

**AN ANCIENT SYRIAC
DOCUMENT, PURPORTING TO BE
THE RECORD, IN ITS CHIEF
FEATURES, OF THE SECOND
SYNOD OF EPHESUS; PART I**

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An ancient Syriac document, purporting to be the record, in its chief features, of the second Synod of Ephesus; Part I by S. G. F. Perry

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S. G. F. PERRY

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DOCUMENT, PURPORTING TO BE
THE RECORD, IN ITS CHIEF
FEATURES, OF THE SECOND
SYNOD OF EPHESUS; PART I**

AN
ANCIENT SYRIAC DOCUMENT,

PURPORTING TO BE THE RECORD, IN ITS CHIEF FEATURES, OF
THE SECOND SYNOD OF EPHESUS,

AND DISCLOSING HISTORICAL MATTER

'INTERESTING TO THE CHURCH AT LARGE;'

Of which Document an attempt at an entire Reproduction in Fac-simile Characters
and at a Translation is now first made

BY THE

REV. S. G. F. PERRY, M.A.

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(Dr. Samuel Lee's Syriac N. T.)

PART I.

OXFORD

BY T. COMBE, M.A., E. B. GARDNER, E. P. HALL, AND H. LATHAM, M.A.

Printed at the University

1887

[Privately Printed.]

TO
THE HOLY SYNOD OF BISHOPS

OF CHRIST'S HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH,

MOST REVEREND AND RIGHT REVEREND FATHERS IN GOD

IN COMMUNION WITH THE SEE OF CANTERBURY;

Convoked at the instance of the Metropolitan and Bishops of Canada and of others, and holden at Lambeth Palace on 24, 25, 26, 27th days of September, in the year 1867, under the Presidency of his Grace the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, in the spirit which animated 'that gentle Father of his People,' who says of 'the Bishops assembled in Council'—'The Divine favour will bring to pass, that we with the rest, our Colleagues, may stably and firmly administer our office, and uphold the peace of the Catholic Church in the unity of concord;' this attempt at an entire reproduction in fac-simile Estrangèla characters and at a translation, of

AN ANCIENT SYRIAC DOCUMENT

(for centuries lost, and now generally unknown, to the Church)

purporting to be an historical relation, in its chief features, of a certain Synod at Ephesus summoned by Imperial Authority to be held in August, 449 A. D. as, and distinctly and authoritatively designated by itself when held to be,

AN ECUMENICAL SYNOD OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH,

but, by reason of the outrage committed by its President and the violent perversion of its ends, for ever pronounced by Saint Leo the Great to be the

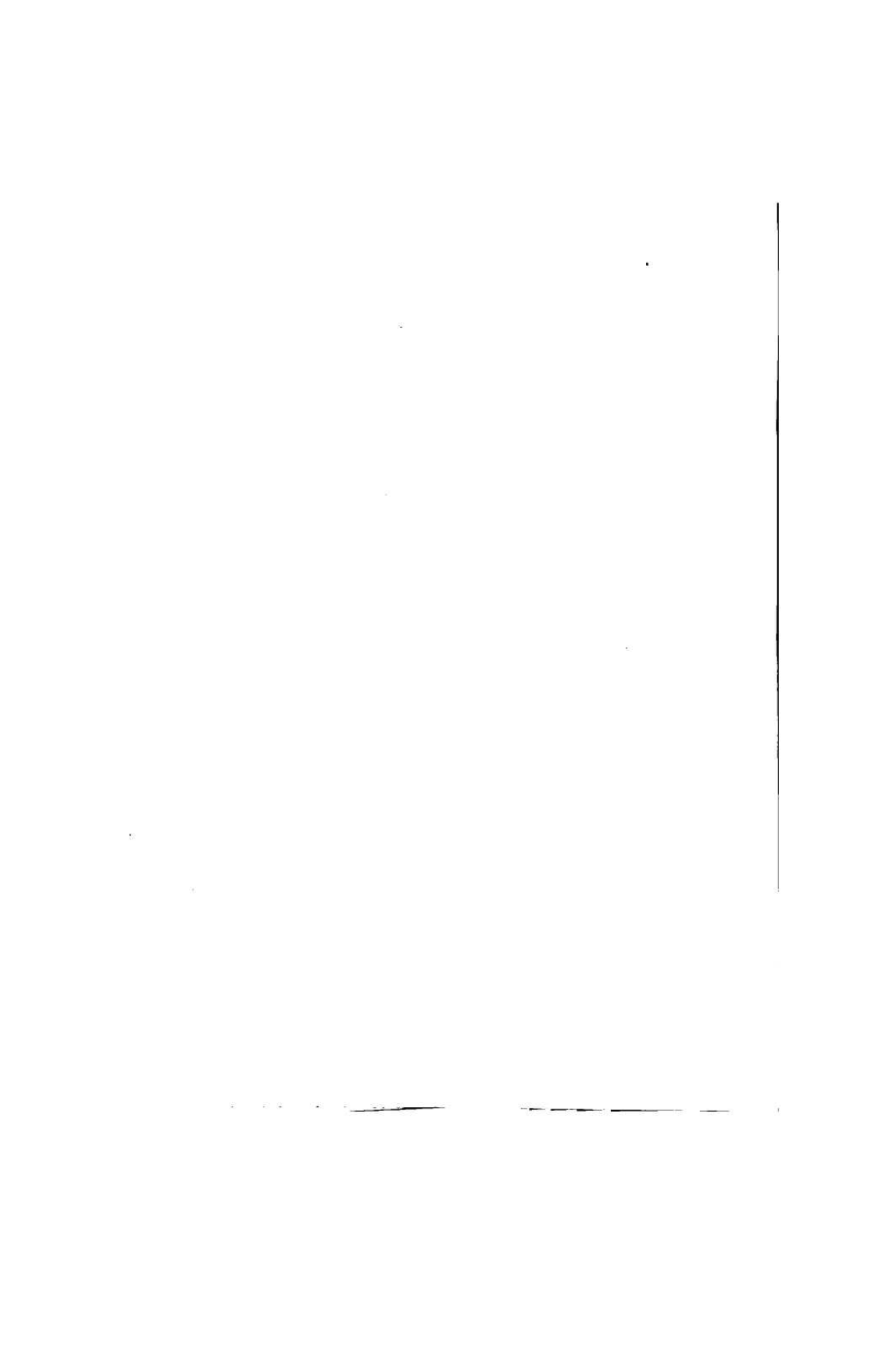
'LATROCINIUM' OF EPHEBUS,

IS,

WITH PROFOUND VENERATION, AS WELL AS BY EXPRESS PERMISSION,

DEDICATED

BY A PRIEST OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN COMMUNION WITH THE SEE OF
CANTERBURY.



PREFATORY REMARKS.

THE original ancient Document, which the following pages indicate an attempt to reproduce in fac-simile type and to translate, forms one of those rich and magnificent Syriac treasures which the present Archdeacon of Bedford, Dr. Tattam, brought from the Syrian Monastery of St. Mary Deipara, in the Desert of Nitria or Soete (ܩܝܫܝܘܢ ܕܩܝܫܝܘܢ ܕܩܝܫܝܘܢ ܕܩܝܫܝܘܢ ܕܩܝܫܝܘܢ), on the Western side of the Nile, between twenty and thirty years ago. The most important and most ancient of all those treasures have already been made known to the world by distinguished Oriental scholars, viz.:—

- (1) Clementis Romani Recognitiones, by Dr. P. de Lagarde of Berlin.
- (2) Titi Bostreni contra Manicheos libri quatuor, by Dr. P. de Lagarde.
- (3) Eusebius Bishop of Cæsarea on the Theophania or Divine Manifestation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, with a translation and notes, by Dr. Samuel Lee, late Professor of Hebrew at Cambridge.
- (4) Ancient Syriac Documents relative to the earliest establishment of Christianity in Edessa and the neighbouring countries, from the year after our Lord's Ascension to the beginning of the fourth century, with a translation, by Dr. Cureton, and with a Preface by Dr. William Wright of the British Museum.
- (5) Spicilegium Syriacum: containing remains of Bardesan, Meliton, Ambrose, and Mara Bar Serapion, with a translation and notes, by Dr. Cureton.
- (6) History of the Martyrs of Palestine, by Eusebius, Bishop of Cæsarea, with a translation into English, and Notes, by Dr. Cureton.
- (7) An Ancient Syrian Martyrology, edited and translated by Dr. William Wright of the British Museum, in the Journal of Sacred Literature. 'The MS. of which it forms a part was transcribed in the year of the Greeks 723, i. e. 412 A.D.'
- (8) Analecta Syriaca, with Appendix, by Dr. P. de Lagarde.
- (9) The Fragments of John of Asia, soon to be published by Dr. J. P. N. Land.
- (10) The Festal Letters of St. Athanasius, by Dr. Cureton.

In this last work Dr. Cureton gives a full and very interesting history of the way in which these ancient Syriac monuments were discovered in the Syrian

Convent, in the valley of the Nitrian Lakes, and brought by Dr. Tattam in 1842 to England, and afterwards deposited in the British Museum as the property of the nation in 1847, where they now form one of the most remarkable and important collections of the writings of antiquity which have ever been transported from East to West. Dr. Cureton mentions the share M. Pacho had in the purchasing these Manuscripts of the Cloistered Brethren of the Nitrian Valley. It turns out that M. Pacho himself, after having sold, according to agreement, the whole to the trustees of the British Museum, must have withheld part of them in some way or another, of which part the Imperial Public Library of St. Petersburg appears to be in present possession, certainly as far as the Syriac copy of the Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius, which Dr. Wright showed me, is concerned.

Next after these very recherché specimens of Syriac literature above mentioned, ranks in importance and character, as I think, our Manuscript, which describes itself as

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 ܕܡܫܘܚܐ ܕܡܫܘܚܐ ܕܡܫܘܚܐ

It is most probably a Syriac version, made about a century after the events it records, of a Greek original long since lost to the Church. It is numbered 14,530 among the Additional MSS. in the British Museum. It is very legibly and boldly indited on vellum in the Estrangêlâ character, and presents, as now bound up, only two blank leaves, indicating as few lacunæ in the document. The generally excellent condition of the parchment leaves is no doubt due to the continuously dry and warm climate of the Desert, which has preserved it for our benefit during a period considerably exceeding one thousand years, according to the date so fortunately undefaced in this MS., as in many of its fellows, and placed at the end on the last page but one.

The last page, however, presents difficulties of no ordinary kind; but its photographic representative, given in corresponding type at the end of our printed text, magnifying as it does the letters and the parts of letters that are discernible, as well as the marks of disfigurement, may induce some Syriac scholar to venture on an endeavour to decipher the sadly marred features of its dimly sombre visage, and so to offer some solution of those difficulties that have hitherto baffled some few not unskilful handlers of ancient Oriental MSS.

The whole MS. consists of 216 pages, each page averaging about 28 lines. Sometimes towards the middle the lines number 33 and 34. The portion of the Syriac text printed in this Part I is the beginning of the attempt at a reproduction of the document in its entirety, so that, page in our text nearly

corresponding to page in the original, and line exactly to line, word for word, red type for red, and black type for black, we shall be enabled in the course of time, if encouraged, to accomplish the task of reproducing the whole document in fac-simile Estrangèla characters as contemplated.

The translation strikes off with the Latin rendering of one of the documents already given in Mansi's L'Abbé. The English translation here given points to those very important matters connected with the characteristics of this MS.; for it relates to what occurred after August 8, and to the case of Ibas and to the unfolding of the unlawful acts of Dioscorus and partisans at the Synod, by which its President perverted it into a Conciliabulum and that Conciliabulum into the Latrocinium of Ephesus. The Emperor had summoned the Synod for August 1. Its first session, three extant fragments concerning which are given in Latin and Greek in L'Abbé's 'Conciliorum Collectio,' took place on August 8. It is the Session on Saturday, August 20, of which mention is made, and that on Monday, August 22, proceedings of which are recorded, in these Acts alone.

As the preceding remarks relative to the Syriac MSS. cannot be otherwise than apposite and pertinent to the matter in hand, so the subjoined reflections will not, I think, be considered inapposite or inopportune, which deal with the subject of Synods generally, although *at present* it appears to be not unwise to say little of that particular one, of which *much* is to be said and can be better said when all connected with it is complete.

Now it is evident to all men (~~who read the~~) to use the first words of our document) reading the signs of the times, that the grand idea of the distinctive oneness of the 'one Body' of Christ—so fully taught by the Holy Ghost, as well in the glorious Creeds of the Church Catholic as through the direct and immediate inspiration of Holy Writ—is receiving and growing into a vivid realization in this latter half of the nineteenth century, which may witness, before its close, through that 'one Body' being continually quickened and informed by the 'one Spirit,' a no inappreciable approximation to the Church's oneness of character in primitive times. And there is also much reason to aver that the synodical system of the Church, by and in the highest form of which her articulate voice was in the ages of faith so faithfully uttered and obediently heard, and of which, I will add, our MS., coming up as it does through the long vista of those past ages from the unchanging East, is so singularly expressive, promises, by God's mercy to us, to receive such positive and helpful encouragements as will afford to many, yearning for its joyful fulness, a warranty of hope and belief that that visible Oneness or Unity must also be attended with an immediate and manifest accession.

Now the Synodical Institutions of the Church Catholic are of Divine origin. The germ from which they are all evolved and the source to which they can be referred and traced back, as well in their first emergent and scarcely discernible development as in the grandest and most glorious, when the largest General Council could exultingly appropriate Christ's promise to itself, may be found in the Divine words containing that promise of our Lord's gracious Presence : *ὃς γὰρ εἰσι δύο ἢ τρεῖς συνηγμένοι εἰς τὸ ἑμὸν ὄνομα, ἐκεῖ εἰμι ἐν μέσῳ αὐτῶν*. The secondary meaning of those words, reality of belief in which has been abundantly and unprecedently evidenced of late years—may it still increase!—in the awakened consciousness of Churchmen to privilegee and duties in connection with assemblies for Worship, needs certainly no elaborate elucidation ; whilst the primary, significative of order, discipline, and work, has surely been insufficiently regarded in the realization of blessings inherent of necessity in a guaranteed promise to what is done, *εἰς τὸ ὄνομα*, by many or by few in authorized union and action.

This year of grace, however, and this month of September, bear witness to a special and unprecedented instance of actual realization of the promise, in the Synod of Bishops, held at Lambeth, of Christ's Holy Catholic Church in communion with the See of Canterbury :—special, whether there are regarded evidences of the special Presence attached, and the special office of teaching the truth of God assigned, to such Synods ; or it be looked on only as a *συνόδος ἡ ἐκδημοῦσα*, like that at Constantinople in November A. D. 448, when the Hæresiarach was formally accused of a denial of the truth of the distinction of the two natures of Jesus Christ ;—unprecedented, as the annals of our whole Communion furnish no such instance of the 'Demonstrative Unity' of its Chief Pastors. May this apostolic return by our Right Reverend Fathers in God to the earliest and normal rule and law of the Church, by which the primary signification of Christ's own words is manifestly attested and realized, exercise over the future of our one-third division of Christendom such a beneficial influence as will encourage every member of that Division gladly to recognise his position in it and to realize his 'vocation and ministry'—his calling from on high (*ἡ εὐαγγελισίας*) and his office and function in the 'one Body'—as it regards that primary signification, and such as may bear comparison with that of the great Fathers of Nice over the whole history of Christendom, in the actual past and present, as well as in its probable future.

The received histories of the Catholic Church from the Day of Pentecost, after the Apostolic Synod at Jerusalem in A. D. 51, held to determine points of Ritual and to enact Canons, and another under the presidency of the Bishop of that city, held to receive a persecuted Apostle and his company, present us