in the power to make what had been traditionally received impressive, to give to it its proper form, and to gain for it new currency. From Rome Tertullian visited Greece and perhaps also Asia Minor; at any rate we know that he had temporary relations with the churches there. He was consequently placed in a position in which he could check the doctrine and practice of the Roman Church. Thus equipped with knowledge and experience, he returned to Carthage and there laid the foundation of Latin Christian literature. At first, after his conversion, he wrote Greek, but by and by Latin almost exclusively. The elements of this Christian Latin language may be enumerated as follows :—(i.) it had its origin, not in the literary language of Rome as developed by Cicero, but in the language of the people as we find it in Plautus and Terence; (ii.) it has an African complexion; (iii.) it is strongly influenced by Greek, particularly through the Latin translation of the Septuagint and of the New Testament, besides being sprinkled with a large number of Greek words derived from the Scriptures or from the Greek liturgies ; (iv.) it bears the stamp of the Gnostic style and contains also some military expressions ; (v.) it owes something to the original creative power of Tertullian. As for his theology, its leading factors were—-(i.) the teachings of the apolo­gists; (ii.) the philosophy of the Stoics; (iii.) the rule of faith, interpreted in an anti-Gnostic sense, as he had received it from the Church of Rome; (iv.) the Soterio- logical theology of Melito and Irenæus ; (v.) the substance of the utterances of the Montanist prophets (in the closing decades of his life). This analysis does not disclose, nor indeed is it possible to discover, what was the determining element for Tertullian; in fact he was under the dominion of more than one ruling principle, and he felt himself bound by several mutually opposing authorities. It was his desire to unite the enthusiasm of primitive Christ­ianity with intelligent thought, the original demands of the Gospel with every letter of the Scriptures and with the practice of the Roman Church, the sayings of the Paraclete with the authority of the bishops, the law of the churches with the freedom of the inspired, the rigid dis­cipline of the Montanist with all the utterances of the New Testament and with the arrangements of a church seeking to set itself up within the world. At this task he toiled for years, involved in contradictions which it took all the finished skill of the jurist to conceal from him for a time. At last he felt compelled to break off from the church for which he had lived and fought ; but the breach could not clear him from the contradictions in which he found himself entangled. Not only did the great chasm between the old Christianity, to which his soul clung, and the Christianity of the Scriptures as juristically and philosophically interpreted remain unbridged ; he also clung fast, in spite of his separation from the Catholic church, to his position that the church possesses the true doctrine, that the bishops *per successionem* are the reposi­tories of the grace of the teaching office, and so forth. The growing violence of his latest works is to be accounted for, not only by his burning indignation against the ever- advancing secularization of the Catholic church, but also by the incompatibility between the authorities which he recognized and yet was not able to reconcile. After having done battle with heathens, Jews, Marcionites, Gnostics, Monarchians, and the Catholics, he died an old man, carrying with him to the grave the last remains of primi­tive Christianity in the West, but at the same time in conflict with himself.

(4) What has just been said brings out very clearly how important in their bearing on Tertullian’s development were the circumstances of the age in which he laboured. His activity as a Christian falls between 190 and 220, a period of very great moment in the history of the Catho­lic church ; for within it the struggle with Gnosticism was brought to a. victorious close, the New Testament estab­lished a firm footing within the churches, the “ apostolic ” rules which thenceforward regulated all the affairs of the church were called into existence, and the ecclesiastical priesthood came to be developed. Within this period also falls that evangelical and legal reaction against the political and secular tendencies of the church which is known as Montanism. The same Tertullian who had fortified the Catholic church against Gnosticism was none the less anxious to protect it from becoming a political organiza­tion. Being unable to reconcile incompatibles, he broke with the church and became the most powerful representa­tive of Montanism in the West.

Although Tertullian’s extant works are both numerous and copious, our knowledge of his life is very vague. He cannot have been born much later than about 150. His activity as a jurist in Rome must fall within the period of Commodus ; for there is no indication in his writings that he was in Rome in the time of Marcus Aurelius, and many passages seem to preclude the supposi­tion. The date of his conversion to Christianity is quite uncertain; there is much in favour of the years between 190 and 195. How long he remained in Rome after becoming a Christian, whether he had attained any office in the church before leaving Rome, what was the date of his visit to Greece,—on these points also we remain in ignorance. It is certain that he was settled in Carthage in the second half of 197, the date of his writing his *Apologeticus* and (shortly afterwards) his two books *Ad Nationes ;* we also know that he became a presbyter in Carthage and was married. His recognition of the Montanistic prophecy in Phrygia as a work of God took place in 202-203, at the time when a new persecution broke out. For the next five years it was his constant endeavour to secure the victory for Montanism within the church ; but in this he became involved more and more deeply in controversy with the majority of the church in Carthage and especially with its clergy, which had the support of the clergy of Rome. As Jerome writes (*De Vir. Ill.,* 53): “Usque ad mediam ætatem presbyter fuit ecclesiæ Africanæ, invidia postea et contumeliis clericorum Romanæ ecclesiæ ad Montani dogma delapsus.” On his breach with the Catholic church, probably in 207-208, he became the head of a small Montanist community in Carthage. In this position he con­tinued to labour, to write, and to assail the lax Catholics and their clergy until at least the time of Bishop Calixtus in the reign of Elagabalus. The year of his death is uncertain. Jerome (*ut sup.)* says: “Fertur vixisse usque ad decrepitam ætatem.” That he returned at last to the bosom of the Catholic church is a mere legend, the motive of which is obvious ; his adherents after his death continued to maintain themselves as a small community in Carthage. Although he had left the church, his earlier writings continued to be extensively read ; and in the 4th century his works, along with those of Cyprian, were the principal reading of Western Christians, until they were superseded by those of Jerome, Ambrose, Augustine, and Gregory. Jerome has included him in his catalogue of Christian “viri illustres,” but only as a Catholic to whom reference should be made with caution.@@1

The works of Tertullian, on the chronology of which a great deal has been written, and which for the most part do not admit of being dated with perfect certainty, fall into three classes,—the apologetic, the polemical theological, and the ascetic. And in point of time also three periods can be readily distinguished, the years 202-203 and 207-208 constituting the divisions. Some of the things he wrote have unfortunately disappeared,—in particular the *De Spectaculis, De Baptismo,* and *De Virginibus Velandis* in Greek ; his works in Latin on the same subjects have survived.

I. *Works dating from before 202-203.—*To this class belong the *Apologeticus* (197) and the two books *Ad Nationes, De Specta­culis, De Idololatria, De Cultu Feminarum Libri II., De Testi­monio Animæ* (written soon after the *Apologeticus), Ad Martyres* (perhaps the earliest of all), *De Baptismo Haereticorum* (now lost), *De Baptismo, De Poenitentia, De Oratione* (the last three v. ritten for catechumens), *De Patientia, Ad Uxorem Libri II., De Præscriptione Haereticorum,* and *Adv. Mαrcionem* (in its first form). The *Apolo­geticus,* which in the 3d century was translated into Greek, is the weightiest work in defence of Christianity of the first two centuries. Respecting its relation to the *Octavius* of Minucius Felix much has been written ; to the present writer it seems unquestionable that Tertullian’s work was the later. Of great moment also is the *De Praescriptione Haereticorum,* in which the jurist is more clearly heard than the Christian. The *De Spectaculis* and *De Idololatria* show that Tertullian was already in a certain sense a Montanist

@@@1 Compare also the judgment of Hilary and of Vincent of Lerins, *Commonit.,* 24.