

THE NEW MANICHAEAN DOCUMENTS

THE account of the Manichaean documents lately found in Egypt and now safely housed in Berlin and London, which has been published in the *Sitzungsberichten* of the Prussian Academy by Prof. Carl Schmidt and Dr Polotsky (*Phil.-Hist. Kl.* 1933, 1), is important enough to merit a special note. The documents were found in a chest at Medinet (el)-Mādi, just south of Fayyūm, by native Egyptians, who divided them up, some leaves going to Cairo, so that part of the contents of the chest are now in the Chester Beatty collection, part are in Berlin. It seems clear, however, that they were written farther south, near Assiut, the ancient Lycopolis. They consist of a Hymn-book, a collection of Mani's Letters, a historical work about Mani's career containing some account of his final imprisonment and martyrdom and the subsequent fortunes of the Manichees, and above all large fragments of Mani's work called *The Chapters* (τὰ κεφάλαια).

The single leaves are in a very tattered state and require to be separated one from the other and mounted on glass before they are fit to be studied. Only five small fragments, therefore, are edited in the new publication. These, however, are enough to exhibit the style of this systematic work and to give some of its characteristic teaching. Each 'Chapter' begins with a set formula :

'And again as the Enlightener, our Father the true Apostle, sat among his disciples . . . he said in his Revelation: "There are Five Fathers, the first is the Father of Greatnesses . . . And He, this glorious Father, evoked three Emanations from Himself: the first is the great Spirit, the first Mother, &c."'

'And again said the Enlightener: "There are four great Days, that proceed one out of the other, &c."'

Even in the small pieces given as specimens we hear of the Pillar of Glory, the Perfect Man, Jesus the Brightness, the Virgin of Light, and other personages of the Manichaean Hierarchy.

We may therefore look forward in the near future to large continuous fragments of this great teaching treatise, written either by Mani himself or under his direction, and to extracts from his collected Letters, which will surely supply many most interesting historical details. Not the least interesting feature of this great find is the fact that the documents have been translated from Greek into Coptic in the dialect of Assiut-Lycopolis; for the presence of a Manichaean mission at Lycopolis explains why the earliest of all refutations of 'the New Christianity' should have been written by that Alexander who, whether he was a pagan philosopher or a Christian bishop, was certainly an inhabitant of Lycopolis itself.

Professor Schmidt and his assistant Dr Polotsky are heartily to be congratulated on their great discovery. It would be ungrateful to conclude without a word of recognition of the work of Dr Ibscher, to whose capable hands has been entrusted the delicate task of detaching and mounting the tattered leaves.

F. C. BURKITT.

A MANUSCRIPT OF ST AUGUSTINE AT PERTH, SCOTLAND

SOME years ago a small but interesting collection of Latin manuscripts was presented to St John's Church, Perth,¹ by the Rev. John Stirton, D.D., Minister of Crathie and Domestic Chaplain to the King. Dr Stirton was led to make these gifts by his love for his native city, and the same impulse leads me to record the existence of one of the manuscripts there, lest it should escape the notice of interested parties. I have to thank the authorities of the church for lending the manuscript concerned to the University Library, Aberdeen, where I have been able to study it at leisure.

The manuscript, which was acquired by Dr Stirton in August 1919, is in a calf binding at least two centuries old and the outer and top edges are somewhat clipped. It bears old shelfmarks D. 1. 21, and No. 3. ll. 2. sh. 6, these being in different hands. The present measurements are mm. 164 × 118, and the written area measures mm. 109 × 71. The manuscript may be assigned to the second half of the thirteenth century. The present number of folia is 124, and these have never been numbered. The vellum is sometimes thick, sometimes thin, and the sheets have been arranged correctly, flesh side next flesh side and hair side next hair side, but no quaternion signatures are present. There is a table of contents on fol. 2 in a fifteenth-century hand. Two scribes took part in writing the manuscript. There are red subscriptions and blue initial letters. Chapter numbers are sometimes indicated in the margin, and occasionally there are catchwords. The lines are ruled in the usual way, and the number to the page varies between 23 and 31.

The contents are as follows:—

- f. 3r. Incipit epistola² prima beati Augustini ad inquisitiones Ianuarii presbyteri. Dilectissimo filio Ianuario Augustinus in domino salutem.

¹ See *St John's Kirk, Perth, a History* by Thomas Hunter, J.P. (Perth, 1932), for an excellent account of this ancient place of worship.

² Here and elsewhere I have expanded the abbreviations to save difficulties in printing.