

CRCN

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Rev. Reginald C. Fuller D.D., Ph.D., L.S.S.
General Editor

Rev. Leonard Johnston S.T.L., L.S.S.
Old Testament Editor

Very Rev. Conleth Kearns O.P., D.S.S.
New Testament Editor

*With a foreword by
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THE FORMATION AND HISTORY OF THE CANON

OLD TESTAMENT CANON

BY R. C. FULLER

NEW TESTAMENT CANON

BY R. J. FOSTER

13a Bibliography—General: J. Hölscher, *Kanonisch und Apokryph*, 1905; H. Höpfl, 'Canonicité', DBS 1 (1928), 1022–45 with ample bibliography; S. Zarb, *Historia Canonis Utriusque Testamenti*, 1934; F. Kenyon, *Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts*, 1958⁵; Barucq-Cazelles, 'Le Canon des livres inspirés', in RF 1957; J. H. Crehan, 'Canon' in *Dict. of Catholic Theology*, 1 (1962), 321ff.

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13a **Meaning of 'Canon'**—The Greek word which we translate as 'Canon' originally signified a rod or bar and so it

came to mean a measuring rod. Then it was used metaphorically for any rule or standard of excellence in art or literature,—thus the ancient Greek authors were called canons (*kanones*)—or for a rule of conduct as by St Paul, Gal. 6:16. Similarly, the rules, decisions and decrees enacted by the Church to be the standard of doctrine, discipline and worship were called canons, and for a like reason men talked of the canon of Scripture or the canonical Scriptures because they contained the rule or standard of faith and morals. But this is not the sense in which the phrase 'Canon of the Scripture' is commonly used. It is usually taken to mean the **collection or list of books acknowledged and accepted by the Church as inspired**, i.e. Canon is taken in the passive sense of the books conforming to the rule for their acceptance as inspired works. Hence, the list would serve to distinguish sacred from profane writings. Similarly, books are said to be canonical or canonized when they form part of the canon. The earliest certain evidence of this usage is from the works of Athanasius (c. 350) although there are some who believe (from indications in Latin versions of his works) that it was used much earlier by Origen (d. 254). This Scriptural Canon comprises the OT and NT.

Note. The inclusion of books in the Canon of Scripture, whether Jewish or Christian, was a long, and often unconscious, historical process. For the first Christians, "The Scriptures" were the OT, and that included the books current in both Palestinian and Alexandrian Jewish communities. But for a long time no attempt was made to determine precisely the limits of the collection, see 15 *bc*; 21*ab*. Regarding the NT Canon, Aland has pointed out that it should not be treated in isolation from the OT. The Christian Canon of Scripture is an indivisible unity and should be treated as such (*Problem of NT Canon*, p. 2).

THE OLD TESTAMENT CANON

BY R. C. FULLER

13c The OT was the official collection of the sacred writings of the Jews before it became part of the Christian Scriptures. But two things must be noted. The OT Canon recognized by the Catholic Church contains seven more books (and parts of two others) than are contained in the present Jewish Bible. Moreover, the order of books is different. The Heb. Bible arranges them approximately in the order of recognition as sacred writings. The Christian Bible following the LXX arranges the books roughly by subject matter (see § 14a). Thus the Heb. Bible comprises (according to our way of counting) 39; and the Catholic OT has 46. We follow the Jewish order of books in this art. so as to trace the process of 'canonization'. The Protestant Canon of the OT following the Jewish, is shorter and omits Tb, Jdt, Wis, Sir, Bar, 1 and 2 Mc, and parts of Est and Dn namely Est 10:4-16-24 and Dn 3:24-90, and ch: 13 and 14. These books and parts of books were not included in the Heb. Bible at the end of the 1st cent. A.D., and have survived only in the Gr. Bible adopted by the Christians.

d The books which are included in the Heb. Bible are known as **proto-canonical** (p.c.) and those which have survived only in Gr. are called **deuterocanonical** (d.c.). The terms were first used by Sixtus of Siena in 1566, but are somewhat unfortunate in that they suggest two distinct canons (see § 15a) whereas they are intended to indicate only chronological priority of the p.c. over the d.c. as regards recognition of their canonical status, and even then only in general terms.

It is not to be supposed that there was any clear idea of inspired literature at the beginning. There were official records, laws, oracles and patriarchal traditions. Nor was there any very obvious distinction between civil and religious records, just as there was no real distinction between 'Church' and 'State'. In the earlier stages God guided his people rather through the spoken word and the records were gradually collected as being the concrete and written expression of that word. Hence, all the records were in some sense regarded as prophetic, of the 'Former and Latter' Prophets. The 'Former Prophets' comprise in fact historical books.

It has been suggested by Pfeiffer that the change in emphasis from Oracle to Book took place with the finding of the Book of the Law in the time of Josiah, 621 B.C. From that time onwards all the stress was on the Law and its observance.

e The following table may be useful for reference:

Hebrew Bible

The Law: Gn, Ex, Lv, Nm, Dt.

The Prophets: The Former Prophets: Jos, Jg, 1 and 2 Sm, 1 (3) and 2 (4) Kgs.

The Latter Prophets: Is, Jer, Ezek, and the Twelve (i.e. Hos, Jl, Am, Obad, Jon, Mi, Na, Hb, Zeph, Hag, Zech, Mal).

The Writings: Ps, Prv, Jb, Song, Ru, Lam, Eccl, Est, Dn, Ez, Neh, 1 and 2 Chr.

Christian Bible (Old Testament).

The Pentateuch: Gn, Ex, Lv, Nm, Dt.

Historical Books: Jos, Jg, Ru, 1 and 2 Sm, 1 (3) and 2 (4) Kgs, 1 and 2 Chr, Ez, Neh, Tb, Jdt, Est including 10:4-16-24.

Wisdom Books: Jb, Ps, Prv, Eccl, Song, Wis, Sir.

Major Prophets: Is, Jer. with Lam and Bar, Ezek, Dn, including after 3:23 the Prayer of Aariah and the Song of the 3 Children, ch 13 Susanna, ch 14 Bel and the Dragon.

Minor Prophets: Hos, Jl, Am, Obad, Jon, Mi, Na, Hb, Zeph, Hag, Zech, Mal.

Historical Appendix: 1 and 2 Mc.

Deuterocanonical Books, The Apocrypha—The books and parts of books in italics above are included in the Canon by Catholics, who call them *deuterocanonical*. Others exclude them from the Canon and call them *Apocrypha*. Some Church of England Bibles print the Apocrypha apart, after the OT (or even after the NT) and include amongst them also 1 (3) and 2 (4) Esdras and the Prayer of Manasseh; works which Catholics likewise exclude from the Canon. The Letter of Jeremiah is included by Catholics as part of Baruch in the Canon; by others with the Apocrypha.

Formation of the Jewish Canon: Beginnings *His Lo* 14a Moses, the Lawgiver of Israel, that tradition ascribes the beginnings of a collection of sacred literature (Dt 31:9); the earliest nucleus of law, together with the then scanty written records of the tribes, were gathered together by him, for transmission to posterity. But the first efforts on any large scale to collect together a literature are probably to be ascribed to the reign of Solomon. By that date, there were, of course, already in existence very varied records, genealogies, lists of places, chronicles of the previous kings, epic poems, legislative material including bodies of particular laws (e.g. the Book of the Covenant); the earliest psalms—but not yet a connected history. According to the prevailing view of Pentateuchal composition, this was the task now begun and in the succeeding centuries more than one narrative was composed incorporating earlier material. Thus we may consider the Yahwist and Elohist traditions to have been formulated and eventually united into one history which we now find in the Pent (cf § 136i). By the time of Hezekiah's reform (2 Chr 29) in the 8th cent. B.C. there were further additions of Psalms, collections of wise sayings or proverbs, many of these attributed to Solomon (cf Prv 25:1), and of course the court records. In addition there began to be collected prophetic books or written records of the outstanding prophets of the day such as Hosea, Micah and Isaiah. The Temple in Jerusalem would have been the depository for this literature, or at least for the greater part of it. We may note here the finding of the 'Book of the Law' in the Temple at the time of Josiah's reform, 2 Chr 34:14. It was in all likelihood the Book of Deuteronomy, or at least a substantial part of it, which

14a may well have been written at the time of, or soon after, Hezekiah's reform in the preceding century, (though incorporating earlier material), and lost during the reign of the wicked Manasseh. The Book had a profound effect on Israel's history, and it is noteworthy that the Books of Kings are permeated with the spirit of the Deuteronomist.

b **The Law, the Prophets and the Writings**—It was during the exilic and post-exilic periods, however, that the most thorough-going editorial work was done, and the books of the OT began to take the shape with which we are familiar. The 'priestly' editors as they are called, were largely responsible for codifying much of the ritual legislation and adding to it. Moreover, they were pre-occupied with the worship of the Temple, and this theme dominates a great deal of their narrative which has been incorporated in the Pent. Certainly, by the time of Ezra's reform c. 450 B.C., the Pent was complete, and it is even possible that he had a hand in its final compilation. In a ceremony rather like that in which Josiah promulgated the Book of the Law (2 (4) Kgs 22-3) Ezra read out the Book of the Law of Moses (the Pent) 'from early morning until midday' Neh 8:3. It seems probable that at this date only the Pent was officially regarded as canonical, because the Samaritans, who set up their own separate religious organization soon after this time, recognized only those books as canonical Scripture. And indeed, even when other books were added to Israel's Canon at a later date, the Law continued to be regarded as in a class by itself. In contrast with pre-exilic times when people depended on a word or oracle from the Lord through his prophets, there was now a 'machinery' for the instruction of the people, namely, the synagogues which were springing up everywhere and in which the Law was expounded every Sabbath to the people (cf § 613d).

c So during the next two centuries a second group of books gradually took shape. The Pent contained much history interspersed with its law in order to show how God works through the history of his people and how law grows out of experience. In the historical books which follow (Jos, Jg, Sm, Kgs) the author is less interested in history for history's sake than in using the facts of history to illustrate certain religious themes, and to bring out the workings of God. This is why the Jews call these books 'the Former Prophets'. There are later historical books of course, namely, Chr, Ez-Neh, written before the end of the 3rd cent. B.C. These books were not included in this second group possibly because the second group had already acquired a special status which they had not yet reached. Consequently we find them ultimately relegated to the third group of sacred books—"The Writings". Those historical books called the Former Prophets, show evidence of later editing. Just as the Pent bears the marks of the priestly editors throughout, so these historical books display signs of a Deuteronomist stamp on top of the indications of composite authorship. It is unlikely that this editing could have taken place before the going into exile; moreover, the history of Kgs takes us later than this. We are probably correct in suggesting an exilic date for this work. It goes without saying that much of the historical material contained in the books dates back many centuries.

d To the earlier historical books ('the Former Prophets'), were added the books of the 'Latter Prophets', that is to say the collections of written prophecies gathered over the years since about the 8th cent. B.C. After 400 B.C., when the voice of prophecy seemed to have been silenced, the Jews collected together as much as they could of the written records of their prophets and eventually placed

these beside the Law. Some prophets of course, left nothing in writing. Again we need not suppose that the records we do possess were all written down by the prophets themselves. Certainly, they did write at times; thus Jeremiah dictated some of his oracles to Baruch (Jer 45). Besides prophecy, these books contain not infrequently biographical material, and all this was woven into the book, together with the oracles. The title, 'Latter Prophets' includes Is, Jer, Ezek, and the 12 Minor prophets; and their final editing took place probably in the relatively short period of time towards the end of the 5th cent. B.C. Nevertheless, at that time the preoccupation was chiefly with the Law, and it was that which Ezra concentrated upon. Another century at least was to pass before 'the Prophets' attained an equivalent status. In the prologue to Sir, written by the grandson of the author about the year 130 B.C., we read of the existence of at least two clearly defined groups of sacred writings, namely, the Law and the Prophets, the latter title evidently referring to the Former and Latter Prophets, of which we have been speaking. This second group was probably complete about the year 200 B.C.

There also existed at this time a large quantity of other sacred literature, some of it dating back a long way, the Psalms for instance, the Proverbs, and some of the later historical works. It is easy to see the unique position of the Pent, and why it was cut off from the rest, but it is more difficult to understand why and on what principle the 'Prophets' were cut off from the other books referred to above. Perhaps it was convenient to separate this second group from the rest of the literature for practical purposes. What remained was called by the general name of 'The Writings' or simply 'The Other Books', and here we find the greatest variety of all. Into this collection were put those books which were recognized rather late, and others which perhaps had only just been written. The chief book in the group is of course the Psalms and, indeed, the group seems to be designated under this name by Christ, who speaks of 'the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms', Lk 24:44. In the 2nd cent. B.C. a further gathering of Sacred Books took place. In 2 Mc 2:13 we read that as Nehemiah founded a library and collected books about the kings and prophets, so did Judas Maccabeus collect all the books which had been lost on account of the war.

The closing of the Jewish Canon.—At Jamnia (Jabneh) towards the end of the 1st cent. A.D., the Rabbis included in this group Ps, Prv, Jb, Song, Ru, Lam, Eccl, Est, Dn, Ez, Neh, 1 and 2 Chr. To speak more exactly it was a question of excluding other books with claims to canonical status, rather than officially including the ones cited, which of course were already 'in possession'. But there does not seem to have been any such clear-cut view before that time. In fact, if there had been it is hard to see what the deliberations of the Rabbis were about. In the century before Christ, and indeed up to A.D. 70, we have the period of the apocalyptic writings which constituted a vast literature (cf § 454a-e). Besides this, there was an abundant output of moral or wisdom writing, such as Sirach, which achieved great popularity. Some of this literature was originally composed in Heb. or Aram.; but apart from the Sir. Heb. text found in the Cairo Geniza (cf § 441a), and the fragments from Qumran and Masada, nothing of these originals has survived. The rest of this literature was written in Gr. and this and the Gr. translations of the other books have survived largely because of their preservation by the Christian Church.

The evidence from Qumran and Masada shows g

14g that this literature circulated not only throughout the Dispersion but also in Palestine. Moreover it appears to have been read in Palestine not only in Heb. or Aram. but also in Gr.—a language which was familiar to a large proportion of the population.

* Though there was no clear-cut view of the Canon prior to A.D. 70 there must have been at least some general ideas on the matter of the inclusion or otherwise of this literature. Clearly there were grades of status and though we have no direct evidence on the matter it is probable that certain books (i.e. those which survived in the LXX) were singled out from the rest in course of time as belonging to the Canon of Scripture. It was for this reason that they were copied in the MSS of the LXX by the Christian Church. After A.D. 70 controversy began between Christians and Jews, and arguments from Scripture were produced from both sides. **The Christians used the text of the LXX whereas their opponents, though they may have used the LXX as well, could always refer back to the original Heb.;** and not infrequently the LXX differed from the Heb. The Jews refused to consider the possibility that the Gr. might have a better reading, and decided that the LXX was wrong especially where it seemed to favour the Messianic interpretation. They turned more and more to the Heb. text until finally the LXX was (c. A.D. 130) condemned outright and became anathema to every orthodox Jew, cf § 26j. Already before this rejection of the LXX there was a narrowing of outlook with regard to the actual books to be regarded as sacred and canonical. It is not difficult to see why the apocalyptic literature lost face. Quite simply, after A.D. 70 it was discredited. For so long these books had been proclaiming the sudden and glorious manifestation of the Messiah and the confusion of his enemies. Then came the great revolt in A.D. 66 largely inspired by these explosive ideas and this was followed by the débâcle of A.D. 70, and the destruction of their hopes. As for the rest of the literature, its **exclusion was no doubt due to the greater insistence on the law and a turning away from the more liberal outlook of many of these books.** Perhaps also some of the contents was not to the liking of the Jews in that it seemed to **favour the Christian Messianic interpretation.** Besides this, it was necessary to exclude the new literature of the Christians which was beginning to accumulate, namely the epistles, the Gospels, and the Acts of the Apostles, and was being used against them.

h None of these reasons was however given for the rejection of this literature. Jos (C. Ap I, 8) says that the Jews have only 22 sacred books 'which are justly believed to be divine'. This is clearly an artificial number (the total of letters in the Heb. alphabet) but it included all 39 of the books referred to above § 13e. Josephus goes on to say that the period of prophecy lasted from Moses to the reign of Artaxerxes (Longimanus—465—424 B.C.) king of Persia, and that though Jewish history has been written since then it has not the same authority because 'there has not been an exact succession of prophets since that time'. The criterion that an inspired and canonical book had to be written not later than Artaxerxes, or (as it is implied elsewhere, *Talmud, Baba Bathra* 14b—15a) not later than Ezra, may now be seen as a move on the part of the Jewish authorities to exclude at one stroke the vast mass of apocalyptic literature which had gained such a hold on the people, as well as other books which were not to their liking. Sir and Mc were excluded by this; Dn and Jb were included because regarded as prophetic; Song, Prv and Eccl were ascribed to Solomon and so included; Wis and Psalms of Solomon were ex-

cluded perhaps because only in Gr. Est being in Heb., was (eventually) included but only after a long period of doubt based on its contents. It was presumably regarded at last as having been written before the death of Ezra. Lam was accepted as belonging to Jer; Bar was excluded because not written in Heb., cf IB, I, p. 32ff. This criterion of canonicity in fact bears all the marks of having been worked out *post factum*; it cannot have existed before A.D. 70. It is true that the traditional figure of the prophet had been absent, but the writers of the apocalyptic literature and indeed of the post-Ezra literature in general regarded themselves as in the prophetic tradition and were so regarded by the people. 'That Sirach, a book manifestly written after Ezra, came so near to being included in the Jewish Canon militates against the argument that the theory limiting inspired writings to pre-Ezra times was of long standing in Judaism', Sundberg, p. 116. D. S. Russell observes that the apocalyptists were convinced of their own inspiration as authentic successors of the prophets, (*The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic*, 133, 158). Further it seems clear that the mention of the 'other books' in the prologue to Sir was not meant to indicate a closed group, because in 2 Mc 15:9 Judas Maccabeus encourages his men from 'the Law and the prophets' without mention of a third group.

At Jamnia about A.D. 90 the Rabbis rejected all 15a this literature including the d.c. books, but even then the matter was not so clear-cut as it seemed. The canonical character of Est—of which book no trace has been found at Qumran—was in doubt for a long time among both Christians and Jews. Doubts likewise were expressed about Prv, Song, Ru, Eccl and Ezek before they were eventually accepted everywhere. On the other hand books which were rejected continued to be used for a time. Thus Sir in particular was still read and quoted as Scripture though it was banned from public reading in the synagogue. It continued to be read for several centuries. No doubt it is due to the rejection of these books by the Rabbis that their Heb. or Aram. texts were not preserved except accidentally in one or two cases. Was there an Alexandrian Canon?—Did the Alexandrian Jews recognize as sacred certain books which were not so recognized in Jerusalem? It used to be argued that the books known as d.c. which are extant only in Gr. were recognized as inspired and canonical only among the Jews of the Dispersion and especially of Alexandria who read their Scriptures in Gr.; and the Christians took over this larger Canon from the Alexandrian Jews when they took over the LXX. But this is too simple a view. In the first place, we have seen that many of these books were originally written in Heb. or Aram. and many fragments of them have been found at Qumran in addition to fragments in Gr. The books were certainly known in Palestine before A.D. 70 though unfortunately it is not possible to say exactly what status they enjoyed throughout the country or even among the Qumran community. It is true that generally speaking biblical MSS found there are written in a formal book-hand and moreover on parchment or skin of some kind. Others are written on papyrus but the evidence does not allow us to state categorically that a book written in a book-hand on parchment was necessarily recognized as canonical Scripture or conversely that one which was not so written was therefore given no such recognition. In Cave 6 for example fragments of Kgs have been discovered written on papyrus and on the other hand a MS of the Book of Jubilees was found written in the book-hand normally reserved for biblical MSS. Moreover some of the Qumran

LXX
Greek

15a Con- sider to the that book sale who liter Alex Ma to Let ful was the the seen com- vanc bo was Mo the its Pal or Gre b The said took the as ev Hel su Je Sc the pr bo Be fer per d's bo the By we not Je Ch any Th sa the ma th co for Ba no ch S W c ha ne the fr if

15a Community books seem to have been treated with a consideration at least equal to or even exceeding that accorded to the canonical books. But is it antecedently likely that Alexandria would have consciously recognized books which were not regarded as sacred in Jerusalem? Would Jews of the Dispersion have looked anywhere but to Jerusalem for guidance as to their canonical literature? Most certainly no one would have turned to Alexandria for guidance in preference to Jerusalem. Moreover it was because of the need to give authority to the LXX that the legend of its origin recorded in the Letter of Aristeas (§ 26b) was concocted. There a fanciful tale is related about how authority for the translation was received from Jerusalem. The point of the story is the necessity for asserting that the translation did have the approval of the Jewish authorities in Palestine. It seems logical therefore to conclude that there was no conscious difference between the two centres. Given the vague views on canonicity at the time a definite list of books was not to be expected, but we may be sure there was no obvious divergence in this matter of the Canon. Moreover, if there had been such a thing, it is improbable that the first Christians would have adopted the LXX and its extra books in conscious opposition to the Jews of Palestine. The first Christians, after all, were of Heb. or Aram. speech, though very soon outnumbered by Greek-speaking converts.

b The Christian Canon of the OT—It has often been said that the first Christians being largely Gr.-speaking took over the LXX Bible and that this Bible included the extra books. In this way the books came to be accepted as inspired by the Christian Church. We have seen however that many of these books were originally written in Heb. or Aram. and that there is no real evidence of any such distinction between Canons before the Fall of Jerusalem. The first Christians would have used the Scriptures which lay to hand. In the days before A.D. 70 there must have been some fluidity as to which books precisely were regarded as canonical. For most of the books there would of course have been no doubt at all. But some would have been marginal, though such differences of opinion as occurred would have been perhaps personal rather than territorial. Then came the great disaster of A.D. 70, followed by the bitter controversies between Christians and Jews leading to the rejection by the Jews of certain books as well as of the LXX itself. By this time of course the great majority of Christians were Gr.-speaking and their Bible was the LXX. It was not to be expected that any decisions taken now by the Jews and taken moreover (as it would appear to the Christians) out of hostility against them, would have any influence over their recognition of particular books. That is to say—the Christians continued to have the same rather vague attitude to the canon of the OT as the Jews had had before A.D. 70. They agreed about most of the books to be included but were uncertain about the precise limits of the Canon. Our earliest MSS of the complete OT (LXX) are of the 4th cent. A.D. and therefore an uncertain guide as to the Canon of the 1st cent. But negatively they reveal an interesting fact. There is no uniformity in the MSS as to the d.c. books to be included. Thus LXX (S) has Tb, Jdt, 1 Mc, 4 Mc, Wis, Sir, LXX (B) has not got Mc. LXX (A) has 1–4 Mc, Wis, Sir, Tb and Jdt. One 3rd cent. papyrus fragment c has Wis and Sir (no Gr. MS has 4 Esd.) It should be noticed that the d.c. books are distributed throughout the OT and not gathered into one place. We may conclude from this that they were placed on an equal footing, even if some books also seem to have been thought inspired

and canonical which were afterwards rejected. If this was the case in the 4th cent., we are fairly safe in assuming that the position was no less vague in the first. We must be clear on this point. The first Christians did not accept their Canon from the Jewish authorities of Jamnia in A.D. 90. They had already received—before A.D. 70—the books which were later to be listed as canonical. We can get some idea of the books they recognized by tracing quotations and references to particular books. In the NT itself there are no explicit references to the d.c. books but there are traces. Thus Mt 6:14 = Sir 28:2; Mt 27:39–40, = Wis 2:12–15; Rm 1:20ff = Wis 13–14; Heb 11:35–39 = 2 Mc 6:18–7 = 42; Jas 1:19 = Sir 5:11–13; 1 Pt 1:6 = Wis 3:3ff. When we come to the Apostolic Fathers and early Church writers there is no difficulty in finding quotations from the d.c. books and moreover quotations made in very much the same way as those from the p.c. books. 'Thus Clement of Rome places the story of Judith side by side with that of Esther; the Wisdom of Sirach is cited by Barnabas and the Didache and Tobit by Polycarp', Swete, op. cit., 224.

The earliest lists and Jewish influence—In his 16a *Dialogue with Trypho* 32, Justin Martyr says that he will use only those books 'which are esteemed holy and prophetic, among you (i.e. among the Jews). Justin's own views on the d.c. books are clear. He accepts them, but already the Jewish decision on the Canon is having its influence. It is when we come to the first lists given by Christians that we notice a distinct move in the direction of the Jewish Canon. Thus, Melito of Sardis (A.D. 175) writes to Onesimus 'when therefore I went to the East and came to the place where these things were proclaimed and done, I accurately ascertained which are the books of the OT and I sent you the list as given below' Then follows his list, which does not include Est and the d.c. books. (Eus. HE, IV, 26). The omission of Est may reflect Jewish doubts on its canonicity but the omission of the d.c. books shows that Melito is giving the Jewish Canon. He may have done this to provide Onesimus with a list of the books useful in controversy with the Jews; or he may have accepted the shorter Canon. The evidence for a conclusion is lacking. As against this, the Muratorian Canon from Ch 29, about the same time includes the book of Wisdom.

Origen of Alexandria (d. A.D. 254) likewise gives a b list of the OT Canon, according to the Jewish reckoning, but in this case he explicitly states that he is giving the Jewish Canon, or as he says 'according to the Hebrews', Eus. HE, VI, 25. This would be important in controversy with the Jews. But his own views were different. In his *Letter to Africanus* (PG. XI, 47ff), who rejected the story of Susanna because it was not included in the Daniel received by the Jews, Origen says that this and Bel and the Dragon and the d.c. parts of Esther should be accepted on the grounds that the Gr. Bible had been accepted by the Church. This Letter of Origen to Africanus is basic evidence of the attitude towards the d.c. books in the 3rd cent. It is nevertheless a matter for comment that there is no early list of the Christian Canon and one is drawn to the conclusion that no early complete list was possible. The final word had not yet been said as regards a few of the books. K. Aland says 'For the primitive Church there was no hard and fast Canon of the OT' (p. 3). but this needs qualification. There was indeed a contrast between the cut and dried Jewish Canon and the comparatively nebulous Christian Canon on which there had been no authoritative decision. On the other hand there was agreement on 90% of the Canon and the number of books on which there was any discussion was very small

16b indeed. It would hardly be surprising if some Christian writers came under Jewish influence. It is worthy of notice that the Syriac translation of the OT made about A.D. 200 omits the d.c. books. On the other hand, they were inserted later. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that proximity to Palestine was not without its influence in this case. From what has been said it will be seen that there is a discrepancy in some writers between their acceptance of the d.c. books individually because the Church receives them, and their reluctance to draw up a list of the Christian canon: indeed it seems that they are over-influenced by the Jewish Canon. But in the long run, the practice of the Church prevailed.

From the beginning of the fourth century—It has been said above that Origen in his controversy with Jews used only the Hebrew Bible because this alone was recognized as canonical by his opponents. This meant in practice that these books were used to prove doctrine while the d.c. books were only to be used in Christian circles, or for the instruction of catechumens. It is easy to see how at a later date the idea could arise that there was a difference of authority in the books themselves. Thus Athanasius in his *Festal Letter* 39 (A.D. 367) PL 26, 1435ff calls the d.c. books non-canonical and to be read only to catechumens. But he puts Est among these, and also *Pastor* and the *Didache* while Bar is placed among the canonical. Besides the exigencies of controversy with the Jews as a possible cause of confusion, there was also the proliferation of apocryphal literature. Many of these works bore names similar to canonical books, and in fact were given such names in order to promote their acceptance, cf § 88c. Sometimes they were quoted by the Fathers as Scripture, but at no time were they accepted by the Church or read at public services. Their very multitude, however, made some Fathers over-cautious and inclined to be stricter than the situation warranted. This may have been a contributory reason for the too-ready acceptance by certain Fathers of the shorter Jewish canon. A number of Eastern Fathers besides Athanasius followed him in rejecting the d.c. books and classing them as non-canonical, e.g. Cyril Jer, Epiphanius, and Greg Naz; while Euseb classed them as disputed. Nevertheless, as with the earlier Fathers, many of these frequently quote the d.c. books as if on the same level as the Heb. Canon. The important thing to notice is that the Fathers with the exception of Jerome never class the d.c. books with the apocryphal or spurious books of heretical origin (the third group of Athanasius).

d In the West, both Rufinus and Jerome have a divided witness on this point. When they were in Rome, neither had any difficulty in accepting the d.c. as received by the Latin Church. It was when they went East that they came under the influence of the Jews, and rejected the d.c. books. Rufinus called them 'ecclesiastical' to be read with profit but not to prove doctrine. Jerome, more forthright than Rufinus, says that the d.c. books are apocryphal, thus using this word of these books for the first time. In his *Prologus Galeatus* he likewise says of them 'non sunt in canone', PL 28, 600–603. By using the term 'apocryphal' of these books, Jer is the first writer it seems, in the Western Church, to deny (implicitly) their inspiration, c. A.D. 390. He explicitly denies the canonical character of any book not found in the Heb. Bible. Nevertheless, as in the case of many other Fathers, even when he has declared himself in favour of the shorter canon, he goes on to refer to and use the d.c. books as if they were canonical. Moreover, when he is translating the OT he is well aware that his view is at variance with the prevailing view at least in the West. 'There is no book

or fragment of the deuteroconon,' says Cornely, 'which he does not use with reverence, and as a divine authority' (CSS, 1, *Introd. Gen.* 1885, p. 107). It was Augustine of Hippo who became the defender of the d.c. books against Jer, and very probably he was instrumental in having the question of the Canon discussed and pronounced upon at the African Councils. All this was not without effect on Jer. He tells us that he translated the d.c. books into Latin as a concession to the authority of the bishops (*Praef. in lib. Tob.*, PL 29, 24–25). Then in A.D. 402 he attempts to exculpate himself to Rufinus and says he did not really deny the inspiration of the d.c. books but was only giving the opinion of the Jews (*Apol. contra Ruf.* 11, 33. PL 23, 476).

St Augustine and the African Councils—Aug e accepts the longer canon on the authority of the Church (*De Doct. Christ.* 8; PL 34, 41), and defends individual books on the grounds that they are read in Church. Thus, Wis was found worthy of being read from the lector's pulpit in the Church of Christ (*Lib. de Praedest. Sanctorum*, c. 14). At the Council of Hippo, A.D. 393 a list was drawn up giving the longer canon, and this was repeated, and confirmed at the 3rd and 4th Councils of Carthage, A.D. 397 and 418. At the end of the decree there is a footnote: 'Let this also be made known to our brother and fellow priest, the holy Boniface, bishop of Rome, or to other priests of those parts, for the confirmation of this canon; for we have learned from the Fathers that we should read these in Church' (EnchB 16–20). In A.D. 405 Exsuperius, bishop of Toulouse, wrote to the Pope, Innocent I, asking him for a ruling on this question, perhaps worried by Jerome's statements. The Pope replied in his letter *Consulenti Tibi* (PL 20, 501) repeating the list drawn up by the Councils. These were the first official professions of belief concerning the Canon, although not involving the highest authority speaking *ex cathedra*. But they were enough to produce a virtual unanimity of view in the W during the 5th cent., though in the E, and in particular in Syria, general agreement was not reached until the 7th cent., when the E accepted the longer canon. Subsequent texts of the Latin Bible, of course, always included the longer Canon, until the period of the Reformation was reached. However, some editions included 3 and 4 Esd and the Prayer of Manasseh. When the Clementine Vulgate was printed after the Council of Trent, these books too, were printed, though at the end, apart from the Canon 'lest they altogether perish'—as the note adds.

Later History—After St Augustine, opinions again 17a became divided. Even Pope Gregory the Great spoke of 1Mc as being amongst 'those books which, though not canonical were produced for the edification of the Church'. (*Lib. Mor.* 19, 21; PL 76, 119). Evidently the great prestige of Jer was not without its effect on posterity. Cardinal Cajetan, nearly a thousand years later, endorsed once more the view of Jer in calling these books apocryphal, i.e. not inspired, but added that they might be used for edification and even be called canonical, thus admitting that inspiration and canonicity are separable, (Cajetan, *Comm. Esther*, quoted in Cornely, *Introduction*... 1, 135). These views were expressed after the statement of the Council of Florence on the Canon of Scripture in the Decree *pro Jacobitis*, A.D. 1441 (Dz 1335), repeating exactly the list of the earlier Councils. When the Reformation came therefore, the adoption of the shorter Canon by the Reformers was not a breaking away from an unanimous position; still less, of course, a dissenting from the Council of Trent, which was itself, one should rather say, induced to make a pronouncement because of the views of

17a the Reformers. Nevertheless, speaking generally, one can say that the books finally accepted by the Catholic church were those which were quoted regularly by the Church Fathers and Writers as Scripture, and read as such in Church, and which appear to have been continuously copied into the MSS of the Greek Bible, and thence into the Latin Bible. Some books occasionally found in MSS of the LXX were eventually excluded in the W, e.g. 3 Esd, the Prayer of Manasseh, 3 and 4 Mc, Ps 151 and the Psalms of Solomon. External reasons may be found in the fact that these books are seldom, if ever, quoted by the Fathers and Church writers, or that they are a duplication of existing books (e.g. 3 Esd) or that their contents were considered to be unworthy, or because they were of too late origin (e.g. 4 Esd). But in the last resort one can only see the Spirit of God working through his Church.

b When the Reformers broke away from Rome they had to settle this question of the OT Canon. A number of considerations had to be borne in mind. There was, for example, the awkward fact that one of the d.c. books, 2 Mc, spoke of the intercession of the saints (15:14), and of prayers for the dead and so by implication, purgatory (12:43-45). Furthermore, since the books were not in the Heb. text, and the Reformers laid such emphasis on having Bibles from the originals, it was not surprising that they rejected these books, or at least placed them on a lower level. For there was a difference of view here. Whereas Luther and the Church of England regarded them as for edification, and on a lower level than the Heb. Canon, Calvin on the other hand and Calvinists generally, thought them of no account and not to be read in Church at all. The respective positions may be seen in the Thirty-nine Articles on the one hand (1559) and the Westminster Confession (1647), on the other. The Reformers, having rejected the d.c. books, gave them the title of 'apocrypha'—a name which Jer had given them for the first time, and indeed alone among all Church writers of the early centuries. It should be noted that the Reformers included under this heading the extra books sometimes printed in Latin Bibles—namely, 3 and 4 Esd (which Protestants call 1 and 2 Esd) and the Prayer of Manasseh. Hence, the terms 'deutero-

canonical books' and 'apocrypha' are not synonymous. 17b Church of England Bibles continued to include the d.c. books amongst the 'Apocrypha' (as they were, and are, called), though at the back of the OT. The Archbishop of Canterbury even imposed a year's imprisonment for publishing Bibles without the 'Apocrypha'. This was in 1615. Nevertheless they were omitted more and more in subsequent editions of the Bible. In the early 19th cent. the Edinburgh Bible Society denounced the 'Apocrypha' as superstitious and absurd, and within a few years all the Bible Societies had decided not to publish them at all. It may be said, however, that among Protestants generally today the 'Apocrypha' are coming back into greater use.

c The Council of Trent in 1546 declared that it accepted all the books of OT and NT with equal feelings of piety and reverence. There follows the longer Canon, as originally enumerated by the Councils of Africa Dz 1501-1504 (EnchB 57-60). From the time of Trent, Catholics have regarded the d.c. as on the same level as the p.c. and equal in the degree of their inspiration. The declaration of Trent was reaffirmed at the First Vatican Council, (Dz 3006, 3029; EnchB 77).

The Orthodox Church throughout most of its history has kept the longer Canon, though not precisely the number held as canonical by Rome. But at the time of the Reformation, Cyril Lukaris, Patriarch of Constantinople, began a struggle against what he considered increasing Papal influence, and for this purpose inclined towards the Protestants. His Confession, published at Geneva in 1629, and distinctly Protestant in tone, was rejected by the other Orthodox. He published a Gr. Bible of an openly Protestant type, printed at Geneva, in which the d.c. were omitted. However, his attempted reforms gained little support, and the Sultan had him murdered eventually at the instigation of his enemies. In the years following his death, the Orthodox Church held a series of Synods, in which they affirmed the ancient Orthodox Faith in the most uncompromising manner, anathematized Cyril's Confession and rejected his Bible. Since that time, opinion in the Orthodox Church has fluctuated between the shorter and the longer Canon, but predominating in favour of the longer.

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