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The Journal

of

Theological Studies

JULY, 1935

FRANCIS CRAWFORD BURKITT

IN Francis Crawford Burkitt, who died in his seventy-first year early on the morning of May 11, after a stroke the night but one before from which he did not recover consciousness, the University of Cambridge lost, to use the words of the obituary notice in *The Times* of Monday, May 13, 'one of the most distinguished Divinity Professors she has ever had' and 'one of her most vivid and attractive personalities'. No one can read much of what he wrote without feeling that he is in contact with a personality as well as a mind of unusual acumen and equipment. The personal characteristics that marked his work are of more than ordinary interest and significance. They are touched on in the obituary notice, in additional notes in subsequent numbers of *The Times* (May 14 and 15), and in an article in *The Guardian* (May 17) under the title 'A Lay Theologian'. The memoir which the British Academy will publish may attempt to give a more complete picture of the man. For all his years and learning he died young, and to those who knew him he will always have a place among their brightest and happiest memories. Here we are concerned only with a dispassionate estimate of the contribution to theological studies made by one of the foremost, fullest, and most productive scholars of his generation in the world-wide commonwealth of scientific 'theology' as the study is understood to-day.

To the JOURNAL his death involves a peculiarly intimate loss. From its beginning in 1899 no volume, scarcely even a number, has been without some contribution from him, except for the three years when he was on war work at his own charges with the Y.M.C.A. in France. Though he wrote occasional articles for other periodicals, foreign as well as English, the JOURNAL has been the channel by which much of his most illuminating work

has been made known. The JOURNAL without Burkitt cannot be the JOURNAL it has been. Apart from his own contributions he was always at hand and willing to read an article offered by some one else and allay or confirm an editor's qualms about its value. 'I must ask Burkitt about that' was a constant 'uprise', and often instead of the mere 'yes' or 'no' that was requested there would come a reasoned reply, with documentary evidence, in the unfailingly careful script.

That to the end there was no failing of mental power and grip is shewn by the Note on the Diatessaron and the review of the papyrus *Fragments of an Unknown Gospel*, which were written in the weeks before the stroke and are published in this number (pp. 255 and 302) with deepest regret that nothing more from his pen can be looked for in the JOURNAL.

It is hoped to publish in the next number a bibliography, classified according to subjects.

Professor Burkitt's range was so wide that no single scholar is competent of his own knowledge to estimate the value of his work as a whole, and a number of his friends have contributed the 'appreciations' of his work in various fields that follow. The mere survey of the work of a student and scholar such as Burkitt was, with an attempt to estimate his own particular contribution, is itself a contribution to the knowledge of each subject that is under consideration. It is not an easy task, but the distinguished scholars who were invited felt constrained to do it not only *honoris* but also *pietatis causa*. Dom Connolly, for example, writes that he took it as a singular favour to be asked to contribute the section on the Syriac studies of one whom he had known as a friend for forty years. If subjects sometimes overlap a little and judgements are not quite the same, the total estimate of Professor Burkitt's contribution may be the more trustworthy.

As the basis of all his work was minutely careful study of texts and languages, the first place is given to his achievements in this field, which led him to some of his discoveries and conclusions on questions of the history of early Christianity. Next come estimates of his work on the Old Testament and the Gospels, with appreciations from two distinguished Jewish scholars, and these are followed by estimates of his contributions to the history of Christian worship and forms of liturgy and of the Franciscan

movement. Even so the bibliography of his writings will shew that not all the subjects he dealt with are included.

(a) *Textual Criticism* (*Latin in particular*)

Professor Burkitt was indisputably the greatest New Testament textual critic of our time. He owed this position partly to his extensive knowledge of Biblical languages, partly to the extraordinary clarity of his judgement. He had a wonderful power to distinguish the important from the unimportant, and was therefore able to bring into relief the really significant elements in each type of text. Most critics have known either Greek and Latin or Oriental languages. He had an excellent command of both branches, and thus could see the problem as a whole. But even this unique combination would not have been enough, had it not been fortified by a thorough knowledge of the palaeography of these languages. He could, as it were, envisage all the stages of the copying of biblical manuscripts throughout the ancient world, and when a new piece of evidence was discovered he could place it in its proper setting at once. He had, further, no mean knowledge of Church History, as will be testified from a competent quarter, and there is no need to emphasize the value of this for the textual critic.

Without in any way seeking to ignore what he did for other biblical languages, his contributions to the Syriac and the Latin stand out as his greatest achievements. His *Evangelion da-Mepharreshe* (1904) is his greatest work on the one side. Not only do we find there a lucid presentation of the character of the Curetonian and Sinaitic MSS, but what is I think hardly less important, his proof that the Peshitta was not, as had been supposed, a second-century work, but found its proper place in the early years of the fifth century. The whole history of the text was wonderfully clarified by this epoch-making discovery, and readjustment became absolutely necessary.

His *Old Latin and the Itala* (1896) was, I think, his first publication concerning the Latin Bible *per se*, and it gave ample promise of what was to come. He would have been the first to acknowledge the inspiration he derived from Sanday, to whom in fact this book is dedicated. But Sanday, for his part, would have

been equally ready to confess that his own equipment for dealing with such a subject was hardly comparable to Burkitt's. Every part of this little book advanced our knowledge, the use of the LXX text of Daniel in Latin writers, the proof that Codex Colbertinus (*c*) is 'African' at the end of St Luke, the discussion of the meaning of the word 'Itala' in St Augustine, &c. The admirable edition of *The Rules of Tyconius*, an earlier work, has of course a value of its own for the biblical critic also. His general article in the *Encyclopedia Biblica* on the whole problem of the textual criticism of the New Testament contained a great deal of first-hand work, and has been of immense value. It remains, I think, his only statement covering the ground completely. Among his neatest pieces of work I should myself count his proof in the first volume of the JOURNAL that the mysterious Brixianus (*f*) of the Gospels is really half of a bilingual manuscript, of which the other half was Gothic, and that the Latin side is not a precursor of the Vulgate, but a Vulgate text modified by the help of the Gothic. His minute knowledge of the Old Latin enabled him to fix *b* (Veronensis) as the most central manuscript of the European Old-Latin family. Along with C. H. Turner he restudied *k* (Bobiensis) and discovered some important corrections to be made in Wordsworth's reports.[1] It is not out of place to refer at this point to his exquisite penmanship, which deservedly found a place in a published volume of examples of modern scholarly handwriting. Not only was his English script of extraordinary neatness, but his power to imitate the writing of ancient MSS was almost uncanny.

Though a leading authority on the Old Latin, he devoted much time to the study of the Vulgate also. In this connexion his penetrating criticism of Dom Quentin's methods in editing the Octateuch will not soon be forgotten, and his contributions to the text of other Old Testament books, whether in special articles, or in the course of reviewing other men's books, were always of the highest value. In connexion with the Vulgate the special attention he gave to the early days, as shewn in the *De Consensu Evangelistarum* and the *Speculum* of St Augustine, was very much needed. But his attention did not stop there, as his interest

[1] *The Gospel History and its Transmission* clearly shews the importance of textual criticism for the solution of the synoptic problem.

in the work of Dr Glunz shews. His consent to supervise the publication of the remaining parts of the Wordsworth and White Vulgate from Philippians onwards was more than gratifying to all who were concerned, and not the least loss that we have sustained by his death is the removal of his guiding hand at this critical stage of the publication.

This is a very inadequate account of what Burkitt has done. His valuable help was always at the disposal of other workers, irrespective of race or church. As far back as 1901, on the advice of our common friend, Armitage Robinson, I called on him, and received the first stimulus to devote myself to these fascinating studies; and since that time his manifold encouragement and kindness have never failed me.

A. SOUTER.

(b) *Syriac Studies*

F. C. Burkitt's first single-handed publications, his critical edition of the *Book of Rules* of the early African writer, Tyconius (1894), and *The Old Latin and the Itala* (1896), were connected with the Latin versions of the Bible. These studies will doubtless receive from another hand the attention they deserve; they are mentioned here as an indication of the experience and equipment in the domain of textual criticism which their author could bring to the work which is unquestionably his most enduring achievement, his great edition of the Old Syriac Gospels. In that edition his earlier Syriac studies had their centre and their incentive, and other Syriac publications of his which preceded or accompanied it were in the main either directly preparative to it or by-products from his preliminary investigations; and those investigations embraced nothing less than a searching enquiry into the authorship or the date, and so into the evidential value, of all known Syriac documents claiming to be earlier than the second quarter of the fifth century, and an examination of not a few others of later date. It seems proper therefore to speak in some detail of the origin and course of this undertaking.

Burkitt's work on the Old Syriac version of the Gospels had its starting-point in the discovery of the now famous Sinai palimpsest. Early in the year 1892 those learned and intrepid ladies,

Mrs Lewis and her sister Mrs Gibson, found themselves at the Convent of St Catherine on Mount Sinai, whence long before had come the great Codex ℵ of the Greek Bible. On being shewn a palimpsest the upper writing of which contained the lives of women saints, Mrs Lewis could see that the under writing was that of an ancient copy of the Gospels in Syriac, but could not read enough to enable her to judge of the character of the text. With the aid of her sister she photographed the whole book, and the plates (or films?) were brought to Cambridge. In Mrs Lewis's words: 'During the process of development the first pages were shewn to several Syriac scholars, whose eyes were, like my own, not sufficiently keen to read between the lines of writing in the photographs; but presently more favourable specimens appeared, and in the month of July, 1892, some of these were deciphered by Professor Bensly and Mr F. C. Burkitt, and were pronounced by them to belong to a version nearly allied to the so-called Curetonian, which has hitherto been known only from a single imperfect copy.' In the following year a fresh expedition to Mount Sinai was undertaken, the members of the party being Mrs Lewis and Mrs Gibson, Professor and Mrs Bensly, Mr and Mrs Burkitt, and Mr Rendel Harris, who had visited the Convent in 1889 and discovered there the Syriac version of the *Apology* of Aristides. About six weeks were spent by the men of the party in deciphering and transcribing the palimpsest, and further photographs were taken. Later the transcripts were again revised by the aid of the photographs, and the results were published at Cambridge in 1894 (*The Four Gospels in Syriac from the Sinaitic Palimpsest*). In that edition, the pages and lines of which correspond to those of the MS, each page is signed with the initials of the transcriber responsible for it; whence it can be seen how large was Burkitt's share in the *editio princeps* of this celebrated MS. But in reality it was larger than thus appears, for Professor Bensly died two days after his return to England, and his portion of the work was entrusted by his widow to Mr Burkitt to be revised for publication (*vide* F. C. B.'s Notes on p. xxxix).

The production of a standard edition of the Old Syriac Gospels would appear to have been undertaken by Burkitt shortly after

the death of Professor Bensly, and hence the preparation for it must have occupied him—though by no means to the exclusion of other studies—for fully ten years. In his Preface to the edition he thus explains its origin: 'Professor Bensly had been for many years contemplating a new issue of the "Curetonian Gospels", and on the discovery of the Sinai MS it seemed as if the man most fitted for the work of preparing a critical edition of our greatly increased material was on the spot and ready to do it. But to the grief of all students of Oriental literature he died immediately after his return from Sinai in 1893, and when the present Dean of Westminster [Dr Armitage Robinson] entrusted me with the work which Professor Bensly had undertaken for *Texts and Studies* I found that I had to begin from the very beginning. Of Professor Bensly's projected edition of the "Curetonian" nothing tangible remained after his death but his copy of Cureton's edition containing an incomplete recollation of the MS. There were no notes, no specimens of a new translation, no sketches of *Prolegomena*. Bensly's unrivalled familiarity with Syriac literature and the methods of Syriac translators would have given his edition, had he lived to complete but a portion of it, a unique value. But so far as we can discover, this store of learning perished with him.' That the edition did not eventually appear in *Texts and Studies* was occasioned by the page dimensions of that series, which were found to be inadequate for so large a book.

'I found that I had to begin from the very beginning.'—The task before the young editor was not merely to present in the best manner possible the text of the two MSS of the 'Old Syriac', the Curetonian (*C*), and the Sinaitic (*S*), but to investigate the history of the version which these two MSS, in spite of their many differences, were seen to represent; and above all it was necessary to determine the relation of this version to the text of the Gospels in the 'Peshitta' or Syriac Vulgate (Pesh.), and if possible to establish the date of Pesh., or at least of its earliest attestation. 'The Peshitta N. T.', he wrote in 1901, 'is the sheet-anchor of the defenders of the Greek *Textus Receptus*: it is the great obstacle in the way both to the disciples of Westcott and Hort and to those who champion what are called "Western" texts.' He had just said: 'the date we assign to the Peshitta New Testament largely depends upon the view we take of S. Ephraim's

relation to this version.' The words are from the first page of a book now to be mentioned.

It was to settle once and for all the question of St Ephraim's relation to the Peshitta that Burkitt, in 1901, contributed to *Texts and Studies* an essay entitled 'The Gospel Quotations of S. Ephraim'. At that date it was widely believed that St Ephraim had used the Peshitta text, which even Dr Hort placed between 250 and 350 A.D.—and St Ephraim died in 373. In order to test this opinion it was necessary in the first place to have a corpus of certainly genuine works of St Ephraim, and to shew that others attributed to him were either certainly spurious or lacked trustworthy attestation. Accordingly, after providing an invaluable analytical Index to the Roman edition of St Ephraim's works, with indication of the MSS, early or late, in which each piece is to be found, Burkitt next drew up a list of the saint's writings which are attested by MSS earlier than the Mohammedan invasions of the seventh century. 'This', he says, 'may not be a complete list of the genuine extant works of S. Ephraim, but there can be little doubt that all those which are included are genuine. . . . Together they make up a considerable mass of writing, certainly enough to settle the question whether S. Ephraim used the Peshitta text of the Gospels' (p. 25). He then proceeded to examine the Gospel quotations and allusions found in these works. Of the result there could be no doubt: St Ephraim's text was not that of the Peshitta; and it follows that, if writings ascribed to him in later MSS can be shewn to use Pesh., that alone is enough to render them suspect.

But to prove that St Ephraim did not quote from Pesh. was not at once to prove that that version did not exist in his day. Like Aphraates before him he habitually used the Diatessaron, upon which he wrote a commentary, and a clear instance has hardly yet been alleged of his quoting from *any* version of the Four Gospels, though he shews that he was acquainted with the 'four volumes' and refers Joh. i 3 to St John by name. Still his elimination as a witness to Pesh. was of great importance, for it brought the evidence of the third and fourth centuries into line with certain indications of the early fifth century the significance

of which had hitherto been obscured. What in all reasonable probability is the true story of the Syriac Vulgate, so far at least as concerns the Gospels, was told by Burkitt in a volume entitled *Early Eastern Christianity* (the St Margaret's Lectures for 1904). It was a happy coincidence, whether designed or not, that these Lectures appeared in the same year as his edition of the Old Syriac Gospels, for they give in semi-popular form the results of his long study of the early Syriac-speaking Christian communities and their literature, and thus provide a welcome historical background to some of the more technical discussions in the larger work. The second Lecture, 'The Bible in Syriac', deals in due course with the Peshitta and its origin, which is traced to Rabbula, bishop of Edessa from 411 to 435 A.D. Among the many reforming activities of that great prelate his biographer and disciple records that 'he translated by the wisdom of God that was in him the New Testament from Greek into Syriac, because of its variations, exactly as it was'. And in one of his Canons Rabbula himself writes: 'Let priests and deacons have a care that in all churches the Separate Gospels (*Evangelion da-Mĕpharrĕshe*) be kept and read.' We can hardly fail to identify these copies of the 'Separate Gospels' with Rabbula's own new translation. Considering, then, that before his time there is no sure trace of the Peshitta text, that soon after his death quotation from it is the rule, that it is found as the received text among Nestorians and Monophysites alike, and that MSS of it (from the latter half of the fifth century and onward) present hardly any variation, Burkitt's conclusion seems inevitable: 'For these reasons, therefore, I identify the "translation" spoken of by Rabbula's biographer with the Peshitta itself. I regard it as a version prepared by him or under his immediate direction, and I understand the use of it to have been enforced during his tenure of the See of Edessa' (p. 58). But it is pointed out that what the new version was designed to replace was not any earlier divergent texts of the Four Gospels, such as *C* and *S*, which had but a limited currency, but the Diatessaron of Tatian, which was used by Aphraates and St Ephraim, which in the fourth-century *Doctrine of Addai* is synonymous with 'the Gospel', and which was still in wide circulation in the time of Theodoret (bishop of Cyrrhus 423–457), who removed more than 200 copies of it from

churches of his diocese and replaced them with copies of the Four Gospels.

Of the remaining Lectures in *Early Eastern Christianity*, which is altogether a most attractive and instructive book, there is no room to speak here. I must mention, however, that I still protest, as I protested thirty years ago, against what I regard as the paradoxical view put forward in the fourth Lecture (on 'Marriage and the Sacraments'), where it is represented, on the authority of Aphraates, that until at least the middle of the fourth century Baptism among the Eastern Syrians at large was withheld from married persons and those intending to marry: 'The Christian community, therefore, according to Aphraates, consists of baptized celibates', &c. (p. 127). This I believe to be a misreading of Aphraates, and of the early history of (Catholic) Christian asceticism.[1]

The edition of the Old Syriac Gospels was published at Cambridge in 1904 under the title *Evangelion da-Mepharreshe*, with the sub-title 'The Curetonian Version of the Four Gospels, with the readings of the Sinai Palimpsest and the early Syriac Patristic evidence edited, collected and arranged'. The book was to be classical, and it is evident that the author had determined that the form should be worthy of the contents; for it appeared in two quarto volumes which by their large type, generous spacing and margins, and clear arrangement offer the reader every possible help and attraction. It will remain as a monument not merely of industry and careful scholarship, but of the individual genius of its author, whom it would entitle to fame if it were his only work.

The first volume, of 556 pages, contains the text faced by a literal English translation, with an apparatus in duplicate—that under the text being repeated in English, so far as necessary and feasible, under the translation. Where *C* is wanting, *S* provides the text; where both MSS are extant, the readings of *S* are given in the apparatus, together with the early patristic evidence. As

[1] In the JOURNAL for July 1905 (vi 522) I submitted a different reading of the evidence of Aphraates. Burkitt replied in the next number (vii 10), now claiming St Ephraim in support. A year later (viii 41) I gave from St Ephraim a series of passages in which he speaks in a normal way of marriage and taxes Marcion with his rejection of it.

regards this latter, however, it is to be observed that very little of it is direct evidence for the Old Syriac version : the chief sources are Aphraates and St Ephraim, and their quotations are mainly from the Diatessaron. What the patristic evidence makes clear is that there was a close agreement in translation—wording—between the Old Syriac and the Diatessaron, and no influence of the Peshitta upon either. The second volume, of 322 pages, contains 'Introduction and Notes', and provides everything possible in the way of prolegomena, though in one department not everything that the author could have desired; for when all has been said the external history of the Old Syriac version remains very obscure. In the fourth century it would appear to have been little in use and to have been consulted chiefly by the learned for purposes of comparison with the Diatessaron.

The title *Evangelion da-Mepharreshe* is not self-explanatory, and is apt at first rather to mystify. The reason for its adoption, and the extended sense in which it is employed (now to the exclusion of the Peshitta), is explained only in the middle of the second volume (p. 177). The title is justified by the fact that it is found in both copies of the Old Syriac Gospels, at the beginning of *C* and the end of *S*. It means 'Gospel of the Separated' (*sc.* books, or perhaps evangelists) and was in use at an early date to distinguish the full translation of the Four Gospels from the Diatessaron, which in turn was styled in Syriac *Evangelion da-Meḥallețe*, 'Gospel of the Mixed'.[1] Had the Diatessaron survived in use, the term 'Gospel of the Separated' might have passed over to the Peshitta itself; and indeed Rabbula, in his Canon mentioned above, evidently uses it of the Peshitta.

Of Burkitt's other Syriac publications it is necessary to speak more briefly, nor can a full list be given of his many shorter notes in this JOURNAL or elsewhere.

In 1896 he was part-editor of some Palestinian Syriac fragments in *Anecdota Oxoniensia* (Semitic Series I ix); and in 1901 he gave in the JOURNAL (ii 174) a valuable survey of 'Christian Palestinian Literature', with a bibliography of the Palestinian Syriac texts published by that date.

[1] The early Syriac translation of Eusebius (*H. E.* iv 29) explains 'Diatessaron' by the gloss, 'that is, Gospel of the Mixed'.

Early Christianity outside the Roman Empire (Cambridge, 1899) is a print of two lectures delivered at Trinity College, Dublin. Much of the matter of these lectures is embodied, sometimes verbally, in the later series *Early Eastern Christianity*, already referred to.

In a paper entitled 'The original language of the Acts of Judas Thomas' (*J.T.S.* i 280: 1900) Burkitt proved (at least I think so) that the Syriac form of these third-century Acts is original and the Greek a translation. The conclusion was of importance, for, as he was afterwards to shew, the Gospel references in the Syriac imply the use of a pre-Vulgate version of the Four Gospels, to which the Acts are therefore the earliest direct witness.

Burkitt did not aspire to be a poet; but his control of English verse form is proved by his two translations of the famous Gnostic *Hymn of the Soul*, incorporated in the *Acts of Judas Thomas*, which he and others would ascribe to the Syrian poet, philosopher, and heretic, Bardesanes. The first version, *The Hymn of Bardaisan*, printed separately in 1899, attempts to reproduce the metre of the original. The second is to be found, with a discussion of the date and authorship of the Hymn, at the end of *Early Eastern Christianity*. This is a fine and remarkably faithful rendering in dignified hexameters of the one really great Syriac poem, and deserves to be better known to students of English literature.[1]

The Syriac Forms of New Testament Proper Names ('Proceedings of the British Academy' vol. v, 1912) is an enlightening study of a subject which presents several obscure problems. If the suggestions offered fail in some cases to carry conviction, that is because the gaps in the evidence reduce us perforce to guessing. The Greek and Syriac forms of the name Nazareth are perhaps the chief crux of all.

Two years after the publication by Dr Rendel Harris of the *Odes of Solomon* in Syriac, and when the excitement caused by the recovery of these early Christian hymns was at its height, Professor Burkitt discovered at the British Museum a second and

[1] It may be mentioned that I have a letter in which the author points out that three of his hexameters have only five feet, and should be thus corrected:—Stanza v line 4, 'None *in the land* did I see'; xvi 3, 'Not less alike *were they*'; xvi 4, 'Bringing my Robe, each *singly* marked'.

much earlier MS containing nearly two thirds of the collection. A collation of this MS with the text of Dr Harris was given by him in this JOURNAL (xiii 372, 1912). The discovery was purely accidental; but it is usually the right people who make these happy finds! I seem to remember his telling me that at the time he was interested in the subject of Astrolabes, and that he understood there was a diagram of one in this MS (its final sections are on astronomical and geographical subjects according to Wright's *Catalogue* p. 1008).

Euphemia and the Goth, with the Acts of Martyrdom of the Confessors of Edessa (Text and Translation Society, 1913). This is a most attractive volume, much of which is quite 'light reading'. In an Introduction which contains much interesting matter, especially on the topography and the churches of Edessa, Burkitt defends the substantial 'historicity' of the Acts of Shmona and Guria and Ḥabbib. As to the story of Euphemia, he maintains against Prof. E. von Dobschütz that it was composed in Syriac and at Edessa, though in one late Syriac MS it is said that the story was written at Constantinople by a monk named John. Neither he nor von Dobschütz seems to have noticed the curious coincidence that the name of the heroine's mother, Sophia, and her own name answer to the dedications of the two great churches on either side of the Bosporus, St Sophia of Constantinople and St Euphemia of Chalcedon. It seems possible therefore that the story was written at Constantinople, though by a Syrian from Edessa. The book, like others of the same series, was printed abroad, and by some misadventure a considerable number of typographical errors in the English, and a few in the text, escaped correction. On page 134 lines 5–6 there is an odd mistranslation: read there 'because she was moved with compassion' (the verb being ܚܰܣܬ, not ܚܳܣܬ).

S. Ephraim's Prose Refutations of Mani, Marcion, and Bardaisan vol. ii (Text and Translation Society, 1921) is a book that was left unfinished by its gifted author the Rev. C. W. Mitchell, who was killed at the front on May 3rd, 1917. He had edited the first volume in 1912. As we have comparatively little of St Ephraim's prose writings, these treatises in spite of the obscurity of their method and style are of great value; but unfortunately they are fragmentary, for the palimpsest of which

they are the under writing is in places quite illegible. On Mr Mitchell's death his papers and proof-sheets were entrusted to Professor Burkitt and that very great and meticulously accurate Oriental scholar the late Professor A. A. Bevan. In the words of Burkitt, who writes the Preface: 'About half the Syriac text . . . had been passed for press and printed off; a good deal of the remainder was in type, but only partly corrected, and some was still only in MS. About half the translation was made, but still needing revision. Professor Bevan and I have therefore completed the text and the translation, and I have verified the Syriac, as far as my eyes would go, with the Palimpsest in the British Museum.' Besides this, Burkitt supplied a valuable Introductory Essay of seventy pages (pp. cxi ff). The book itself is sufficient witness to the care bestowed on its preparation.

To the 'Proceedings of the British Academy' vol. xi (1923) Burkitt communicated a paper entitled 'The Early Syriac Lectionary System', in which he gave a translation of what appears to be the earliest known Syriac Lectionary for festivals and other occasions throughout the year. It is contained in a sixth-century MS in the British Museum and had never previously been published. A few pages of the MS are unfortunately lost.

In the last place may be mentioned a Note in this JOURNAL (xxix 269, 1928) on 'The MSS of "Narsai on the Mysteries"'. This paper is of considerable importance liturgically, as it goes far towards proving (what I had essayed to prove in my Introduction to *The Liturgical Homilies of Narsai*, in 'Texts and Studies' 1909) that Homily xvii in Mingana's edition (which I call A) is really by Narsai, or at least by one who could write exactly in his very distinctive manner and style. Burkitt has shewn that the Homily as it appears in the MSS is 'edited' as an ancient 'classic'—apparently for public reading—and that the person to whom it is ascribed in some of the MSS, but who could not possibly have written it (a certain Ebed Jesu of the 13th century), is probably the editor. The introductory words just before the text note that 'it is in the 2nd metre of Blessed Mar Narsai'—which is next door to saying that it is by that Father.

Among the varied accomplishments of this many-gifted scholar was that of a consummate calligrapher. Not only did he write a

beautifully firm English hand, but he could imitate almost to perfection any ancient script—Greek, Latin, Syriac, Armenian, Ethiopic, and the like. I have heard a story for the accuracy of which I cannot vouch, that as a boy at Harrow he perpetrated a 'fake' of an old MS fragment which found its way into a glass case, until the fraud was confessed. Whatever the truth of that may be, it is a fact that the graceful small 'Estrangela' (Syriac) type in use at the Cambridge University Press since 1901 was designed by Burkitt: it first appears that year in his work on S. Ephraim's Quotations from the Gospel.

ܘܫܠܡ ܕܝܢ ܟܠܗ ܪܘܫܡܬܐ ܒܐܬܘܬܐ.

R. H. CONNOLLY.

(c) *Hebrew and Old Testament Studies*

On his Hebrew and Old Testament studies Dr S. A. Cook writes as follows:

Of Burkitt's multifarious contributions to Hebrew and Old Testament studies the one that stands out most conspicuously in my mind is the article 'Text and Versions', which he wrote for the *Encyclopaedia Biblica* (1903). For its completeness, conciseness, and exposition of the principles of textual criticism this masterly survey at once attracted attention, and—I speak only for Part II (Part I deals with the New Testament)—it is still without an equal. Of course it can be supplemented in many places, and in his miscellaneous notes in the JOURNAL and elsewhere Burkitt himself amplified it. Thus, Wellhausen's well-known 'restoration'—as he calls it—of the original text of 2 Kings xix 26 sq. (= Isa. xxxvii 27 sq.), more fully handled in the now long-defunct *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology* (xxiv, 1902, pp. 216 sqq.), was subsequently discussed anew in the JOURNAL (xxxiv 369). Also, Dr Hayman's 'too little known' emendation of Deut. xxxiii 21 comes up again in the JOURNAL (xxxv 68: cf. the reference to it *ib.* p. 441). It was characteristic of Burkitt to keep in mind the claims of earlier scholars: thus he recalls Hoonacker's theory of the divine name Yahu (*Journ. of Bibl. Lit.*, 1925, pp. 353 sqq.) and G. Hoffmann's interpretation of a certain obscure Aramaic inscription (*J.T.S.* xxi 340).

Of the many examples that could be cited of Burkitt's textual criticism, perhaps the most valuable illustration is afforded by his detailed review of a curious Hebrew MS, in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge, edited by the late Mr H. W. Sheppard (*J.T.S.* xxii, 1921, 165–172). The MS is remarkable for its numerous unusual variant readings which, the Editor suggested, might represent a very early type of text before the Massoretic Text was fixed. But Burkitt's knowledge of palaeographical and textual data enabled him to demonstrate that almost all the readings were unimportant and that the few that were really of interest did not support Mr Sheppard's view—one swallow, in fact, did not make a summer. The review is a model of criticism, which Hebrew students should study.

A rather similar question had arisen previously in connexion with the 'Nash Papyrus', the unique Hebrew fragment containing the Decalogue and the Shema, and now in the University Library. Was it Pre-Massoretic? Burkitt, who had been as invaluable as he was unselfish in helping me with the palaeographical and textual difficulties, discussed separately the character of the text.[1] In a piece of careful reasoning, he argued to the conclusion that although the text of the fragment is Pre- or Non-Massoretic, the Massoretic Text—*qûd* text—was to be preferred. From the M.T. we can explain the Nash Papyrus, but not the reverse: the papyrus represents certain popular tendencies, the M.T. the 'archaistic scholarship of the Scribes'.

Typical of his originality and resourcefulness was the use he made of transliterations in Greek and Syriac. A beginning was made in the *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology* xxiv (1902) 143 sqq., in an extremely suggestive study of certain Greek transliterations of Babylonian (or Accadian as it is now called); and it is still fresh in our minds how the use of ϕ and not π to represent the Semitic *p* served to throw light upon the variant Greek forms of the name Capernaum.[2] Syriac transcriptions, in turn, were shown to be of more than academic importance, and in a paper to the British Academy (24 Jan. 1912) he discussed the extent to which the Syriac translators of the New Testament recognized the Semitic original of the names which

[1] *Jewish Quarterly Review* xv 392–408, cf. xvi 559 sq.

[2] *J.T.S.* xxxiv (1933) 389 and note.

lay before them in Greek. Among other conclusions he was able to say that, 'when minutely examined, the Syriac Version, even in its oldest form, shews, like all other monuments of Christianity, the great chasm that separates the second-century Christian Church from Palestinian life before the Destruction of Jerusalem'. Nor is this all, for when in recent years the problem of the origin of Mandaism began to be keenly discussed, Burkitt could point out that the Mandaean terms which might seem to suggest a knowledge of the Hebrew language or of Jewish tradition, instead of being derived from some Jewish or Palestinian sect, whether heretical or orthodox, were demonstrably derived from the Syriac transliterations in the Peshitta of the Old Testament.[1] The argument was perfectly conclusive.

It would take up too much space even to enumerate some of the more conspicuous examples of Burkitt's well-stocked and resourceful mind.[2] In the field of Old Testament criticism attention may be directed to his clever explanation of Gen. x 8–10 (*J.T.S.* xii 280 sq.), based on a newly edited Sumerian tablet. Not so well known as it should be is his translation of the greater part of Ecclesiastes in the style of the quatrains of Omar Khayyam.[3] He held that the more sustained type of argument in the book reflected the influence of Greek thought and that it was originally in Aramaic—a view which, so far as I have noticed, has not been examined. As a specimen of his translation I subjoin parts of Eccles. iii 10–15:—

'This is the Trouble God has given to Men:
He made all things fair in their Season; then
A Sense of Time He gave to us, yet kept
The Vision of the Whole outside our Ken.

'Aye, what God wills, that stands for ever fast,
The Course of things will go on to the last,
Man cannot add to it or take away;
God makes the Future as He made the Past.'

[1] *Church and Gnosis* (1932) p. 106 sq.; cf. *J.T.S.* xxix (1928) 228 sq.

[2] The brilliant conjecture that Taxo in *Ass. Mos.* ix 1 is Eleazar was published long ago in Hastings's *D.B.* iii 449 (1900); but, by a bad oversight, it is omitted in the almost encyclopaedic *Rel. des Judentums* (3rd ed. of Bousset by Gressmann, 1926) p. 232.

[3] Privately printed at Rouen, October 1918, republished by the S.P.C.K., 1922; see also *J.T.S.* xxiii 26.

Markedly original is his suggestion that Micah vi and vii belong to a northern prophecy.[1] Hence the famous utterance (vi 8), the noblest summary of the prophetic message, may have been 'the swan-song of northern Israelite prophecy'. This with much else on the essentials of Old Testament prophecy is fortunately made generally accessible in an extremely stimulating sketch of 'the Prophets of Israel' in the *New Commentary* (1928). Most recently of all the figure of Ezekiel seems to have attracted him, and in this priest-prophet he saw the coalescence of the former rivalry of priestly and prophetic ideas, and a synthesis of the conflict between the older Nature Religion and the Social Religion of the reformers.[2]

But though he wrote less on the Old Testament, behind all his work there lay a full knowledge of the course of Biblical Criticism. His most 'popular' addresses were founded upon a close and independent study of the great questions. It is interesting to recall that in some important matters he agreed with Kennett, the first of whose pupils he was (1886); thus, he accepts a sixth-century date for the *book* of Deuteronomy.[3] On the other hand he dissents as regards the meaning to be attached to the prophets' attitude to ritual. He lived through the years when Old Testament criticism was fighting its way; and at Church Congresses and elsewhere he took an active part in interpreting the chief critical views. But he came to feel ever more keenly that there had been losses; and of the old-time stories that have dropped out of 'our geological manuals and our primers of Ancient History' he says, 'I am not one of those who think this is a matter of no consequence for the present and the future of the Christian faith'. We need 'a reconstruction and revision of our theological theories about the origin of things, including Man', but, unfortunately, 'useful reconstruction does not make much progress'.[4]

Through his son, Mr. Miles Burkitt, he became keenly inter-

[1] *Journ. of Bibl. Lit.* xlv (1926) 159–161. This has not escaped Lindblom *Micha* (1929) p. 118 sq.

[2] *Church and Gnosis* ch. v ('The Church and the Old Testament'). Burkitt had actually promised—after much thought—a paper on Ezekiel for the July meeting of the Society for Old Testament Study.

[3] *J.T.S.* xxii 61 sqq.; cf. *Journ. of Bibl. Lit.* xl (1921) 166.

[4] *Church and Gnosis* p. 126 sq.

ested in Pre-History and Archaeology; and visits to Palestine only convinced him how much we had gained in our knowledge of the Holy Land and the Old Testament. Much had been gained; but he felt that we have to pay for it, and more than once he lamented the current lack of interest in the Bible and Bible Studies.[1] Yet he knew that much of the interest had been and still was more sentimental than intelligent; and among the many pungent observations for which he was famous, especially relevant here is his remark: 'if the Bible were more read, instead of being talked about, I fancy we should not hear quite so much about "the noble English of our incomparable Version"' (*J.T.S.* xxiii 24). Intelligent interest and a knowledge *of* the Bible rather than of 'potted' books *about* the Bible—these he tried to implant in students, old and young, and there must be few men indeed who did not gain from him some new light, some fresh stimulus.

The transition from the reformed religion of Israel, through the Apocalyptic literature—in which he was perfectly at home—down to the Jewish-Christian conditions in the first century A.D., was the field he made his own. The stages from the old more or less magical nature-worship which the prophets reformed to the definitive separation of Christianity from the religion to which it owed so much brought problems upon which he was engaged to the very end.[2] Indeed, even the day before he was stricken down he had conducted his Seminar, and in his usual manner had held us with his brilliant, witty, fearless, reverent, incisive handling of each topic as it arose.

Mr G. R. Driver, writing independently, bears similar witness.

Burkitt's work on the Old Testament consists for the most part of scattered articles in Dictionaries of the Bible and papers in journals and other learned publications; at the same time he published two independent works.

Of the latter the most important is his edition of the *Fragments of the Book of Kings according to the translation of*

[1] e.g. in his address at the Annual Meeting of the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem (*Quarterly Statement of the Palestine Exploration Fund* 1933, p. 189).

[2] Characteristic of him is his distinction between Greek and Jewish conceptions: e.g. the fact that the idea of the reality and eternal significance of Time is part of the debt of Christianity to Judaism and not to Greek thought (*The Legacy of Israel* p. 96).

Aquila (1897) taken from two scraps of vellum of the fifth or sixth century A.D.; this is a palimpsest, having a Hebrew liturgical text of the eleventh century written over the uncial Greek text, which Burkitt deciphered with great skill and furnished with a number of interesting notes. The text is of considerable importance, not so much for the interpretation of the Old Testament, since only a few verses in 2 Kings xx (xxi) and xxiii are preserved, as for the light which it throws on Aquila's methods of translation. The other work, *Ecclesiastes rendered into English verse* (1922), is a slighter work; for it contains only selections of the original work in rhymed stanzas of four lines. It is chiefly of interest as an attempt to treat the worldly wisdom of the Hebrew sage after the manner of Fitzgerald's famous translation of Omar Khayyam; but it is not altogether successful, largely perhaps because the work of the Hebrew sage does not so easily lend itself as does that of the Persian poet to such treatment.

In the latter class in some ways far the most important of Burkitt's articles is the masterly description of 'Text and Versions' of the Bible in the *Encyclopaedia Biblica* (1903); this is still a useful work, which has perhaps been upset only in occasional points by subsequent research, and is likely to remain so for some time to come. Another interesting piece of work is the fragment, published in *Anecdota Oxoniensia*, Semitic Series I ix (1896), of Job xxii in the Palestinian Syriac dialect from a manuscript in the library of the monastery of St Catherine at Mount Sinai; it shews not only his skill in decipherment but the enterprising nature of a mind which did not shrink from the risk of applying a chemical preparation to a faded manuscript to bring out the writing, an experiment rewarded with complete success. Another side of his work is well illustrated by his lecture on apocalypses in *Judaism and the beginnings of Christianity: a course of lectures delivered at Jews' College* (1933), in which he brings out their importance both to Jewish and to Christian studies; thus he makes clear that in the Book of Daniel the passionate expectation of the end bringing with it the final judgement of God constitutes in a sense a Jewish attempt to construct a philosophy of history and that without some knowledge of these strange documents it is impossible to enter into the hopes and fears of the

Jewish multitudes which form the background of the Gospels; nor does he fail at the end of his lecture to bring even the study of apocalyptic literature into relation with modern life by quoting a private letter from Cumont after his departure from Belgium, leaving it under the heel of the German invader, to the effect that Daniel still offers 'a vision of hope, a faith in final justice' to those groaning under tyranny and oppression.

Beside these more or less considerable works, Burkitt published also a long succession of articles on problems of interest in various learned periodicals, notably in the pages of this JOURNAL. These all show the amazing ingenuity of his mind. Sometimes such notes are nothing more than words of warning to be careful, for example in expecting too much of the Septuagint; sometimes brief accounts or collations of newly discovered manuscript fragments at Monte Cassino or of a palimpsest at Munich; at other times he puts forward fresh explanations of old problems such as the interpretation of the Psalm of Habakkuk or of the Table of Nations in Genesis, or raises anew the question whether the Hebrew text of Ecclesiastes is a translation of an originally Aramaic document, as he maintains. The most interesting, if not the most important, of his articles of this kind are those on the Nash Papyrus; this was a papyrus (first published by Prof. S. A. Cook) edited by Prof. Burkitt in the *Jewish Quarterly Review* (vol. xv pp. 392–408 and vol. xvi pp. 559–561), who assigned it to the first century A.D.; it contains a Hebrew text of the Decalogue and the beginning of the Šĕma', which gave him the opportunity to make a number of acute remarks on the text and especially on the relation of the Massoretic text to that of the Septuagint. At the same time the two photographs, that in the first shewing the text blacked in with ink and that in the second giving it as taken by an improved method of photography, shew how his active mind was never content to rest but was always looking out for ways and means to advance beyond the position already gained. There are also in this and in other journals numerous suggestions for emending the Massoretic text, some more but others less successful; nor is this unlikely in one whose fertile mind was continually throwing out new theories on every conceivable subject. Lastly, his wide range of reading in the literature which has grown up around the Old Testament, and

his amazing memory, may be illustrated: he was able immediately to refer a recently published explanation of Exodus xxxviii 6, put forward by its author as a new discovery, to Bar Hebraeus and to show that a supposedly new emendation of two corrupt words in Deuteronomy xxxiii 21 had already been made by another scholar in a work issued at Cambridge exactly forty years ago.

(d) *The Gospels*

Burkitt's attack on the problem of the textual criticism of the Gospels began in the last century. In an Introduction to P. M. Barnard's *Clement of Alexandria's Biblical Text* ('Texts and Studies', 1899) he sounded what, in those days of the dominance of the 'Neutral' text, was a bugle-call summoning to battle: 'Let us come out of the land of Egypt, which speaks (as Clement's quotations show) with such doubtful authority, and let us see whether the agreement of East and West, of Edessa and Carthage, will not give us a surer basis upon which to establish our text of the Gospels.' The possibility adumbrated in these words doubtless stimulated his interest in the Old Latin texts and in the Old Syriac (of which something is said above by Dr Souter and Dom Connolly). Hence his monumental *Evangelion da-Mepharreshe*, the publication of which was an 'event' in the history of Gospel textual criticism.

Burkitt—like other revolutionaries—seems, as evinced by some occasional remarks, to have felt some apprehension that he might have gone too far in his challenge of the 'Neutral' text; and he was prone later on to insist on the excellencies of B, the Vatican MS. So much so that some of us at times wondered whether there lurked in his subconscious mind the feeling that the great work of Westcott and Hort had made the text of this MS a Cambridge 'institution', criticism of which was allowable only to members of that University.

His double interest, in the textual and in the historical criticism of the Gospels, was brought before the world with the beginning of the present century. At an Extension Summer Meeting at Cambridge in 1900 he gave the *Two Lectures on the Gospels* which display the freshness and originality that characterized every-

thing he wrote on the subject. It is notable that the last number of the JOURNAL, published after his death, contains a collection of reviews which shew him still at work with all his old vigour and acuteness on the same twofold interest.

In 1906 appeared *The Gospel History and its Transmission*, the most popular and widely read of all his books, which for a quarter of a century has been the standard introductory text-book on the subject for theological students in this country. The most lively sections are those dealing with the 'literary originality' and 'historical value' of the Gospel of Mark.

His continued interest in the Gospels was manifested to every reader of the JOURNAL, scarcely a volume of which lacks some interesting and original note or review on Gospel text or history. His subsequent books, however—*The Earliest Sources for the Life of Jesus*, *Christian Beginnings*, and *Jesus Christ, an Historical Outline*—were comparatively short. The last, published in 1932, consists in part of a reprint of a chapter on the Life of Jesus in a composite work (*Christianity in the Light of Modern Knowledge*, 1929) and partly of an Epilogue primarily devoted to a criticism of the rising German school of 'form' critics. Short as it is, this Epilogue is much the most telling attack so far delivered upon this school. It is notable that in what must be almost the latest product of his pen (the review of a piece of form-criticism by J. Sundwall in the last number of the JOURNAL) he returns to the charge, and once more champions the fundamental historicity of Mark and of the general developement of events as portrayed in that Gospel.

Less attention than it deserves has been given to Burkitt's contribution to the symposium *St Francis of Assisi, Essays in Commemoration 1226–1926*, published by the London University Press. As long ago as 1910 (in the Oxford Studies in the Synoptic Problem) I invited notice to the light thrown on the synoptic problem by analogies found in the early sources of the Life of St Francis. Since then, these analogies have been both multiplied and complicated by fresh discoveries of Franciscan documents. Burkitt's essay (which has behind it his study of sources published in vol. iii of F. Ehrle's *Miscellanea*) is an attempt of the first importance to apply this new material to the elucidation of the critical problems of the Gospels.

This is not the place for a personal appreciation of the many qualities which endeared him as a friend. I cannot, however, forbear to record the debt I owe for the numerous corrections and suggestions made by him in the course of his careful reading of the proofs of my books *The Four Gospels* and *The Primitive Church.* B. H. STREETER.

(e) *Rabbinic Studies*

Mr. H. Loewe writes:

What did Burkitt mean to Rabbinic studies? This question is capable of two answers. If we understand the question to refer to publications, the reply is simple. Burkitt edited no texts—unless we include the Nash Papyrus under this heading. He wrote no grammar; he compiled no dictionaries. Indeed, amazing though his versatility was, he could scarcely have put his hand to so specialized a task in a sphere adjacent to his own, but not identical with it. Nevertheless, Burkitt had an accurate and a comprehensive knowledge of Rabbinics, and he knew how to evaluate and use it. He was at home in the subject, and he could not merely read and translate, but his keen eye was ever conscious of errors, whether in rendering or in application. Burkitt's great merit was his power of assimilating Rabbinic material, and applying it properly and in due perspective. He was always ready either to supply the appropriate Rabbinic background or parallel, or to accept it if brought to his notice, irrespective of the result, whether or no it confuted or confirmed theories of his own. He was equally quick to discover any flaw or misapplication of such material. Cambridge has produced no meagre number of Christian scholars of Rabbinics: Spencer, Lightfoot, Lowe, Taylor and Mason, Lukyn Williams—still happily with us—and many others. Burkitt does not quite fit into this class, since Rabbinics was not his main study. But his is the merit of co-ordinating Rabbinics and Patristics, of regarding both with equal sympathy and with equal criticism. To him Rabbinics came naturally: they were not strange, remote, and unreal. Nor were they isolated from contemporary thought and life. He saw the unbroken chain uniting Amos, Hillel, Aqiba, and Maimonides, a chain parallel to John, Paul, Jerome,

Augustine, and Aquinas. And just as he recognized the characteristics of these two lines of developement, so was he able to influence his contemporaries and, above all, his pupils. Mainly through him, many theological students have gone out into the world better equipped than their fathers in regard to the Jewish environment of the New Testament. What G. F. Moore did in America, Burkitt accomplished in England. One can best estimate Burkitt's services to Rabbinics by recalling the things that were written and said by theologians in the Harnack-Schürer era. Taylor and Mason may have been greater Talmudists; indeed, they were. But their influence was much less effective than his. It is hard to think of Cambridge theology without Burkitt. One can but trust that Burkitt's disciples will carry on his teaching, in his spirit.

Again, his synthesis of Rabbinics and Patristics, his objectivity and appreciation, were a lesson to Jewish scholars. He caused many Jewish students, as well as many Christians who read his books, or listened to his occasional addresses to Jewish audiences, to understand that Christianity and Judaism had issued from one source, and, in spite of great differences, yet aimed at one and the same goal. Jewish students always felt in regard to Burkitt that he was the same man wherever he spoke. There was never an innuendo, never an *obiter dictum*, which they had to overlook or pretend not to have heard. It was not merely that his name was among the first on any list of scholars in any attempt to foster Jewish scholarship, or in any protest against blood-libels or persecutions. Yet more significant, however, is the fact that never, by word or jest, by deed or writing, did he depart one hairsbreadth from the lofty standard by which his life was regulated. A law of truth was in his heart, and no perverseness was ever found on his lips.

Dr Claude Montefiore adds what follows:

I may not here speak of the special debt of gratitude which I owe to Burkitt for what he wrote about me in the volume *Speculum Religionis* (1929), except to say that anybody who chances to read that 'appreciation', as he calls it, would notice at once how Burkitt's gifts of sympathy, open-mindedness, and

vision are constantly displayed in it. I would only add to what Mr Loewe has written a word about Burkitt's theory as regards the Scribes and Rabbis of the first and second centuries A.D. Burkitt could and did entirely appreciate the Rabbinic love of the Torah; he could and did understand and believe that fair and holy lives could be, and were, lived on the basis of that love and promoted by it. He was entirely ready to allow that the Rabbinical religion was *not* 'mean and gloomy, producing in its votaries either boastful self-satisfaction or despair and anxiety of soul'.[1] Nevertheless, he believed that Jewish scholars were inclined (however naturally) to go too far in holding, as so many do, that there is not a good deal of historic truth and accuracy in the strong criticism of the religion and morality of the Scribes and Rabbis in the Synoptic Gospels. His theory was that it so happened that there actually was during the ministry of Jesus a considerable number of Scribes and Rabbis much below the high religious and moral standard of Hillel or R. Jochanan b. Zakkai. The events of A.D. 66–135 brought about a moral and religious purgation, and the Rabbis of, say, A.D. 150–500 included a much smaller percentage of 'goats' than the Rabbis of, say, A.D. 30. It would not be a reasonable argument that Roman Catholicism, as a distinctive religion, could not produce fair and holy lives, just because in, say, 1520 A.D. there happened to be a high percentage of priests whose religion was outward and formal, and whose morality was poor and inadequate. Whether Burkitt's theory be right or wrong, it illustrates his independence of mind, his readiness to face the facts, his desire to give a true interpretation of them without fear or favour, without bias or pressure. Let us suppose that a scholar of his great learning, impartiality, width of sympathy, and singular alertness had stood outside all religious beliefs, or even all denominational distinctions; it would yet have been a fine phenomenon. It was surely a still finer one, and perhaps also much rarer, when we realize that this splendid and unusual scholar was a sincere Christian believer.

[1] *Speculum Religionis* p. 11.

(f) *As Liturgiologist*

No account of F. C. Burkitt would be complete without some reference to him as a liturgiologist. His publications on liturgical matters are few and slight in comparison with his contributions to other departments of learning. They were, however, by no means commensurate with his knowledge of the subject; and whether they took the form of a note, or an article, or even a review, they invariably illumined some obscure corner, or made a valuable suggestion which pointed a way for other students to open up. It is still believed in certain circles that liturgiology is a proper study only for those possessed of a 'sacristy' interest. Burkitt made no such mistake. None knew better than he the intimate connexion and reaction, throughout Christian history, of *lex orandi* and *lex credendi*. The importance of the study of liturgy, particularly of early liturgy, as he conceived it, lies in the fact that it reveals beliefs, ideas, and aspirations, which, as they belong to the general body of Christians, have contributed as much to the formation of the Christian tradition as, if not more than, the thought of outstanding writers and 'Fathers'. It was from this point of view that Burkitt lectured in Cambridge on 'Christian Worship'. Those who attended the lectures were disappointed if they expected a comparison of medieval uses; but they were compensated by an inimitable introduction to early ideas and theories of worship as expressed in ancient liturgical texts.

Truth to tell, Burkitt was not greatly interested in western medieval liturgiology, at least of the later period; and he was inclined to attribute ulterior practical, instead of scholarly, motives to those who studied it. Such persons as concentrated their attention upon, e.g., the Sarum *lex* to the exclusion of, say, the Verona Canons were better described, he once wrote, as 'liturgiolists' than as liturgiologists.

It was his work in the field of Syriac literature that led him to liturgiology—so it would seem from the article on 'The Palestinian Syriac Lectionary' in this JOURNAL (vi 91). Already in vol. i, in his article on the Syriac Original of the Acts of Thomas, he had dealt with material of special interest to students of prayers and formulae recited at eucharistic services. His work

on early Syriac ecclesiastical literature, summarized in *Early Eastern Christianity*, the St Margaret's Lectures for 1904, was also not without importance for those engaged in investigating the origins of both East and West Syrian liturgiology. Likewise his several articles on the Didache, the Didascalia, and cognate documents, can as little be neglected by students of liturgical beginnings as those documents themselves. An article, valuable for the study of the East Syrian liturgy, is that on 'The MSS of "Narsai on the Mysteries"', in which Burkitt sets out the evidence in confirmation of Dom R. H. Connolly's ascription of Homily xvii to Narsai. Of equal value is his British Academy Paper entitled 'The Early Syriac Lectionary System'. Burkitt had, indeed, a very considerable knowledge of, and interest in, the history and text of the East Syrian, or Nestorian, liturgy. This may be discerned in 'The Old Malabar Liturgy' (*J.T.S.* xxix 155), in which he discusses the antiquity of the Nestorian rite in South India. But it was rather in conversation than in publications that his knowledge was made available to those who wished to benefit by it.

The same is true of Burkitt's knowledge of Latin liturgiology. He wrote little on the subject. Yet his article on 'St Felicity in the Roman Mass' (*J.T.S.* xxxii 279) shews that he could have written much and to the point. As the title indicates, the article is concerned to confirm a suggestion, made by another writer, that the Felicitas of the Roman Canon is a Roman, not an African, martyr. Incidentally Burkitt suggests an explanation of the different uses of the terms 'Gelasian' and 'Gregorian', as they appear in Anglo-Saxon and Frankish writings; and he takes occasion to say that, in what he terms the 'Bishop *v.* Buchwald controversy', he ranges himself on the side of Edmund Bishop. For Bishop he had a great admiration, which he expressed in his note on 'The Bobbio Missal' (*J.T.S.* xxvi 177); he would recommend those who consulted him to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest all that Bishop had written. But he would sometimes differ from, or correct, Bishop, as in 'St Felicity in the Roman Mass'. Burkitt's support of Bishop against Buchwald in the controversy over an Epiclesis in the Roman Canon was vigorous and unhesitating. He maintained, and could shew reason, that those who regarded an Epiclesis as

a 'primitive' form of consecration were ignorant of the background of the subject. He was fully qualified to write a history of the Epiclesis; but though the Prayer Book controversy stirred him to express his mind to some extent, he was content to write letters to *The Times* which, though they might have stated the bare facts, gave no opportunity of marshalling the evidence which he had at his disposal. He was frank in regarding the rejected Prayer Book as an exhibition rather of 'liturgiolism' than of liturgical knowledge. The would-be revisers of the 1662 Prayer Book, he used to say, failed to understand the Book which they wished to revise. His statements were admittedly often provocative; for, although his interpretation of the Communion Service, set out in the paper 'Eucharist and Sacrifice', and again in 'Christian Worship' (in vol. iii of *The Christian Religion: its Origin and Progress*' edited by Professor Bethune-Baker), called forth objection, it elicited no answer. On this particular subject Burkitt felt as well as thought. Such as heard him discuss it then knew, if they had not discovered it before, that his view of the relation between *lex credendi* and *lex orandi* was not merely an academic maxim, applicable only to a study of the past.

If Burkitt wrote little on liturgical subjects, his loss is not less lamentable to liturgical study. Perplexed students knew that if they consulted him, whether by correspondence or in conversation, he would give more help than they were at first conscious of requiring. Nothing was too much trouble, or took too much time, for Burkitt to lavish assistance; often it must have been at a great cost of his own time. He was a very Doctor in the exact sense of the word, in that he could inspire, and by inspiring could direct. To have known Burkitt the liturgiologist was, as it was once said of loving a certain great lady in the eighteenth century, 'a liberal education'. EDWARD C. RATCLIFF.

(g) *As Student of Franciscan History*

I am asked to write of Professor Burkitt's work in the one field in which I was able to follow him step by step, namely, that of Franciscan history.

This, it has always seemed to me, gave special scope for his rare combination of the mathematical and the historical mind. The one enabled him to keep a number of facts in his head, with all their correlations close or loose, just as a chess expert keeps them even while he is playing blindfold. The other put life into the dry bones. His essay on the interrelation of the early Franciscan sources, in the Centenary Volume of 1926 (edited by W. W. Seton), seems to me the most exact and living reconstruction of this kind that I have ever read. He was here confronted with a multiplicity of documents, mostly contaminated, but gradually crystallizing by competition and interaction into a sort of official canon, within a couple of generations of the Founder's death; in short, very much the story of the New Testament canon. Here, of course, his previous studies gave him an enormous advantage; and on all the most important questions he seems to have said the last word.

On the other hand, he was admirable in his sympathy with, and his presentation of, the Saint's character. Mr. J. H. Moorman's paragraph in *The Times* of May 14 shews the extent to which Burkitt helped and inspired undergraduate students. When, again, he travelled through the holy places of Umbria, his imagination seized at once upon the famous scene at Rieti, and he saw, what nobody had noticed before, how much it must have owed to the remarkable echo from the cliff. I twice heard him lecture on this part of the story; and each time he impressed and charmed hearers whose special interests were almost a whole horizon apart from the Franciscan story. His smile and his vivacity, and his serenity even in controversy, were Franciscan. I feel sure that I have said nothing here which would not be fully endorsed by Dr A. G. Little, who for fifty years has been the acknowledged leader of Franciscan studies in Britain.

G. G. COULTON.