

AN  
ESSAY AND INQUIRY

BY  
SELIM 'ABD-UL-AHAD  
(B.A., *Beyrout*)

AND  
W. H. T. GAIRDNER  
(B.A., *Oxon*)

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# CONTENTS

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CHAPTER	PAGE
INTRODUCTION: THE GOSPEL OF BARNABAS	1
I. THE MEANING OF THE WORD GOSPEL ...	3
II. EXTERNAL EVIDENCE FOR THE DATE AND AUTHORSHIP OF THE GOSPEL OF BAR- NABAS ... ..	9
III. INTERNAL EVIDENCE FOR THE DATE AND AUTHORSHIP OF THE GOSPEL OF BAR- NABAS ... ..	18
<i>Section</i> I. THE GOSPEL OF BARNABAS, A PRODUCT OF MEDIAEVAL ITALY ... ..	18
<i>Do.</i> II. BARNABAS' IGNORANCE OF PALESTINIAN GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY ... ..	25
<i>Do.</i> III. OTHER ABSURDITIES IN BAR- NABAS ... ..	29
<i>Do.</i> IV. BARNABAS OR THE QUR'AN, WHICH? ... ..	33
IV. CONCLUSION, SUMMING UP THE CASE ...	39



# THE GOSPEL OF BARNABAS

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## INTRODUCTION

The publication of a scholarly edition of the Italian Gospel of Barnabas, with an English Translation, Introduction and Notes, has given a fresh impetus to the interest felt in this work in the East.

The name (though not the contents) of this strange book had long been known in India, and was not unknown in Egypt, and, though it was but a name, it has been freely cited in these countries by interested parties, who showed their slender respect for truth by citing a book they had never seen or read, and almost certainly never would have heard of but for a chance mention of it in Sale's Introduction to the Qur'án ("The Preliminary Discourse"). Not only so, but it has been triumphantly cited by opponents of the Christian religion, as the book which most of all confuted the New Testament and demonstrated all that our Moslem friends have alleged against the Christian Book and Christianity generally. Such men have, therefore, been guilty of using as one of their most valued weapons a book about which they knew nothing but the name!

Now, however, an easily accessible edition has been given to the world, and there are many signs that the interest in this book is to be quickened, especially in the Moslem East. Translations are appearing both in

India and Egypt, and the wildest talk is being indulged in as to the historical value of the book. It is very sad that in religious controversy, where the desire for truth should reign supreme, men will commit themselves to the most reckless assertions, suppression of facts, and downright falsehood, as has been well seen in the matter that now engages our attention.

Truth, however, will out. We are, therefore, honestly glad that translations of this romance (for this "Gospel" is simply a romance) are appearing, as there is now some chance of our hearing the last of "The Gospel of Barnabas" in religious controversy. We believe that when honest men throughout the East know the contents of the book, they will assign its true historical value—which is exactly *nil*.

The following chapters are intended to supply the reader with the materials for forming his judgment in this matter. We shall give a history of the only extant manuscript, an Italian one, and discuss the external evidence which exists for determining its date and authorship. Then we shall examine its contents and see what light internal evidence throws on the same subject.

But first of all we must get clear about the name "Gospel", for so often in religious controversy people contend vigorously for a long period of time meaning quite different things by the same name. It is quite essential to define one's terms in all serious work for truth. And as no term has been more foolishly used by friend and foe alike than the term "Gospel", we must at the very outset of our study come to a perfect understanding as to what it really means and does not mean.

## CHAPTER I

### THE MEANING OF THE WORD "GOSPEL"

1. "Gospel" etymologically means "good news", and the word is applied in the Christian Book to the good news which Jesus brought to a sinful world, whether by what He *said*, or even more by what He *did* for men. This is what Jesus and His apostles originally meant by "Gospel" or (in Greek) *evangelion* e.g., Mark i. 15, "Repent ye and believe the Gospel", where the meaning is not "believe the Book", as no book was yet in existence; but "believe My glad tidings".

2. But technically the word has been applied to writings in which this "good news" or "gospel" has been preserved and handed down. On the one hand, some understand by it, in this sense, the whole Christian Book, often called the New Testament, and this is the sense in which it is clearly used in the Qur'án. There is no objection to this, if we understand what we mean when we thus use it.

3. On the other hand, the technical use of the Church was to apply the word specially to the fourfold record, to distinguish the biography of Christ on earth from the rest of the Sacred Book. It is not, therefore, correct to apply it to each component of the fourfold record, for the real meaning of the expression "Gospel of St. Matthew", for example,



is "the Good News (of Jesus Christ) according to St. Matthew" as in the original Greek. In other words, it would be a gross mistake to say that each of the four Evangelists wrote a distinct "Gospel"; the truth is that each one of them wrote down the life and message of Christ according as he was inspired. The titles of these several writings, however, are not inspired, any more than the titles of the Sûras of the Qur'án are inspired.

Thus we see that the word "Gospel" is used in three distinct senses, *viz.*,

1. "Good News", originally;
2. The whole Christian Book, technically and generally;
3. The fourfold biography of Jesus Christ, technically and particularly.

And when Moslems and Christians talk together they usually mean the *whole* Christian Book, however composed. But if either party wishes to use the part for the whole, and apply the word to the fourfold record of Christ, or even a component part of that, he should do so in the full consciousness *that he is not saying a word against the full unity of the Christian Book.*

Now we come to the question, What relation does this fourfold record stand to other accounts of the life of Christ extant or non-extant?

These may be divided into two classes:

- (a) such as appeared in the apostolic age,
- (b) such as appeared after that age.

(a) In this case, which alone can have a certain value for us, we know that they once existed, and that they were valuable and acceptable in their time, though we need not say they were inspired,

St. Luke says in his preface:—"Many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, even as [the Apostles] delivered them unto us" . . . . Doubtless St. Luke used these memoirs freely and has thus given us the benefit of them. But after performing their temporary function they were disused, and as not one of them is extant, neither Moslem nor Christian need discuss them further.

(b) As regards this case many so-called "Gospels" sprang up in the second century, and to gain authority they were ascribed by their authors to Apostles. Some of these have disappeared, others are extant in fragments. These works were by untruthful, unscrupulous men, who employed the great names of the Apostles to palm off on the Church unapostolic teachings and theories about Christ. Of such is the "Gospel" ascribed to "Peter", fragments of which remain. Of such is the precious document which the heretic Basilides claimed to use. He called it a "sacred gospel", handed down to him from Peter through a man named Glaucus. A convenient explanation, but not thus works the Spirit of God. Moslems, with their excellent sense of the value of universality and publicity in the matter of tradition, will agree with Christians in not merely suspending judgment about such a book as that, but in declaring categorically that it must have been a dishonest and dishonourable hoax. The book itself fortunately has totally disappeared, if it ever existed, which, as nobody ever even set eyes on it, is dubious.

So much for the "Gospels" of the second century. And, bearing on the present subject, we say in passing

that it is most remarkable that among the names even of these second century "Gospel" forgeries *the name of Barnabas never occurs!* So that not only can no "Gospel of Barnabas" be reckoned as apostolic, but it cannot even have the doubtful honour of being an early forgery.<sup>1</sup>

What then is the touchstone that distinguished the true from the false in these works? Simply that those whose origin was certainly apostolic survived by universal consent and approval, and the remainder were allowed to drop out and disappear. Our four survived simply because they were fit to survive; they were apostolic, they were true accounts of the genuine Christ, they were, in short, inspired.

Is such a sifting process inconsistent with inspiration? Not in the least: even the Qur'án had to undergo this process; verses were rejected as non-genuine or insufficiently attested, and others accepted. Similarly, we take our stand on this ground, that God inspired the acceptance of the Books which were attested, and which His Providence and Spirit caused to be written. The result is the present Christian Book ("Gospel" or "New Testament" including the fourfold record).

It results from this then that no book other than these four has a chance of being accepted now. The work of sifting and attesting is over and done. And that work can never be done a second time; for the decision has been made by those qualified to make it and at the time when it was possible to make it. And, therefore, that decision goes further back still: it goes back to God. And just as no new Súra of

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<sup>1</sup> Whether any "Gospel of Barnabas" ever existed *after* the second century is more than doubtful. See next chapter.

the Qur'án could possibly be admitted to-day, so no new Book could possibly be admitted into the Gospel or the New Testament.

This completely rules out any "Gospel of Barnabas", or of anybody else. At most, such a work, if dug up somewhere, could rank as an interesting volume of traditions, the value of which could never be precisely determined, and which would have at any rate to be appraised by applying them to the teachings of the fourfold record. But when we have a work such as that of Barnabas before us, which not only bears in itself the marks of a malignant forgery, but also is a work about the very name of which history for some five centuries after Barnabas is utterly silent—then there ought to be no question at all. The man with the least vestige of the spirit of science or truth will place it on his shelf of romances, and the fact that it is called the "Gospel of Barnabas" will weigh no more than if we were to-day to write and publish "The Autobiography of Joseph". And we declare to our readers our belief, nay our certainty, that this is the true state of the case. This title, "Gospel of Barnabas", is the mere title of a late romance, as we shall prove. We are just as able and competent to bring out another "Gospel of Barnabas" to-morrow, with the same name and different contents. Who could prevent us? No one. But nobody would be so unwise as to believe that Barnabas had anything to do with it.

From these remarks it will be seen how foolish and wicked is the insinuation of some that the mere fact that there was originally a selecting process reduces all "Gospels" to the same value from the point of view of trustworthiness and authenticity. Do such men say

that the mere fact of the scrutiny of Khalid ibn Thábit renders the authenticity of the whole Qur'án of to-day doubtful? Or are the Traditions of Bukhári on the same level as the imaginations of mediæval Moslem romances about the Prophet? Is the God-guided test of apostolicity nothing, and are the books that passed it to be classed as ranking in point of value with any romance that any rascal wrote or might have written or may write to-day, from Basilides to this hour? To shelter under reasoning like this simply shows the desire to avoid truth at any cost. We must use the brains God has endowed us with, and be careful to use them honestly lest we fall under condemnation in the day of Reckoning. No! there is all the difference in the world! And the four stand out as having PASSED GOD'S TEST, which none other has done or will even do. This is the universal teaching of history, and to this voice our Moslem brother too must bow, because he also believes in the existence of a pure Christian Book, or Injil, in A.H. 1, A.D. 623, and he is utterly unable either to point to any Book extant to-day or extant then differing from our Book and replaced by it, nor to point to any record of such a substitution having taken place. This challenge has been made, and we make it again. It will not be answered. Therefore we may conclude that the Christian Book of to-day is the Book of A.H. 1, and it is the Book which God gave us through Jesus Christ—*The Injil*.

Thus, we repeat, the "Injil of Barnabas" or anyone else is ruled out. But, nevertheless, though we are not called on to do anything further, we are willing to examine this book, and see what external and internal evidence says about it.

## CHAPTER II

### EXTERNAL EVIDENCE FOR THE DATE AND AUTHORSHIP OF THE GOSPEL OF BARNABAS

The date and authorship of every book is settled by external and internal evidence. A title, we once again point out, does not settle the question of the authorship of any book.

External evidence consists of all evidence for the existence of the book in question, gathered from sources outside itself, such as the mention of the book, or citations from it, in contemporary literature, or the literature of subsequent generations.

The external evidence for the Qur'án, for example, consists of the numerous allusions to that book, and citations from it, which are found in Arabic literature right away down to the seventh century.

Internal evidence is the evidence supplied by the contents of the book itself. These contents are sure to bear the mark of a particular age. The style and the subject-matter of the book will alike bewray it. Most probably it will itself claim to have been written at a particular time, and that claim will be sustained or rejected by its congruity with the contents and style of the book itself.

Like every other book, the "Gospel of Barnabas" must submit to this criticism of external and internal evidence. We must see (1) if there are any allusions

to such a book in the literature of the first or second or subsequent centuries, or in fact what is the earliest notice of the book; (2) if the contents of the book itself lead us to any conclusion about its date.

This is the science of criticism—a science which it may be said still hardly exists in the East. Nevertheless it must be acquired, for it is the absence of it, largely, that still makes possible the gross dishonesty of citing this “Gospel of Barnabas” as a first century work.

The present chapter discusses the available external evidence; the remaining chapters analyse the internal evidence—the contents of the “Gospel” itself.

(a) Only one manuscript of this “Gospel” is now in existence. It is in the Italian language.

It was acquired by a scholar named Cramer in Amsterdam in the year 1709 A.D. After changing hands more than once, it found its way to the Imperial Library at Vienna where it is now kept.

The year 1709 A.D. is thus the earliest actual mention of this manuscript; but we can push its history further back by inference.

For the age of volumes may be judged by their handwriting (or print), binding, and (still more) quality of paper. In the case of this Italian manuscript the experts tell us that all the evidence of script, binding, and the watermark of the paper point to the fact that this manuscript was written in the sixteenth century A.D.

Of course this gives no clue whatever to the date of the original composition of the book. The printing, or writing, of a copy of the Qur’án in 1907 A.D. does not prove that the Qur’án first appeared in 1908! We

only mean to say that the present Italian manuscript fails us, as external evidence, beyond the sixteenth century.

(b) Let us turn to another line of evidence. Sale's Introduction to his Translation of the Qur'án informs us that in his time another manuscript of Barnabas existed.<sup>1</sup> But this manuscript was in Spanish, not Italian. It has disappeared at the present time, and we have therefore to rely on Sale's account of it. This, however, we may safely do, from what we know of Sale's scrupulous accuracy in literary matters.

He says that the Spanish manuscript had a title page on which it was claimed to be a translation from the Italian by a Spanish Moslem named Muṣṭafá. We may notice here that neither in the Italian nor the Spanish manuscript is there a word about an Arabic original.

In the preface of the Spanish manuscript there is a story, ostensibly by the discoverer of the manuscript from which the Spanish translation was made. In this the spokesman is an Italian monk named Fra Marino, who claims to tell us the history of his discovery of the original manuscript in the time of Pope Sixtus V (1585-9). He is represented as saying that "having accidentally met with a writing of Irenæus . . . wherein he speaks against St. Paul, alleging, for his authority, the Gospel of St. Barnabas, he became exceeding desirous to find this Gospel; and that God . . . having made him very intimate with Pope Sixtus V, one day, as they were in that Pope's library, His Holiness fell asleep, and he, . . . reaching down a book to read, the first he laid his

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<sup>1</sup> See Preliminary Discourse, Section IV.



hand on proved to be the very gospel he wanted. Overjoyed . . . he scrupled not to hide his prize, . . . and, on the Pope's awakening, took leave of him, carrying with him that celestial treasure by reading of which he became a convert to Muḥammadanism."

Such is the story found in the preface of the (last) Spanish edition.

The story is curious; but reflection elicits the following considerations:—

(1) It may be an invention of Muṣṭafá's, the Spanish Moslem translator; for we are unable to check it by referring to the supposed original, and it is most remarkable that the existing Italian manuscript says nothing about it. This casts a suspicion on the historicity of the story.

(2) The story itself contains absurd touches: the sleep of the Pope, the chance discovery, the theft, all look like the details of a romance rather than a real incident. And what nonsense is that about Irenæus speaking against St. Paul and alleging a "Gospel of Barnabas"! The orthodox Irenæus<sup>1</sup> recognized St. Paul's writings as inspired, and laid down succinctly that none but our present "four" were or ever had been given by God. How could such a one write against St. Paul, or rely on a "Gospel" by some other than Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John? This one thing is sufficient to discredit the story printed in the preface of the (lost) Spanish manuscript.

(3) If it is possible that Muṣṭafá invented this story, in the interests of Islám, it is, of course, also possible that he did not invent it, and that it is really to be

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<sup>1</sup> Voluminous writings of his are extant.

traced to this Fra Marino in 1585-9. In which case we should have little hesitation in saying that Fra Marino was the liar, not Muṣṭafá. We are, however, left with conjecture, for the scent at this point fails us: nothing is said as to the language of this supposed manuscript of the Vatican library, nor is any further description given of it.

To sum up: two lines of evidence have independently carried the book before us back to Italy and the sixteenth century. In one of the two lines of evidence occurs a story which affirms an earlier history for the book. But that story possesses such doubtful external authority, as not occurring in the Italian manuscript, and such questionable internal trustworthiness (as containing such fabulous details), that it is totally impossible to rely on it.

Indeed, on the assumption that there *was* an Italian monk of the sixteenth century called Fra Marino, we should feel strongly tempted (on his testimony) to write him down a knave, and very possibly the composer, or forger, of the "Gospel of Barnabas".

Internal evidence, however, points to a rather earlier date for the "Gospel", as we shall see; *viz.*, about 1300-1350 A.D. It is, therefore, not impossible that Fra Marino (if he existed) did find a copy of the work at Rome, and read it. If, on the strength of it, he really Islámised, we can only write him down, not knave, but fool; as our readers will agree, when we have finished studying together the contents of this "Gospel".

Before however passing to the internal evidence, we must say a word on a supposed Arabic "Gospel of Barnabas".

In the first place, we may dismiss at once all idea that the book before us has anything to do with such a book, if it ever existed; for

(a) No such thing is ever even claimed, either by the existing Italian manuscript, nor by the lost Spanish manuscript, nor by Fra Marino, if he ever existed, for the version he found, if he ever found it, in the preface he wrote, if he ever wrote it. Clearly understand, Reader, that the present work is totally silent about its source or original, beyond calling itself "The Gospel of Barnabas", which as we have said proves nothing.

(b) Moreover, though we build little on this argument, the actual style of the Italian before us does not suggest an Arabic original, or anything but an Italian original.

The Arabic marginal notes have, of course, nothing to do with the question. They are in a European hand and are full of gross blunders. They are evidently attempts of a European tyro to translate some of the phrases of the Italian into Arabic.

(c) The scholars who discovered the Spanish manuscript repeatedly challenged the Moslems of that day to produce the Arabic original, if it existed. None was produced.

In one word, the "Gospel" before us never had an Arabic original, nor claims to have had one.

In the second place, was there ever an Arabic "Gospel of Barnabas", different from the book before us?

This, of course, is strictly outside our enquiry, for we are only concerned with the book before us. The question of another book of the same name has nothing

whatever to do with the point, more especially as such a book, if it ever existed, has for centuries totally disappeared.

But still, for the sake of completeness, we will put down all there is to be said about the subject.

(a) There is a late and worthless legend that when the relics of Barnabas the Apostle were discovered in Cyprus in the fifth century A.D., there was found lying on his breast a copy of the Gospel according to Matthew, written by his (Barnabas') own hand.

We give this legend, not because it has anything to do with a "Gospel of Barnabas", but because it shows us how the legend of Barnabas as a "Gospel" writer perhaps began.

(b) The sixth section of the so-called "Decree", attributed to Pope Gelasius (492-6 A.D.), mentions an "Evangelium Barnabe" in its index of prohibited and heretical books. But there is the gravest doubt of the genuineness of this "Decree", and there are other weighty arguments to support the belief that the "Gospel of Barnabas" mentioned in the Decree had no objective existence at all.

We allude to the strange fact that no mention has ever been made to this Arabic "Gospel of Barnabas" by any Moslem writer, notwithstanding the fact that many of them reject the Christian Book, and accuse us of having corrupted the Gospel, so that this "Gospel" would have been the handiest possible weapon for them, had they known of its existence—witness the extreme eagerness with which it is quoted to-day! Of old Moslem writers, whose silence is an absolute proof of their ignorance of their book, we should first mention Ibn Hazm, who mercilessly

condemns the four Evangelists and "declares that the names of the Apostles are quite unknown". How is it that he failed to cite the book that would beyond all others have given him some specious support? Abú-Faḍl-el-Su'údi and el-Ja'fari are two other Moslem writers who deal with the four Gospels, and assume, apparently, their genuineness, but reject the Christian interpretation of them. Neither of them alludes to any Gospel called the Gospel of Barnabas. And stranger still, the Bibliography of Hadji Khalifa (*obit* 1067 A.H.) is utterly void of any such reference, whereas we might certainly have expected to find some allusion to so congenial a work. Besides, the whole huge mass of Moslem commentaries, and other works which condemn Christianity and accuse it of having corrupted the Gospel, are utterly silent on this matter and make no allusion whatever to an Arabic Gospel of Barnabas. Their silence can have only one possible explanation. *They were utterly ignorant of its existence*; and, if so, it may be roundly said that it was never extant in Moslem times.

And, in fact, not a single soul is known ever to have even set eyes on such a book, from the time of Gelasius to our own.

(c) Beyond this shadowy mention in the fifth or sixth century A.D. we have the amazing fact that neither from the first century, nor the second with its many spurious books, nor the third, nor the fourth, does there come to us a single voice so much as alluding to a book entitled "The Gospel of Barnabas".

From this we can conclude:

(a) that no Arabic "Gospel of Barnabas" ever existed;

(b) that an early pre-Islamic "Gospel of Barnabas" probably never had any existence outside the pages of the so-called "Gelasian Decree";

(c) that in any case the present Italian "Gospel of Barnabas" has nothing whatsoever to do with the matter. We cannot too many times insist to the reader, especially the innocent and inexperienced one, that identity of title goes for literally nothing. A man may write a romance entitled "Yúsuf and Zulaikhá" to-day. Does this identify his book with any of the scores of "Yúsuf and Zulaikhá's" written between now and the early centuries? Or, if the book is in the form of an autobiography, does this necessitate its being attributed to Yúsuf the son of Ya'qúb?! Yet *exactly this* in one conclusion is the one reached by those who, without thought, take any book called "The Gospel of Barnabas" as necessarily identical with one supposed to have existed in 500 A.D., and with one supposed to have been written by Barnabas in the first century.

*Final Conclusion from the external evidence.*—The book is to be traced to the Middle Ages and not beyond. The internal evidence, on which we shall now enter, will prove it actually to belong to the middle ages, and our final conclusion will be that the "Gospel of Barnabas" is a forgery of the Middle Ages;

By a man who knew Christianity well and Islám little;

Who wished to damage Christianity and exalt Islám;

Who was therefore probably a Christian convert to Islám, like the Fra Marino of the Spanish manuscript.

## CHAPTER III

### INTERNAL EVIDENCE FOR THE DATE AND AUTHORSHIP OF THE GOSPEL OF BARNABAS

We now come to the examination of the contents of the book itself, or the internal evidence. And we shall divide this part into the following sections:—

I. Proof that the writer was a European (probably an Italian) of the Middle Ages;

II. Proof that he knew nothing of Palestine, historically or geographically;

III. Proof that his statements are in themselves unworthy of credit;

IV. Proof that, though supporting Islám, he conflicts with the Qur'án.

After which we shall state our conclusion negatively and positively as to the authorship of the "Gospel of Barnabas", and then take our leave of the reader, commending our work to the God of Truth.

#### SECTION I

#### THE GOSPEL OF BARNABAS A PRODUCT OF MEDIAEVAL ITALY

##### 1 The Centenary Jubilee

In reply to a question put forth by the Samaritan woman, Christ is represented by Barnabas to have

said, "I am indeed sent to the house of Israel as a prophet of salvation; but after me shall come the Messiah, . . . . . for whom God hath made the world. And then through all the world will God be worshipped, and mercy received, *insomuch that the year of jubilee, which now cometh every hundred years, shall by the Messiah be reduced to every year in every place.*"

Barnabas thus makes the jubilee a centenary event! The Jewish jubilee, it will be remembered, was celebrated every fifty years. How are we therefore to account for such a gross mistake?

The only solution is that the reference is to the Centenary Jubilee of Boniface VIII, which was celebrated in 1300, being the very first of the series. Owing, however, to its financial success, Clement VI altered the intention of Boniface, which was avowedly to make it every hundred years, and shortened the period and celebrated the next jubilee in 1350. It is clear, therefore, that "Barnabas" falls after 1300, but before 1350, and that he refers to the jubilee of his times. In other words, he must have been a contemporary of Dante, who witnessed the celebration of the centenary jubilee when he was twenty-five, but died long before the jubilee of 1350.

## 2 Quotations from Dante

These quotations are another evidence proving a late authorship of this "Gospel". They cannot be accidental coincidences owing to their great number. Of these we may mention a verse which is clearly a quotation from Dante:—"They go and serve false and lying gods"; which has been quoted in four places (33 a, 81 b, 225 a,



*etc.*). The expression "raging hunger" (62 b) is probably another specimen of such a direct quotation.

But we find a stronger evidence in the close coincidence of the doctrines of Dante and of "Barnabas". The only hypothesis for such a phenomenon is that the latter had a wide knowledge of the works of the former, which he must have absorbed. Examples of this are not wanting. The description of the joys of paradise and the horrors of hell, and the pains which the unbelievers suffer in the latter, recall to us Dante's descriptions of the same. (Compare "Barnabas", 62 and 63 a with ll. 22 and 103, Canto III of Dante's "Inferno").

Stranger still is the coincidence between Dante's 'circles' of hell and those of "Barnabas" (146 b). "Jesus replied," says "Barnabas", "know ye that hell is one, yet hath seven centres one below another. Hence, even as sin is of seven kinds, for as seven gates of hell hath Satan generated it: so are there seven punishments therein" (146 b).

This is exactly what Dante says in the IV Canto of his "Inferno".

Again, "Barnabas" says that God having created the human senses, condemned them to an unbearable hell, snow, and ice (see Dante's "Inferno", Canto XXXIII, l. 22).

The description of the human sins and their returning at the end like a river to Satan, who is their source, is another indirect quotation from Dante's description of the rivers of hell. Similarly, the passage about the believers going to hell, not to be tortured, but to see the unbelievers in their torments, recalls to us Dante's picture of the same.

The denial of forgiveness to the sinner, who, at the very moment of repenting, contemplates new sins in his heart, is identical with the same idea expressed by Dante. (Compare chapter 36 of "Barnabas" with the Canto XXVII of the "Inferno"). Similarly, the differentiation of the degrees of glory and the absence of all feuds and jealousies in heaven are taken entirely from Dante's "Paradise". (Compare "Barnabas", 189 b with Canto III, l. 70, of the "Paradise").

But a still stronger evidence of these coincidences being direct or indirect quotations from Dante is the description of the "geography of Heaven", which agrees with that of Dante and contradicts that of the Qur'án. The latter says that the Heavens are seven in number (Súra ii, verse 29); while "Barnabas" gives the exact number as ten, the last of which is Paradise.

There are other quotations from Dante, but the number of the foregoing is quite sufficient to prove that our "Barnabas" was either a contemporary of or a successor to Dante, for how else can we account for such numerous coincidences? It would certainly be too foolish to say that they are mere random coincidences, and we believe that there is no one, be he ever so ignorant, who would suggest such an idea.

### 3 Traces of Mediæval Doctrines

Alongside with the foregoing argument there are traces of mediæval doctrines, which also help to prove a late authorship to this forgery. These traces are more or less indicative of the disputes which arose among mediæval scholars about such topics as mysticism, predestination, free will, *etc.*, *etc.* The question of free-will, it will be remembered, played a great rôle

in mediæval controversies, and "Barnabas'" views on the subject seem to be contradictory to those of the Qur'án. According to him, man is endowed with a free-will; whatever, therefore, happens to him depends on his own actions. The Qur'án, on the other hand, says, "Whoso willeth taketh the way of his Lord, but will it ye shall not, unless God will it." (Compare Barnabas 180 a with Súra lxxvi. 30).

Asceticism in "Barnabas" bears traces of mediæval times, and in no wise can it be said to breathe the first century atmosphere.

#### 4 Traces of Mediæval Society

No reader of this "Gospel of Barnabas" can fail to observe the clear traces which it exhibits of mediæval society in Europe, and especially in Italy. It is true that the general contents of the book may intentionally suggest other periods; but we may say on the whole, and that with confidence, that the book breathes a mediæval, Italian atmosphere, which is a clear proof that the writer is an Italian who lived in mediæval times. Such traces are bound to appear in spite of all precautions, and must be considered as an indisputable internal evidence of the real date and authorship of the book in question. It is just as much against internal evidence to date back our "Gospel" beyond mediæval times as to assign Milton's "Paradise Lost" to an early century. We can do nothing better than reproduce here some of the traces to which we refer.

There is the picturesque description of the summer season in the fields and valleys, much more suggestive of beautiful Italy than of Palestine in

summer, when the fields are utterly burnt up! (See 185 b).

There is also the reference to stone-quarries (116 b), which, everybody knows, are characteristic of Italy. Indeed stone-quarrying is one of the chief occupations of the Italian labourer, and Italy's fame in quarries is world-wide. But Jewish literature takes little or no account of quarrying.

The reference to (ocean) ships and sailors (109 b) does not suggest the gospel atmosphere of the first century.

Again, we find soldiers occupying their time in peace by drilling and practising military tactics (135 b). Now, mediæval Italy swarmed with professional soldiers, whose tactics must have been one of the most familiar of sights. But, in the literature of the first century, and especially the writings of the Jews, the technical details of military routine in peace time are never thought worth mentioning. Here again, therefore, the imagery suggests Italy rather than Palestine.

Among the clearest of all these traces are those of the system of feudalism, which was in full vogue in mediæval times. According to this system, land was divided among the different feudal lords, who, in their turn, sub-divided their property into minor divisions and rented them to vassals who owed them a perpetual allegiance, above all, in times of war. The writer of the "Gospel of Barnabas" represents to us Mary, Martha, and Lazarus as feudal lords in whose private hands was the proprietorship of whole villages!

Thus there is the description of the vassal who owes to his liege or *padrone* a *portion* of his crop (130 a). This is quite in accordance with the laws of feudalism, but it is foreign to the practice obtaining

in Gospel times, when the "servants" were mere labourers and had to give the whole produce up to their "Lord". In fact, this reference alone should settle all disputes as to the real date of this book. It is a true description of the vassals of mediæval epochs, not of the serfs or slaves of the first century.

Clearer still, the reference to wine-casks is more suggestive of Italy than of Oriental lands (167 b). It may, however, be argued that the reference is to "skins", which were commonly used in the East. But the slightest glance at the passage in question will reveal the truth that the reference is to casks, or barrels, from the fact of *rolling* them about to clean them. Skins are incapable of being similarly rolled about. This reference also is almost sufficient by itself to settle the question.

Another trace is that referring to mediæval court-procedure (129 b), "the arrested prisoner questioned by a magistrate, while a notary . . . jots down memoranda of the evidence".

The reference to the duel between two rival lovers smacks, one would say, of the age of chivalry (105 a). It will be remembered that chivalry was a creation of mediæval society and played its roll for a considerable period. The incident is utterly foreign to Orientals of the first century.

All these traces, and there are many more, are a clear proof of the real atmosphere in which the book was written, and a conclusive argument against a pre-mediæval date.

## SECTION II

BARNABAS' IGNORANCE OF PALESTINIAN  
GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

Absolutely damning to the theory of an apostolic or Palestinian origin to this "Gospel" is the number of gross blunders made by its author in elementary matters of Palestinian geography and history.

The real Barnabas, the man who lived in the first century A.D., knew his country and his times. And the Barnabas of this forgery claims to know both. Let the reader judge whether he does, or no.

The first thing that staggers us is to find that Barnabas imagines Nazareth, and most probably Jerusalem also, to be on a sea or lake.

Nazareth, we know, is on a hill some 2,000 feet above the Sea of Galilee, and half a day's march removed from it. The site to-day is the same as it has always been for over 2,000 years.

As for Jerusalem, all the world knows where and what is its site.

In "Barnabas" (19 b) we have these astonishing words, "Jesus went to the Sea of Galilee, and having embarked on a ship, sailed to his city of Nazareth."

This is clear enough! But in case some one should say that this is a *façon de parler*, and it is only as though some one in London should say, "I am sailing to Cairo or Allahabad," though he knows his actual voyage must come to an end at Alexandria or Bombay respectively; we reply that the defence will not hold; for after recounting the incident of the storm, the narrative proceeds (20 a):—"Having arrived at the city of

Nazareth the seamen spread through all the city all that Jesus had wrought." Here it is said, as plain as words can make it, that immediately on touching land (Nazareth), the seamen landed, and spread in that (seaport) town their news!

The next section confirms our suspicion of the confusion in the brain of "Barnabas", for he says (just before 20 b), "Jesus went *up* to Capernaum" (from Nazareth). Of course it is just the other way round: He would have *landed* at Capernaum, and *gone up* to Nazareth.

The same blunder crops out again, if confirmation is necessary. In (157 a) we are told that one Sabbath morning Jesus came to Nazareth. Then follow several chapters giving His conversation there (157 a—165 b).

Then we read:—"Jesus then embarked on a ship. . . .!" Murder will out! "Barnabas'" notion that Nazareth was on the lake crops out thus innocently, but all the more strikingly.

But more is in store. The ship leaves the port of Nazareth and sails away. Where do we find them next? At Jerusalem. In the very next section (166 b) we read, "Jesus having come to Jerusalem . . . ." No interval has elapsed, and no detail has been omitted: there can be little doubt that as the ship weighed anchor at Nazareth, so it cast the same at Jerusalem!

Next we come to some incidents which, from a historical point of view, are utterly nonsensical.

Of these, we may mention the story of Daniel, who, according to "Barnabas" (82 b), was taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar while he was yet two years old. The statement, it will be observed, is incompatible with what may be inferred from the Bible narrative, for

according to the latter, it was in the second year of his reign that Nebuchadnezzar had his famous dream which Daniel interpreted. "The king then made Daniel great, and gave him many great gifts, and made him to rule over the whole province of Babylon, and to be the chief governor over all the wise men of Babylon" (Daniel ii, 48). Now, if we suppose that Nebuchadnezzar captured Daniel in the first year of his reign (the earliest possible date which could be assigned to Daniel's captivity), and that, according to Barnabas, Daniel was then two years old, it would follow that in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, *i.e.*, in the year in which he had his dream, Daniel was three years old. In this very year, it will be remembered, he was promoted by Nebuchadnezzar to the rank of a ruler "over the whole province of Babylon". According to "Barnabas", therefore, his age would be three, and certainly not more than four years!

Josephus' statement coincides with the Bible narrative, so that those who do not have confidence in the latter must needs accept the testimony of the secular Hebrew historian. (See Book X, chapter 10, of Josephus' "History of the Jews").

Another forgery by "Barnabas" is a story mentioned in chapter xci, which briefly says that a great sedition broke out in all Judæa on account of Christ. "Some said that Jesus was God come to the world; others said, 'Nay, but He is a son of God'; and others said, 'Nay, . . . He is a prophet of God'. These disputes would have ended in a great war, for there assembled at Mizpeh three armies, each one of two hundred thousand men that bare sword. Herod spake to them, but they were not quieted. Then spake the governor and the



high-priest, saying, 'Brethren, this war is kindled by the work of Satan, for Jesus is alive, and to Him ought we to resort, and ask Him that He give testimony of Himself, and then believe in Him, according to His word.' So at this they were quieted, everyone; and . . . they all embraced one another, saying one to the other, 'Forgive me, brother'."

It is unnecessary to remark that this incident finds no place in the pages of any historian, whether Josephus, or Milman, or any other. Besides, it is absurd to believe that three armies to the number of 600,000 men could gather in the twinkle of an eye, and disperse in a still briefer time. And is the gathering of 600,000 soldiers, for the purpose of making war, an insignificant event that Josephus should fail to record it, notwithstanding that he has recorded to us many trifling details, which, in reality, are of little or no practical importance whatever? And how can we believe that Herod, the great enemy of Christ by the witness of history, would attempt to quiet a riot which arose on account of Christ? Would it not have been more natural for him to stir up a riot in order that the better he might have a pretext for condemning Him?

Besides, we know from history that the whole of the Roman legions in those parts at that time did not so much as amount to a total of 600,000 soldiers, and to say that this number was stationed in Judæa alone would imply that Rome had a regular standing army of several millions. Moreover, it is absurd to say that such a big army would disperse at a single word spoken by Pilate. Could not Pilate have said his word of peace before the three armies met for war?

But another element, and certainly an important one, which is lacking in this story, is the non-mentioning of the preliminary details which precede wars, and the recording of which is quite indispensable on such occasions. The whole story of "Barnabas" seems to be a fairy-tale, and the appearance of the three armies at Mizpeh, a sort of spontaneous generation.

But a still stranger forgery is that Herod, Pilate, and the High-Priest, especially the latter (according to "Barnabas"), bowed down their heads in reverence to Christ (98 b). The High-Priest, it will be remembered, was the chief enemy of Christ, and one of His most unscrupulous accusers, who condemned Him because He used to convict the high-priests of hypocrisy. Verily, we are ashamed of proceeding in this matter, which is so childish a forgery: may we speedily hear the last of it.

### SECTION III

#### OTHER ABSURDITIES IN BARNABAS

The most important part of our study is over, for, having proved in the last section that "Barnabas" knew nothing of Palestine, we have proved that he was not the Apostle of Jesus Christ, or indeed a Jew at all. And so the case is over.

Still, there is no harm in proving, in this section, that no sane man can accept "Barnabas", or appeal to him for any reason; and in the next, that no Moslem can appeal to him, except on penalty of citing a book which stultifies his Qur'án.

Here are some stories which recall to us the myths

and legends of old time. We are sorry we cannot reproduce these *in extenso*. Here are some of them:—

“God having created a lump of earth,” says the writer of this “Gospel”, “and having left it for twenty-five thousand years without doing aught else, Satan, who was as it were priest and head of the angels, . . . knew that the God of that lump of earth was to take from it one hundred and forty and four thousand persons signed with the sign of prophecy, and with them the Apostle of God (Muhammad), the soul of which Apostle He had created sixty thousand years before aught else” (36 b).

“Barnabas” seems to have been quite familiar with the Divine history, for he seems to have known that God created a mass of earth and left it twenty-five thousand years—neither one day more nor one day less—and that after so doing He did nothing else. We wonder, with regard to these years, whether “Barnabas” follows the Gregorian or the Hegira calendar. Neither can we divine the secret of the number 144,001 prophets (which is not a sacred one), and we believe that neither Moslems nor Christians can give the names of a fraction of them.

We should, however, be very grateful to our Moslem friends, if they would only reveal to us the secret of God’s creating Muhammad’s soul sixty thousand years before creating anything else. If they say that this was to do Muhammad honour, we would say that in the eyes of God sixty thousand years are no more than one single day. Besides, does the fact that Adam, for example, was created thousands of years before ‘Isa render the first superior to the second?

These sixty thousand years have also been mentioned

in a later passage, which says that Muḥammad's "soul was set in celestial splendour sixty thousand years before anything was made" (41 a).

But this minute chronology of "Barnabas" is not to be compared with the minuteness of his details of the events which will take place in the fifteen days previous to the day of reckoning (see chapter liii). On the first of those days, "Barnabas" says, "the sun shall run its course in heaven without light . . . . The second day the moon shall be turned into blood, and blood shall come upon the earth like dew. The third day the stars shall be seen to fight among themselves like an army of enemies . . . . The fifth day every plant and herb shall weep like blood. The sixth day the sea shall rise without leaving its place to the height of one hundred and fifty cubits . . . The seventh day it shall on the contrary sink so low as scarcely to be seen."

It must be noticed that the queer thing in this passage is not its prodigious features (for we may well believe that the last day will be far more dreadful than "Barnabas" describes), but the literal, chronological fashion in which the writer records these minute details.

Another legend-like story in "Barnabas" is that of the creation and the fall (chapters xl and xli). "Barnabas" says that God set at the gate of Paradise a horrible serpent, "which had legs like a camel," to guard the gate. To this serpent Satan came and said, "Open thy mouth and I will enter into thy belly, and so thou . . . shalt place me near to those two lumps of clay that are newly walking upon the earth." The serpent did so, and Satan induced Eve to disobey

God by eating of the forbidden "apples and corn". She ate and induced her husband to do likewise. But as Adam was eating the food, he remembered the words of God and put his hand into his throat, "whence every man has the mark (of the apple)". Thereupon, God commanded the angel Michael to cut off the legs of the serpent that it might "trail its body upon the earth".

Such is the story in brief, and some of its details are known in some countries in the East. But it may be easily seen how widely they diverge from the Bible record, and how irrational the story is. How absurd it is to represent that the serpent crawls today on its belly because the first serpent had its legs cut off in punishment! The law of heredity only covers the field of character but not that of physical accidents. In other words, if a father loses one of his arms by an accident, it does not follow that his issue will be one-armed like him.

Moreover, even if we grant that the law of heredity plays a part in the roll of accidents, we cannot escape the fact that it has failed to do so with regard to circumcision. For "Barnabas" says that Adam circumcised himself in fulfilment of an oath which he swore upon discovering that he had disobeyed God (22 b). It is noteworthy here that the first man circumcised, according to the Bible, was Abraham: we shall not, however, attempt to prove or refute this, but would grant, for the sake of argument, that Adam was circumcised before Abraham. Yet we see that the law of heredity has failed to work in Adam's issue with regard to this.

In closing, we would remark that, if the Moslem

argues that, in the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation of St. John, there is the mention of certain numbers of years and so forth—and that, consequently, there is nothing strange in the “Gospel of Barnabas” similarly containing such numbers, we would reply that the numbers in the former are figurative, a thing quite intelligible in the case of prophecies, visions, revelations, and the like; whereas “Barnabas’” numbers are, and are meant to be, literal, as may be clearly seen, and he states them with the full confidence of the historian who gives a certain chronology, of the accuracy of which he is perfectly convinced. The difference between “Barnabas” on the one hand, and Daniel and St. John for instance, on the other hand, is a very real one, as is not hard to see.

#### SECTION IV

#### BARNABAS OR THE QUR'ÁN—WHICH ?

Let us now turn to the question of the doctrines which it preaches, especially those which are inconsistent with the teachings set forth in the Qur'án. It were certainly better for those who use this “Gospel” as a weapon against the true one, to examine its doctrines before brandishing it in our faces lest it turn against themselves and wound them. Below we give a few examples of these doctrines that the reader may compare them with those set forth in the Qur'án.

Of these we may refer to “Barnabas’” topography of Heaven, which, in a former section, we proved to be taken (though non-verbally) from Dante: “Verily I say unto thee,” quotes “Barnabas,” “that the heavens

are nine . . .” (190 b). In Súra iii, 29 of the Qur’án we read, “. . . who . . . set His mind to the creation of heaven, and formed it into seven heavens.”

Then there is the story of the birth of Christ, which is incompatible with that of the Qur’án. “Barnabas” says that Mary “brought forth her son without pain” (5 b). But the Qur’án says that “the pains of childbirth came upon her near the trunk of a palm tree. And she said, Would to God I had died before this” (Súra xix, 21).

Then there is the doctrine of love to one’s enemy, which replaced the old Mosaic law of “an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.” The Qur’án, it will be remembered, follows closely the Mosaic law, whereas “Barnabas” says, “Ye shall not overcome evil with evil, but rather with good” (18 a). And again, “Woe unto them that call for vengeance” (65 b); and, “Kiss the hand of those who revile thee, and present gifts to those who persecute thee and strike thee much” (66 b).

Then there is the doctrine which apparently tolerates unclean flesh. “That which entereth into the man defileth not the man, but that which cometh out of the man defileth the man” (33 b). It seems, however, that “Barnabas” remembered later on the Moslem attitude towards pork, and therefore added, “Disobedience will not enter into the man, but will come out of the man, from his heart; and therefore is he defiled when he eats forbidden food.” In other words, not because the food is defiling in itself, but because he who eats it eats forbidden food.

Another doctrine of “Barnabas’” which contradicts the Qur’án is that regarding polygamy. The “Gospel of Barnabas” says, “Let a man content himself with the wife whom his Creator hath given him, and let

him forget every other woman" (123 b). What will Moslems say about this clear prohibition which contradicts Muḥammadan teaching and practice?

It may be argued that the Qur'án does not command but only tolerates polygamy. But whether it is this or that, "Barnabas" does not even tolerate the practice. And here we anticipate an objection. It may be said that, from an Islámic viewpoint, there is no objection to one inspired Book forbidding some practice, and a succeeding one permitting that same practice, or *vice versá*; and therefore it is perfectly possible for Christ, in "Barnabas", to forbid polygamy and for the Qur'án to permit it: so that our argument falls flat. To this we reply that, unfortunately for this objection, "Barnabas" condemns this convenient theory of abrogation itself! "For every prophet hath observed *the law of God and all that God by the other prophets hath spoken*" (39 a).

So that this work of "Barnabas" is utterly incompatible with the Qur'án and Islám itself. And even apart from this, the theory of abrogation cannot affect questions of fact, as distinct from commands or prohibitions, like the question of the seven or nine Heavens.

With these remarks we continue our discussion of the discrepancies between "Barnabas" and the Qur'án, insisting that each one is destructive of *one* of the two books.

But strange to say, "Barnabas" accuses the Rabbins of having corrupted the Tourát (46 a). This false charge was never imputed to the Rabbins of the first century A.D.,<sup>1</sup> even by Muḥammad himself, who

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<sup>1</sup> For this is what the hypothesis involves of course. Clearly our friend "Barnabas" nodded here and forgot his part!



openly confessed that the Bible is "light and guidance to all who believe." "Barnabas'" claim, therefore, is a base and baseless charge: and we have the following dilemma. Either that this "Gospel" was written before the time of Muhammad, or, after the time of Muhammad: in the first case, Muhammad must have witnessed to a false and corrupted Bible; and in the second, the "Gospel of Barnabas" is a gross forgery.

If, however, it be argued that Muhammad's witness was only confined to a special copy of the Bible, then the following two facts must be taken into consideration:—

(1) The Bible copies which were extant in the time of Muhammad were all similar and their texts coincided closely. If, therefore, Muhammad had a special copy which was safe and sound, and to which he witnessed (to the exclusion of all other copies), why did he not allude to such a vital matter and warn his followers against the corrupt copies?

(2) Is it within the power of our Moslem friends to produce that copy to which Muhammad witnessed? Of course not; for the reference in the Qur'an is to "*The Book*" (universal) and not to *a book* (particular). We must not forget, too, that Muhammad makes it beyond human power "to corrupt or change the Word of God." Besides, it is not thinkable that the Jews and the Christians, so widely separated by different beliefs, should agree to blot out or corrupt a single letter of the Bible.

"Barnabas" claims to be more Moslem than Muhammad himself! He claims that the promise to Abraham was made in his son Ishmael, not Isaac. The Qur'an,

it will be remembered, is silent on this matter, though the context on the whole points to Isaac and the commentators confess that they do not know the truth. The best and earliest of them are on the side of Isaac. Rázi reserves his opinion. It is only the later ones who dogmatically insist that the victim was Ishmael. But "Barnabas" roundly asserts that the Jews (and apparently the Christians also) have corrupted the Bible and substituted the name of Isaac for that of Ishmael! Accordingly, Muḥammad must have witnessed to a corrupt Bible!

And most amazing of all is another doctrine of "Barnabas", which is sufficient to place the book finally on our shelf of curiosities, quite apart from the contradiction between this doctrine and the Qur'án and Gospel alike.

This is, in brief, that "Barnabas" totally ignores the existence of John the Baptist (Yihya ibn Zakariya), gives his function of the Forerunner to Jesus, and expressly denies the Messiahship to Jesus while transferring it to the coming prophet Muḥammad.

This amazing idea comes in several times quite explicitly in "Barnabas" (see 85 b, 101 b, 208 b):—

"Said the woman, 'Lord, perchance thou art the Messiah?' Jesus answered, 'I am indeed . . . . a prophet, . . . *but after me shall come the Messiah*,' " etc. . . . (85 b).

"The priest answered, '. . . I pray thee tell us the truth, Art thou the Messiah of God whom we expect?'

"Jesus answered, ' . . . . indeed I am not he, for he is made before me and shall come after me ' " (101 b).

“(Jesus said) . . . . ‘I have confessed also that I am not the Messiah’ ” (208 b).

We need only remark that in the Qur’án the only Messiah is Jesus (‘Isa), and that neither Muḥammad nor any Moslem has ever dreamed of transferring the Messiahship to the Arabian Prophet.

The fact that “Barnabas” nevertheless calls Jesus “Christ” (see 3 a) only shows the writer’s utter ignorance of both Greek and Hebrew. Poor “Barnabas” does not even know that ‘Christ’ means Messiah.

It is surely clear from all this, that no more from a Moslem and Qur’anic than from a Christian and Gospel point of view can the “Gospel of Barnabas” be allowed to be genuine. The Moslem, as well as the Christian, is bound to insist that it is a mediæval forgery. For, as we have shown, if this book is held in any sense to be true, or to contain the true message of Christ, all belief in the Qur’án, Muḥammad, or Islám becomes thenceforth impossible. And the man who uses this book as a weapon, whether of defence or offence, is using a weapon which will prove ruinous to himself.

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION—SUMMING UP THE CASE

We shall not spend time in recapitulating the arguments which show so conclusively that the "Gospel of Barnabas" neither is apostolic nor comes within measurable distance of the early Christian centuries. This negative conclusion, however, is enough to prevent any honest man from citing this Gospel for any controversial purpose whatever.

As to the positive question, who wrote this book and where and when did he write it, it is obviously impossible to give a precise answer. But we have already shown that an approximate answer may be given. We have shown that to the question "When?" it may be answered, "In the Middle Ages, very possibly in the fourteenth century, or later;" and to the question "Where?" it may be replied with confidence, "In the West, in Europe, and probably in Italy." There remains the question, "By whom?" Obviously we cannot name the anonymous forger, but we can make a shrewd guess at some of his characteristics.

Our readers should know and, if they read this romance as we hope they will, will know, that the book is in the form of a Biography of Christ, after the manner of one of the four Memoirs in the true Gospel.

It gives in regular order events, conversations, miracles, from the birth of Christ right away to the end of His ministry.

Now a number of strange phenomena come to light as we study this book:—

(1) The writer shows close acquaintance with the Christians' religion and Book, and with the true four-fold record. This is apparent in every line of the "Gospel of Barnabas", the author of which, for the most part, simply copies out the substance of Matthew and Luke, changing and altering and corrupting as his will leads him.

(2) The writer shows a less close acquaintance with the Qur'án. The whole of his book is obviously to exalt the religion of Muḥammad, and an Islámic flavour pervades the whole; but it is the work, not of a student of the Qur'án, but of one who had learned about Islám from conversations, the Islám of the age of the commentators and the late traditions, legends, and superstitions. He develops, expands and annotates the Qur'án, rather than reproduces it. He is more Moslem than Islám, more Muḥammadan than Muḥammad. He declares unequivocally for Ishmael (as we saw) when the Qur'án leaves the matter open, thereby showing that he is long after the earliest commentators, and coincides with the time when the later commentators were pushed by controversial considerations to take this course. The obscure hints of the Qur'án as to a substitute for Jesus at the time of the crucifixion are made quite definite by "Barnabas". On the other hand, as we have shown, "Barnabas" is an indiscreet partizan—a dangerous, though well-meaning, ally; for without noticing it, he occasionally

goes clean against the Qur'án, and, in his very enthusiasm for Muḥammad, gives him the lie!

If we put all these facts together, we are driven to the conclusion that "Barnabas" was a mediæval Christian who desired to injure Christianity and exalt Islám. Such an one can only have been a convert to Islám, perhaps a monk (for there are signs to show that the writer originally belonged to a religious order), perhaps the egregious Fra Marino himself, the hero of the theft from the Pope's library.

The book is in fact a controversial tract in the form of a romance, in the interests of the Islámic religion.

We regret therefore to have to point out that this Moslem, in his zeal, became a perverter and a corrupter of the Scriptures of God. He was guilty of the tahrif and the tabdil that Moslems profess to anathematise. Here is proof that this great sin has not emanated from the Christian side, but from that of Islám!

Of course we do not accuse all Islám and all Moslems of being guilty with "Barnabas". But they *are* guilty, if they stoop to using the "Gospel of Barnabas" as one of their weapons either of defence or offence. We repeat it, he who tries to make capital out of this book, shares in the guilt of its forger. He who calls a liar to witness is himself a liar. He who makes use of a forged and corrupted scripture is himself a forger of Scripture, a corrupter of the word of God.

Moslems! beware! lest this "Gospel of Barnabas", in which ye see help and guidance, be unto you a snare unto damnation.

Rather, let the book—in spite of itself—lead unto salvation; let it lead unto the perusal of the true

Gospel, the true Record of the Life of the true Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the World.

May God thus work!—He whom it befits to bring light out of darkness, to turn evil into good, and out of the very stumbling-blocks of the devil to make stepping stones unto truth.—*Amen!*

FINIS.

