

they even differ as far as possible from the general conception of Pliny. One thing is a fact, that Pliny the Younger did not mean any other stated day than the one which was observed among the Christians; and therefore, in order to throw light on what Pliny says, we must look elsewhere to see what stated day they kept at that time.

“The stated day of the Jews was the Sabbath. As the Christians originate from the Jews and are their rightful successors, it is not probable that they at once forsook the laws of their fathers; but there is more reason to believe that the Christians followed the Jews in this respect—a fact which Origen in his second book against Celsus by no means conceals. I therefore judge that I shall do nothing inadmissible by asserting that the Jewish believers who confessed Christ had, up to the time of Trajan, not rejected the whole observance of the Jewish law, but had retained the observance of the Sabbath, and then added to this the Sunday festival, by the liberty accorded them. As nearly all the churches which traced their origin from the Jews had thus far kept the Sabbath holy, we can certainly conclude that the churches in Pontus and Bithynia had also retained this custom up to that time, as they consisted almost wholly of Jewish Christians. This I conclude from 1 Peter 1:1, which epistle he wrote to the strangers scattered among the Gentiles throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. The apostles had divided among themselves the care for the spread of the gospel in such a manner that Peter proclaimed the grace of God to the Jews, and Paul and his companions, to the Gentiles. Gal. 2:8,9. From the fact that Peter wrote to the above-mentioned churches, I judge that they must have been founded by him and were chiefly composed of Jews; for the scattered strangers throughout the Gentile countries refer only to believing Jews, although I do not deny that, later, Gentiles joined these churches.”<sup>33</sup>

This testimony of Pliny was written a few years subsequent to the time of the apostles. It relates to a church which probably had been founded by the apostle Peter.<sup>34</sup> It is certainly far more probable that this church, only forty years after the death of Peter, was keeping the fourth commandment than that it was observing a day never enjoined by divine authority. It must be conceded that this testimony from Pliny proves nothing in support of Sunday observance; for it does not designate what day of the week was thus observed.

## Ignatius Misquoted

The epistles of Ignatius, so often quoted in behalf of first-day observance, next claim our attention. Concerning Ignatius and his epistles Neander writes:

“Ignatius, bishop of the church at Antioch, is said, in the reign of Trajan, to have been conveyed as a prisoner to Rome, where he was expecting to be thrown to the wild beasts. On the way, he is said to have written seven epistles.”<sup>35</sup>

Eusebius and Jerome enumerate seven Ignatian epistles, but in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries this number was swelled to fifteen, among them two letters to the apostle John and one to the Virgin Mary. Although these epistles “swarm with offences against history and chronology,” yet the Catholics at first accepted them all as genuine. Calvin condemned the whole lot as “abominable trash”<sup>36</sup>

The later Catholics surrendered at least eight as utterly untenable. But of the remaining seven, a shorter Greek recension was discovered in a Latin version by Archbishop Usher, 1644, and in Greek by Isaak Vossius, from a Medicean Codex in 1646. Henceforth the longer recension, which

had thus far been about the only one known, was generally set aside even by Catholic scholars, as interpolated. But when in 1839 and 1843 a Syriac version was found, containing only the epistles to Polycarp, to the Ephesians, and to the Romans, and even these in a much reduced form, a number of scholars insisted that, if any, they only were genuine.

As to the character of their contents, the Magdeburg centuriators protested that “there were such terrible things intermingled with the text as to horrify the reader.”<sup>37</sup> Mosheim remarks as follows:

“A regard for truth requires it to be acknowledged that so considerable a degree of obscurity hangs over the question respecting the authenticity of not only a part, but the whole, of the epistles ascribed to Ignatius, as to render it altogether a case of much intricacy and doubt.”<sup>38</sup>

Neander says of the shorter edition:

“Even the briefer revision, which is the one most entitled to confidence, has been very much interpolated.”<sup>39</sup>

Schaff makes the following explicit statement concerning the contents and genuineness of the Ignatian epistles:

“In the ‘catholic church’—an expression introduced by him—that is, the Episcopal orthodox organization of his day, the author sees, as it were, the continuation of the mystery of the incarnation, on the reality of which he laid great emphasis against the Docetists; and in every bishop, a visible representative of Christ, and a personal center of ecclesiastical unity, which he presses home upon his readers with the greatest solicitude and almost passionate zeal.” “. Here lies the chief importance of these epistles; and the cause of their high repute with catholics and prelatists, and their unpopularity with anti-episcopalians, and modern critics of the more radical school...”

“It is remarkable that the idea of the Episcopal hierarchy...should be first clearly and boldly brought out, not by the contemporary Roman bishop Clement, but by a bishop of the Eastern Church; though it was transplanted by him to the soil of Rome. And there sealed with his martyr blood. Equally noticeable is the circumstance that these oldest, documents of the hierarchy soon became so interpolated, curtailed, and mutilated by pious fraud that it is today almost impossible to discover with certainty the genuine Ignatius of history under the hyper- and pseudo- Ignatius of tradition.”<sup>40</sup>

Doubtful as the seven Ignatian epistles, even in their shorter version, may seem, for they stand side by side on the same manuscripts with decidedly spurious epistles, yet as one of them is often adduced in favor of Sunday, we will consider it. The passage often used occurs in the epistle to the Magnesians, chapters 8 and 9: To guard against the charge of a wrong rendering, we quote the text as it is given in the noted Bampton lectures by J.A. Hessey:

“Be not deceived with heterodox opinions, nor old, unprofitable fables. For if we still live according to Judaism, we confess that we have not received grace. For even the most holy prophets lived according to Jesus Christ...”

If they then who were concerned in old things, arrived at a newness of hope, no longer observing the Sabbath, but living according to the Lord’s life, by which our life sprang up by him and by his death,...how can we live with out him, whose disciples even the prophets

were, and in spirit waited for him as their teacher? Wherefore, he whom they justly waited for, when he came, raised them up from the dead.”<sup>41</sup>

Now as to the originals, on which the above rendering is based, we would say that Usher, the very one who found the shorter version, using the Latin Codexes *Montacutianus* and *Caiensis*, renders this: “*non amplius Sabbatum colentes, sed juxta Domincam vitam agentes*”<sup>42</sup>

Voss, the discoverer of the Greek version in the Codex Mediceus, gives the Greek—...*Kuriakos zoe* ...<sup>43</sup> the text as it stands in the Greek and Latin Codexes and the above English translation is in perfect harmony with its context and with similar contrasts made in later writings. No mention whatever is made here of Sunday, nor is it called here the Lord’s day. Should on this account any one question even the originals of this shorter version, then let him be consistent enough to drop the whole passage and not to bring it forward as any kind of proof. As the attempt to smuggle into this passage the term “Lord’s day” is but a link in a whole chain of similar attempts, we will consider them as a whole in the next chapter.

## The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles

In our investigation thus far we have considered an anonymous epistle, falsely ascribed to the apostle Barnabas, and have set forth its spurious character; then fifteen Ignatian epistles claimed our attention, which none less than Calvin, in *Inst.*, book I, chap. 13, sec. 29, terms “abominable trash;” we fitly close this dark age with another anonymous document bearing the most high-sounding title, even a twofold one: “Teaching of the Twelve Apostles; the Teaching of the Lord by the Twelve Apostles to the Gentiles.” The document names no author, nor gives the place or the date of its composition, nor are there any hints in its contents whereby they might be inferred with the least certainty. Thus every period between the first and fifth centuries has been guessed, and almost every country between Egypt and Rome by way of land.

This document was found in 1873, in a monastery in Constantinople, bound together in one volume with the epistle of Barnabas, two Clementine epistles, the spurious epistle of Mary of Cassoboli to Ignatius, and twelve pseudo-Ignatian epistles, all written by the same copyist, who signs himself “Leon, notary and sinner,” June 11, 1056. If its character is to be decided by the company it keeps, it is decidedly bad.

Eusebius is the first who mentions among the “spurious” books the “so-called Teachings of the Apostles,” Athanasius classifies “Teaching so called of the Apostles” with the apocryphal books, like Sirach, Tobias, etc. In the apostolically Constitutions of pseudo-Clement of Rome, compiled in the first half of the fourth century, and condemned by the Trullan council for its heretical interpolations, we find it somewhat enlarged and changed as “book seven.” As to the merit of its contents we let one of its ablest admirers, Schaff, testify:

“The truths it contains and the duties it enjoins are independently known to us from the Scriptures” “It is not free from superstitious notions and mechanical practises which are foreign to apostolic wisdom and freedom.”<sup>44</sup>

An investigation of its contents more than substantiates the testimony of Schaff. Thus we read in chapter 4: If thou hast, thou shalt give with thy hands a ransom for thy sins,—Catholic meritorious giving with atoning efficacy. In chapter 6: If indeed thou art able to bear the whole yoke of the Lord, thou shalt be perfect; but if thou art not able do what thou canst,—a strange standard of apostolic teaching. In chapter 7: If thou canst find no living water, pour thrice upon the head—the