writer dwells first on his friend's general good record brought from time to time[1] by brethren visiting his church and reporting on their return, 'Gaius is a true Christian'. It is only with the next paragraph that any specific instance emerges. There we learn of his loyal action, to which certain brethren had recently witnessed before the writer's own church, in the way of hospitality shewn them by Gaius. And the immediate occasion of the Elder's letter is to bespeak a repetition of such kindness at his hands, in

[1] The frequentative force of the present participles ἐρχομένων . . . καὶ μαρτυρούντων, along with καθὼς . . . περιπατεῖς, has escaped our author's notice.

'setting' these same brethren 'forward' on their fresh mission in a manner worthy of God, on whose service they came. He then adds a special reason for such hospitality.

'For they went out for the Name's sake, taking nothing of the Gentiles.'

Here we reach a critical point in Dom Chapman's reading of this letter, and so of its fellow epistle. He insists that *ὑπὲρ τοῦ ὀνόματος ἐξῆλθαν* must mean that these men had fled from persecution on behalf of the Name, probably persecution at Rome under Nero. I will not stay to argue that *ἐξῆλθαν* in this context points less naturally to going forth from a city, than to going forth from the inner life of a Christian community, such as the writer's own church just alluded to; and that this sense is borne out by the analogous *ἐξῆλθαν εἰς τὸν κόσμον*, used of certain 'deceivers' in the companion letter (compare 1 John ii 19 *ἐξ ἡμῶν ἐξῆλθαν*). For indeed the sense of the clause as a whole, *ὑπὲρ τοῦ ὀνόματος ἐξῆλθαν μηδὲν λαμβάνοντες ἀπὸ τῶν ἐθνικῶν*, seems to be *luce clarius*. Dom Chapman says 'the words "for the Name's sake" imply some hardship, if not persecution, and could not be the equivalent of "to preach the Name"'. Surely this is to overlook the distinction between *ὑπέρ* and *διά*. The latter might suggest what he maintains; the former rather denotes 'in the interests of the Name', and exactly suits the idea of going forth on an evangelizing mission among the heathen. Further this reading is demanded by the conjunction of *μηδὲν λαμβάνοντες* κ.τ.λ., which Dom Chapman never actually renders in its connexion with *ἐξῆλθαν*, but which he apparently takes as if it were a past participle. Thus he says: 'Westcott must be right in explaining that the words refer to the Gentile converts to whom the strangers had preached.' Here Dr Westcott's sound patch only makes the unsoundness of our author's exegetical garment apparent. For a rent in grammar results, when we read continuously, 'they went forth (to avoid danger), taking nothing of the Gentiles' to whom they had preached. That would demand *λαβόντες*, not *λαμβάνοντες*, which really expresses a principle or 'habitual rule' (as Westcott says), dependent upon the step described by *ἐξῆλθαν*. Thus Dom Chapman's exegesis of this clause fails to bear scrutiny; nor do the words refer, as he makes out, to

a 'going forth' prior to the beginning of the journey which the Elder is asking Gaius to further. The ἐξῆλθαν is an epistolary aorist. He is speaking of their present policy of obvious disinterestedness in relation to those whom they were to evangelize; and he urges that they should be saved from all expense whilst among Christians, *inter alia* that their funds may hold out the better when they actually reach the ἐθνικοί whom they had in view in setting out. Indeed this reading is required to satisfy the idea of 'fellow workers' in the next verse.

But not only does Dom Chapman's exegesis of this passage break down; with it goes the bulk of the historical setting so ingeniously constructed for the two epistles under examination. Yet while this is so, we hasten to add that a good deal remains from the ruin in the way of valuable materials for a theory based on a truer reading of this verse. The *motif* of martyrdom disappears, and with it much else that before was sufficiently precarious, including the Roman destination of the letters. But the observations connected with the personality of Demetrius can be considered apart, and will repay attention, if only for the one which constitutes the centre of them all—and the abiding merit of the whole discussion—namely, the proper stress laid on the attestation of the man's claim to be received as a genuine 'brother' in the Lord. To this we shall come shortly, in due course.

'I wrote a few words to the Church; but he that loveth to have the preeminence among them, Diotrephes, doth not receive us.'

Here Dom Chapman puts aside the probable view that 'the few words' are our 2 John, in favour of 'a former letter of recommendation given to the strangers on their first visit'. Then he goes on to say that Diotrephes 'can hardly have disregarded St John's recommendation of these Christian teachers unless he had something against them personally'. That is by no means obvious. St John says 'Diotrephes doth not receive *us*, with wicked words prating against us' (φλυαρῶν ἡμᾶς); which points rather to a rejection of the Apostle's own fellowship. This would help to explain why the Apostle felt specially apprehensive lest Diotrephes' church should harbour the 'deceivers' dealt with in 2 John—probably 'the few words' which the writer expected

Diotrephes to try to suppress. In it he hints that a section of the church was not 'walking in truth' and might be ready to welcome the 'deceivers' to the very hospitality Diotrephes had refused St John's friends. Hence the attitude of Diotrephes to those strange 'brethren' was due to hostility to the Apostle himself. 'He receiveth not us', and so 'he receiveth not the brethren'. As to the length to which Diotrephes went in his high-handed opposition to hospitality being extended to these visitors, he was for casting their hosts out of the Church, and presumably Gaius among the rest. Dom Chapman assumes that he had actually achieved his end; but the presents κωλύει and ἐκβάλλει hardly necessitate such a view. In fact the tone of 2 John (especially 1, 4, 12 f) points the other way.

Passing by one or two dubious *obiter dicta*[1], we come to the most suggestive point in Dom Chapman's papers. He calls attention, and most properly so, to the peculiarly impressive manner in which Demetrius, probably both the bearer of the letter and the leader of the mission in question, is commended to Gaius as worthy of all confidence as a Christian brother.

'Demetrius hath witness borne to him by all, and by the Truth itself; yea, we also bear witness; and thou knowest that our witness is true.'

On this our author observes: 'It does not seem to have been commonly recognized that this emphatic sentence is not set down *à propos de bottes*.' So far all must go with him, whether they accept his explanation of the phenomenon or not. The commendation is too laborious and iterative to be merely the usual certificate of good Christian standing. The Apostle 'doth protest too much' not to have a special reason for so writing, especially in a letter else so terse and brief. But is that reason to be found in a 'close connexion with the rest of the Epistle', so that Demetrius 'is, in fact, the one whose character has been called in question by Diotrephes'? I doubt it, as also what lies behind it in Dom Chapman's mind. For he has worked out

[1] e. g. the suggestion that πρεσβύτερος in relation to St John was the equivalent of the later Patriarch or Metropolitan, whereas it was really a fairly common generic term, as we gather from Papias and Irenaeus; and the judgement, 'St Paul was more of the thinker than of the administrator', to which many besides Prof. Ramsay could not give unqualified assent.

what he considers a highly probable identification of this Demetrius with Demas, who forsook St Paul at Rome when danger began to thicken: and it is this which determines his reading of the emphatic commendation and its *raison d'être*. Space will not allow of a detailed criticism of the circumstantial evidence which makes this theory seem probable to its author. I will only set over against it one which appears to me more probable, in the hope that others may concur in this, as well as in the reading of the whole situation into which it seems to fit.

Let us assume, then, that St John's Demetrius is the same as the Ephesian silversmith of Acts xix 23. Such an identification has, to begin with, the advantage in point of locality, especially on what I have argued is the true view of the mission on which Demetrius came, namely one to some region beyond the city in which Gaius is resident. An Ephesian enterprise of this sort is not likely to have gone westwards, to Macedonia or beyond, as we should expect, if the Demas who 'went to Thessalonica' were in question. As to the fact that the Demetrius of Acts was hostile to the Gospel, this is not against the identification, but rather in its favour. For the special emphasis of the Apostle's testimony to his friend's *bona fide* Christianity suggests that there was some grave antecedent ground for suspecting the contrary [1]. Suppose that Demetrius, who was widely known as the stirrer-up of tumult against St Paul, had only comparatively recently become a zealous adherent of the faith he once opposed (on trade grounds); or that at least his Christian record was not a matter of sufficient notoriety to have cancelled his bad name in all the Churches of the province, even those most remote from Ephesus. That would give us just the situation calling for the exceptional testimony here given. For Gaius would need to be armed with absolute proof of the good standing of Demetrius, if he were not to compromise himself at any rate in the eyes of the local church, especially with a Diotrephes ready to seize on any plausible excuse for excluding the Elder's friends from Christian communion. But with such a testimony Gaius would be forearmed against all reasonable challenge. That this Demetrius had the qualities of

[1] Surely *μεμαρτύρηται* (not *μαρτυρεῖται*) *ὑπὸ πάντων* is more emphatic even than the translation quoted above would suggest. 'Hath a reputation resting on universal testimony', would perhaps give the sense more fairly.

leadership the story in Acts itself seems to imply; and these may well have been utilized (as also perhaps his large means) in such mission work as is hinted at in our letter. Any such identification, indeed, is not of the same moment to my general theory, as Dom Chapman's is to his complex Roman hypothesis. But *quantum valeat* it appears the more probable of the two.

'I had many things to write to thee; howbeit I do not wish (οὐ θέλω) to write to thee with ink and pen. But I hope to see thee shortly, and we will speak face to face. Peace be to thee; the friends salute thee; salute the friends by name.'

'Gaius', says our author, 'has many friends at Ephesus, and St John has friends in the Church where Gaius lives'. This seems a just inference, so long as we do not assume complete parallelism between the two cases, that of Gaius and that of St John respectively. For while the salutation from 'the friends' at Ephesus to Gaius may simply represent 'the brethren' who had given him so excellent a character 'before the Church' (6, cf. 3); the individualizing addition of 'by name' in the writer's own salutation of 'the friends' at the other end, suggests that he had visited them in the past. Thus it is probable that 'the friends' in question are the pro-Johannine section of Gaius's church. In fact 'our friends' would represent the sense better in both cases[1].

Now let us turn to see what light 2 John has to contribute.

'The Elder to one who is an elect lady, and her children, whom I love in truth; and not I only, but also all they that know the Truth; for the Truth's sake which abideth in us—and it shall be with us for ever.'

Most will agree with Dom Chapman that 'elect lady' here means a Church (cf. 1 Pet. v 13 ἀσπάζεται ὑμᾶς ἡ ἐν Βαβυλῶνι συνεκλεκτή, a passage which may even have set the fashion of so speaking—see 2 John 13 ἀσπάζεταί σε τὰ τέκνα τῆς ἀδελφῆς σου τῆς ἐκλεκτῆς—as our author rightly notes). But when he adds that 'a famous Church' is meant, 'for it is loved by all that

[1] This does not exclude a possibility that the use of the phrase, 'the friends', was part also of the prudential reserve to which are due phrases like 'the elect lady', 'the children of thy elect sister', in 2 John, and the postponement in both letters of other matters to future oral intercourse.

know the Truth'—and assumes that Antioch or Rome alone will satisfy this phrase—he forgets that 'all' may be used relatively, viz. as relative to a limited area which is otherwise known to be in the author's thoughts. Such an area was the province of Asia, the special sphere of the Apostle's own influence, and that to which he confined himself, as far as appears from his other writings. Thus when in the Apocalypse he writes (ii 23), 'and all the Churches shall recognize that I am He that searcheth the reins', he has primarily in view the Seven Churches of Asia. So also is it here. He is speaking of the sphere of his own special observation and knowledge, and says of it quite naturally 'all they that know the Truth', i.e. in our part of the world. This of course implies that the Church addressed itself falls within the area of his special purview, and is not at a great distance. But that is the most natural assumption to make, unless the contrary is clearly indicated. At least we cannot grant Dom Chapman his opposite assumption to build on. Therewith another main support of the Roman destination of this letter is removed. And further unsoundness in the foundation of this theory comes to light in the very next paragraph, where he comments on

'I rejoice greatly that I have found of thy children walking in Truth, even as we received commandment from the Father.'

'Here', says he, 'the meaning is plainly: "I rejoiced greatly when I heard that some of your children had practised some remarkable virtue, according to the Father's commandment". What was this particular act of virtue?' We need not trouble to reproduce the rather over-subtle argument by which he decides that 'the act of virtue' was 'the glorious martyrdom of some of the sons of the Church to which he writes'. For grammatical considerations alone forbid the notion that a 'particular act' of any kind is in view. Observe that the above paraphrase has substituted the aorist, 'when I heard' for Westcott's correct perfect 'that I have found' (possibly by repeated experience), and the aorist 'had practised' for the imperfect participle 'engaged in walking' (περιπατοῦντας, comp. 3 John 3, where the force of περιπατεῖς is also missed by our author). The Apostle simply utters his joy at the moral

integrity[1] shewn by certain members of the Church addressed, and goes on to express the earnest desire that this Church as a whole will act similarly in the essential matter of mutual love, understood in the only sense recognized by John as real, namely practically, according to God's definite precepts of love (*κατὰ τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ*). This is evidently what he has in mind, when he goes on to exhort the Church not to lose the reward of what it had wrought, by departing from the true path as outlined in 'the teaching of the Christ' (*μὴ μένων ἐν τῇ διδαχῇ τοῦ Χριστοῦ*). That were no real 'progress' (*πᾶς ὁ προάγων καὶ μὴ μένων κ.τ.λ.*), however it might claim to be so in the mouths of 'deceivers', who taught an 'advanced' doctrine about Jesus Christ, as one whose coming[2] was not really 'in flesh', and knowledge of whom was not an elementary matter of doing the precepts of 'the teaching' handed down as having come from His bodily lips. A true knowledge of Christ, 'not after the flesh' but after the spirit, these men seem to have said, left a man much freer than that, much more a law unto himself. This, replied the Apostle, was to open the door wide to lapse into 'evil works'. Such a reading of the passage dealing with the errorists—according to which 'the teaching' wherein men ought to abide was the practical teaching handed down from Christ, but virtually set aside by the new Docetic theory of His person—finds an almost exact parallel in the 'Teaching of the Lord through the Twelve Apostles'. There we read (xi 1, 2): 'Whosoever, then, cometh and teacheth you all the aforesaid, receive him. But if he who teacheth himself turns round and teaches another teaching, to the undoing (of the former), listen not to him.' In like manner John writes: 'If anyone cometh and beareth not this teaching,

[1] *Περιπατεῖν ἐν ἀληθείᾳ* may perhaps be so rendered here and in 3 John 3. 'The phrase', says Westcott, 'is not identical with "walking in the truth" (*περιπ. ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ*, 3 John 4). It describes the general character of the life as conducted "in truth", really and in very deed in a certain fashion', defined in both instances by the *καθὼς κ.τ.λ.* following.

[2] *Οἱ μὴ ὁμολογοῦντες Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἐρχόμενον ἐν σαρκί.* Here the emphasis is not upon the mere past fact of His coming (*ἐληλυθότα*, 1 John iv 2) having been 'in flesh', but upon the essential sphere of His manifestation, whether in the past or at any other time. Over against this, John insisted that 'love' with Him was love embodied in action to men in the body (*ἐν σαρκί*): and His historical 'teaching' (*διδαχή*, cf. Rom. xvi 17 *σκοπεῖν τοὺς τὰς διχοστασίας . . . παρὰ τὴν διδαχὴν ἣν ὑμεῖς ἐμάθετε ποιοῦντας*, Tit. i 9, cf. Acts ii 42), as expressed in definite precepts (*ἐντολαί*), required the like embodiment of love in deed from His followers.

receive him not.... For he who saith to him "God Speed", hath fellowship with his evil works.'

Dom Chapman's theory rests on an unsound exegesis of 2 John, as of 3 John. But before attempting to gather up the positive data for a better synthesis which seems to emerge from our discussion as a whole, a word must be said on the confirmation of that part of his theory which regards Rome as the destination of 2 John, found by our author in the Latin version of the *Hypotyposes* of the Alexandrine Clement. The passage runs:—

'Secunda Ioannis Epistola quae ad virgines scripta est simplicissima. Scripta vero est ad quamdam Babyloniam Electam nomine; significat autem electionem ecclesiae sanctae.'

Nothing could be more precarious than the use of this as evidence of a Roman destination. For apart from the possibility, not to say, probability[1], that Clement wrote πρὸς Πάρθους (cf. the *ad Parthos* of St Augustine and others), and that this shews the sense in which *Babyloniam* should here be taken; Dom Chapman gets over the formidable objection that his reading of the passage demands *Romanam* far too lightly. There was no good reason why Clement should put the thing figuratively, instead of literally and plainly, in a commentary. And in any case, even if *Babyloniam* did here mean *Romanam*, there is no proof or even likelihood that Clement was doing other than make an arbitrary identification, on the basis of the one other analogy in the New Testament for ἐκλεκτή as used of a church. Such exegesis would be verbal and historically worthless.

As to the 'Additional Considerations', for which our author himself does not claim much (two being given 'for curiosity, not for argument'), I think we can afford to pass them by without comment. Our space is needed for the statement of another synthesis which Dom Chapman's discussion has helped to suggest.

Gaius, a man marked by integrity of life according to the Johannine principle of brotherly love as ruling all conduct, had

[1] Dom Chapman has to start his argument, even on the basis of the reading παρθένους, with an over-confident emendation: 'for *ad virgines* we should certainly read *ad virginem*'. Many will feel the metaphor intolerably harsh and mixed, in spite of the attempted *apologia*; 'Why *ad virginem*, since the elect lady has children? Clearly because Clement is about to explain that a church is meant'.

on a recent occasion welcomed a group of brethren from the writer's own church (Ephesus). On their return, these had witnessed to his practical love before the church, contrasting it with the attitude of the most influential person in the church to which Gaius belonged, one Diotrephes. Not only had this man withheld hospitality himself; he had even tried to deter others who were for giving it, to the point of using all his influence to get them extruded from the local church. In this he had not, it seems, fully succeeded; though probably he had produced an acute division of feeling, to judge from the writer's use of *αὐτῶν* in v. 9, and from the restricted salutation to certain individuals as 'our friends'. But in any case there was danger lest Diotrephes' example should influence the future conduct of Gaius and others prejudicially, whether as regards future hospitality or factious church methods.

The reason of Diotrephes' attitude to the stranger brethren was apparently his determination not to have communion with the writer or those who belonged to his circle (*οὐκ ἐπιδέχεται ἡμᾶς*). This determination sprang from his own ambitious and masterful spirit (*ὁ φιλοπρωτεύων*), which resented the spiritual authority of the Elder outside the church in which he dwelt (v. 6) as menacing the independence of his own church, as he conceived it. The way in which he 'prated at' the Elder was probably somewhat like this. 'It is time that some limit were put to the constant assumptions of "paternal government" put forward by and in the name of this man, styled by himself and others "The Elder", as if the fact of his being an original eye-witness of the Christ gave him the right to lord it over the consciences and minds of all men, nay, the churches of a whole province. Where is the freedom wherewith Christ has made us free, if each church, with its own leaders, is not to be allowed to settle all matters touching the meaning and practice of the Gospel without authoritative direction or denunciation, it may be, from outside? Things have come to a pretty pass in these latter days. There used to be room for the Spirit to lead and rule, as Paul was wont to teach, but now we are coming under a new slavery to man. I, for one, will have no more of it. And as the "brethren" passing to and from the centre of his influence, are practically his emissaries, the partisans of his ideas and claims, I will do all I can to keep

them from infecting the local loyalty of our church life with the leaven of this ambitious old man's influence.'

A masterful nature is generally the first to suspect ambition at the heart of great spiritual influence in another. And it was Diotrephes, the man who tried to override the wishes of a considerable section of his own communion by coercive methods, who most deeply distrusted the Elder's motives. There is no sign that he held any office giving him a natural primacy of authority in the local church; rather the reverse. Though only one of several local officers, 'presbyters' in functions, if not in name, he so pushed his own views as virtually to claim to be *primus inter pares*. Here we have not a monarchical bishop[1] (of any dimensions), not even in germ, as far as recognized status is concerned; but rather those conditions of ambition working among the college of presbyters, which Jerome with true instinct recognized as bringing about the developement of the episcopate of a local chief pastor, as the legitimate centre of local unity, the antidote to the evils created by the Diotrephes spirit.

As Westcott observes, there is nothing to indicate that Diotrephes held false opinions. Had he done so, it is probable that this would have been clearly indicated. But it is probable that the unethical temper in which he is described as holding the faith, would make him very liable to side with those who sat loosely by the historical tradition of Christ's practical teaching (2 John 8–11; cf. 3 John 11), over against their antagonist, the Elder, in whose unbending opposition, leading to their having to 'go forth' from his communion, Diotrephes would readily find a fresh instance of the 'lording it over others' of which he complained. For this reason the Elder may well have felt the danger lest Diotrephes' church should welcome the Docetists to be specially great, and so have written to it as he has in 2 John.

Into such a situation the peculiarly emphatic testimony to Demetrius fits most naturally. For Diotrephes would be on the look out for anything in the *personel* of the visiting brethren which might seem to justify refusal of a brotherly welcome.

[1] Had it been otherwise, it would have been futile to write to the church. For the letter would have been delivered to Diotrephes as a matter of course, and would simply have been suppressed.

And certainly the record of Demetrius, if he were indeed Paul's old Ephesian opponent, would furnish a fair excuse of the sort desired. So much may be said with confidence, though we cannot treat the identification as more than the most probable open to us and a good working hypothesis.

But has the Epistle nothing more to tell us about Gaius? I think it has. It seems probable that he was, like Diotrephes, a presbyter of his church; but what is of more interest to us, he was pretty certainly a personal convert of the Elder's. This seems implied in v. 4, where the writer classes him among his own 'children' (*τὰ ἐμὰ τέκνα*, and Westcott's note), and is borne out by the intimate tone of the letter, with its repeated use of 'beloved'. Indeed from the injunction 'salute our friends individually' (*κατ' ὄνομα*), it is probable that the writer had himself visited this church in time gone by. Can we go any further? Only if we may see in the fuller greeting in v. 2 a playful allusion to Gaius's other name, according to a not uncommon habit of ancient letter-writers. The verb *εὐοδοῦσθαι*, 'to be prospered' (on one's way), rather attracts attention. What if the Elder's friend was known also as Euodius, the masculine form of a name found in Phil. iv 2, and one which was borne by Ignatius's predecessor in the episcopate of Antioch. Indeed when I first read Dom Chapman's papers and had not yet criticized his statement that the church addressed in 2 John must be a world-famous one, and so was led to work out the situation in terms of his alternative 'Rome or Antioch'—where Rome seemed to me totally to fail—I was greatly tempted for a moment by the striking coincidence which this fact seemed to offer. 'Yes, John came, as he promised, and caused his friend Gaius to be appointed bishop, to the setting aside of the ambitious doings of Diotrephes. There we have the inner history of how Euodius became the first bishop of Antioch.' And if there were good reason to look outside 'the Churches of Asia', and as far afield as Antioch, for the Lady of 2 John, I still think the hypothesis would deserve attention.

As it is, whether Gaius was also a Euodius or not, the question remains, to which quarter of John's Asian sphere of influence should we look for the church of Gaius? I see no reason for looking beyond the seven representative churches addressed in

the Apocalypse[1]; for our church was one well known and of good standing, being beloved of 'all those who know the truth' within the writer's special Christian world. We can further narrow down the probabilities by noticing that it was a church on the route to be taken by those on mission to unevangelized regions (3 John 7). This leaves us with Sardis, Philadelphia, Pergamum and Thyatira, of which the first seems the least likely by position. Finally, when we consider their internal character as revealed in the letters to the churches, and as recently studied by Professor Ramsay, Thyatira commends itself to me personally as most likely of all to have been the home of Gaius and Diotrephes, where part of the church was quite as John would have them, while yet there were signs that 'the deceivers' might find more of a welcome from the church as a whole than they deserved. But here one is poaching on Professor Ramsay's preserves: and to him I gladly refer the point for further consideration.

It is enough to have thrown out some suggestions towards the historical appreciation of these interesting little letters. The rejection of their Johannine origin seems to me hypercriticism, and finds its parallel in the old Tübingen sacrifice of Philemon to the exigencies of polemic against the authenticity of Colossians which it underpropped. Similarly 2 and 3 John underprop the traditional authorship of 1 John, and so of the Fourth Gospel.

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[1] So, too, thought the author of *Apost. Const.* vii 47, when he made Gaius first bishop of Pergamum, and Demetrius of Philadelphia.