

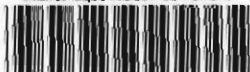
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Salomon Reinach



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## XXIV.

IGNATIUS, BISHOP OF ANTIOCH, AND  
THE APXEIA

by S. REINACH

παρακαλῶ δὲ ὑμᾶς, μηδὲν κατ' ἐρίθειαν πράσσετε ἀλλὰ κατὰ χριστομαθίαν. ἐπεὶ ἤκουσά τινων λεγόντων ὅτι Ἐὰν μὴ ἐν τοῖς ἀρχείοις εὔρω, ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ οὐ πιστεύω· καὶ λέγοντός μου αὐτοῖς ὅτι Γέγραπται, ἀπεκρίθησάν μοι ὅτι Πρόκειται. ἐμοὶ δὲ ἀρχεῖᾶ ἐστὶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, τὰ ἀθικτα ἀρχεῖᾶ ὁ σταῦρος αὐτοῦ καὶ ὁ θάνατος καὶ ἡ ἀνάστασις αὐτοῦ καὶ ἡ πίστις ἡ δι' αὐτοῦ· ἐν οἷς θέλω ἐν τῇ προσευχῇ ὑμῶν δικαιωθῆναι.

—IGNATIUS, *Epist. ad Philadelph.*, § 8.

THE article ἀρχεῖον, in the Estienne-Didot *Thesaurus*, was revised by L. Dindorf, by no means a theologian, but who knew Greek. The second section of the article, with the meaning *archivum*, *tabularium*, is headed by a quotation from the above passage of Ignatius inserted by Dindorf: “*Epist. ad Philadelph.*, n. 8: Ἐὰν μὴ ἐν τοῖς ἀρχείοις εὔρω, ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ οὐ πιστεύω.” Dindorf did not even suppose that the plural τὰ ἀρχεῖᾶ could be considered, not by some but by almost all theologians, as an equivalent of “the Old Testament,” παλαιὰ διαθήκη.

That mistake, which is the result of an exegetical tendency, has reappeared quite recently in an article about Ignatius; I quote the passage:

‘Aux gens qui lui disaient (à Ignace) : “Ce que je ne trouve pas dans les archives”—c’est à dire dans les Ecritures de l’Ancien Testament,—“je n’y crois pas dans l’Evangile” ; Ignace a répondu : “C’est écrit,” mais ils ont contesté sa démonstration, disant : “C’est à prouver” ; quant à lui, ses archives sont Jésus-Christ, archives inviolables que sa croix, sa mort, sa résurrection, la foi qui vient de lui.’<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Loisy, *Revue d’histoire et de littérature religieuse*, décembre, 1921, p. 470.



If Ignatius had meant 'Scripture' in setting forth the objection of the unbeliever, Loisy's interpretation, which is the current one, would cause him to say: 'My Old Testament is Jesus Christ, His cross, etc,' which makes bald nonsense.

Though having combated the current explanation in 1912,<sup>1</sup> I think it necessary to do so once more, appealing not only to the scholarship, but to the *bona fides* of my readers.

The unbeliever said to the bishop: "What I do not find in archives, the facts you recite about Jesus Christ, I will not admit them when they are stated by your gospel."—"But," answers the bishop, "those facts have been prophesied in the Old Testament." "That's no proof," objects the unbeliever, "it is begging the question." Then the bishop gets angry, gives us to understand that he cares nought for official documents as stored up in *tabularia* and that he relies on his own spiritual archives, which are his faith.

In the article to which I refer in the foot-note, I have gone into more particulars and shown how my interpretation is consistent with other passages of Ignatius, especially with that of Ephesians, §. xix. "Now the virginity of Mary was hidden from the prince of this world, as was also her offspring, and the death of the Lord." As Ignatius cannot possibly have been informed by the prince of this world, and as we cannot accuse him of writing nonsense, we feel compelled to admit that he means the worldly powers, the authorities, all more or less subject to the Devil, and that what they are said to have ignored is precisely what has been sought for in vain by wicked unbelievers in the *tabularia*. When the famous French *doctrinaire*, Royer-Collard, spoke his well known phrase: "*Rien n'est bête comme un fait*," he was, like Ignatius, but with less excuse, in an anti-scientific mood.

<sup>1</sup> *Revue moderniste*, 1912. *Cultes, Mythes*, IV, p. 200 ff.



