

constructive facts of the Gospel themselves, or render such language as that of Irenæus and Chrysostom possible. Unfortunately, the one assumption has come down to us separated from that which alone made it tenable. Whenever it may have been finally completed, this separation necessarily prepared as perfectly concealed a pitfall for the unwary as it is possible to conceive.

The effect of the separation was necessarily as follows:—

1. It broke up the connection of the constructive facts as completely as if the letters L A M B were written A M B L.

2. It removed beyond them, and therefore virtually obliterated the constructive facts which

directly or indirectly dominated all the constructive facts of the Synoptic Gospels.

3. It thus rendered the constructive facts of the Synoptic Gospels an insoluble enigma, the only possible clue to which was, as above, virtually obliterated and rendered as though non-existent.

4. It rendered the one-sidedness of St. John's Gospel as wholly enigmatical as it did the uniform one-sidedness of the other Gospels.

5. It destroyed the exquisite four-fold symmetry of the completed record, and substituted for it an ungainly and unintelligible *three-and-one-sidedness*.

6. It robbed the Gospels of all their self-attesting power, and therefore of all their defensive armour, and turned them out defenceless to make sport for the Philistines.

Requests and Replies.

Is it known when and how the burning bush with the legend "Nec tamen consumebatur" was adopted as a Motto by the Scottish Church?—G. S.

The burning bush was a favourite symbol among the early Huguenots of France.

The editor of the *Synodicon*, after telling how the Piedmontese had for their common seal "a taper burning in a golden candlestick, scattering its glorious beams in a sable field of thick darkness," goes on to describe "another seal, as illustrious an hieroglyphic as the former, appertaining unto the national synods of those renowned and once flourishing, though now desolate, Reformed Churches of France, which was Moses' miraculous vision when he fed the flock under the mount of God—viz. a bramble bush in a flaming fire, having that essential incommunicable name of God, Jehovah, engraven in its centre, and this motto, 'Combuero non consumere,' in its circumference. With this those venerable councils sealed all their letters and despatches."

The Scottish Church adopted, with some slight modification, the symbol of the Huguenots. It did so after the Revolution of 1690; but the precise date cannot now be ascertained.

When the second council of the Alliance of the Reformed Churches met in Philadelphia, 1880, the hall in which the meetings were held was adorned with a series of historic decorations, in the form of brightly-coloured columns, intended to commemorate the Churches represented in the Alliance.

At the top of the French column was a large shield with a blue field, covered with golden *fleur de lis*, and in the centre the seal of the Reformed Church of France, as described above. The upper portion of Scotland's column was a shield whose background was a blue field, covered with golden thistles, and in the centre the burning bush, as the seal of the Established and Free Churches of Scotland. The shield in Ireland's column had a green field, sprinkled over with golden shamrocks. On the shield, in bronze colour, was the bush, substantially the same as that of Scotland, but more elongated, and the motto, "*Ardens sed Virens.*"

These and all the other historic decorations used in the hall were lithographed in colours, and a set of them prefixed to each copy of the proceedings.

In his *Lectures on the History of the Church of Scotland*, which drew forth Principal Rainy's famous reply, Dean Stanley has a felicitous reference to the Scottish ecclesiastical symbol. "The badge of the Church of Scotland—the Burning Bush, 'burning but not consumed'—is as true a type of Scotland's inexpugnable defence of her ancient liberties as it was of the ancient Jewish Church and people on their emergence from Egyptian bondage. And so the early history of the Scottish Presbyterian Church has been one long struggle of dogged resistance to superior power."

Ayr.

C. G. M'CRIE.

How do Assyriologists interpret the words in Daniel v. 25.—“Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin?”—G.

The latest view about the words “Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin” seems to be that we ought to render, “Reckon a mineh, a shekel, and half-shekels.” In *pharsin* it is clear that we have a play upon the name of the Persians, but the relevancy of the rest of the text to its interpretation is by no means obvious. The Assyro-Babylonian equivalent of the Chaldee sentence would be: *manî mana sikla u barsi*; and it is therefore evident that the Chaldee version belongs to the language of the Aramæan traders in Babylon.

A. H. SAYCE.

Oxford.

Will you mention the necessary books for a beginner in Syriac?—Orcadian.

Add the following to Professor Margoliouth's list in October. *Orcadian* will probably turn to the New Testament as soon as he has mastered the elements and grammar. He will find much help in *Clavis Syriaca*, a Key to the Holy Gospels in the Peshitto, by H. F. Whish (Bell & Sons).

Aston Upton.

G. H. GWILLIAM.

May I ask the following favour from some one of your contributors who are conversant with the Hebrew Bible? “What is the meaning of the *lacuna* or פסוק באמצע פסוק which occurs nearly forty times in the Hebrew Scriptures?” I shall feel most grateful for an answer to the above, having fruitlessly looked for solution of the same in many Jewish Commentaries, none of which take the least notice of this most perplexing point. The same was discussed in “English Churchman,” but with no result.—Henry Cohen.

פסוק באמצע פסוק is a remark of the Massorettes, those immortal preservers of the Hebrew text of the Bible, whose labours extend from the beginning of the Talmudic times down to the tenth century of the common era. The פסוק באמצע פסוק “a section or stoppage in the middle of the verse” denotes (1) either that in the opinion of the Massorettes there is a word or words missing in the original MS. which the Massorettes had before them; (2) or that the copyist, without wishing to denote a lacuna, wrote the verse in the manner in which poetry is written in the MSS., viz. in half lines (in hemistichs).

JOSEPH STRAUSS.

Bradford, October 7, 1892.

The Great Text Commentary.

THE GREAT TEXTS OF ST. MATTHEW.

MATT. xv. 28.

“Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it done unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was healed from that hour” (R.V.).

EXPOSITION.

“O woman.”—St. Mark expresses this reply more according to the sense: “For this saying go thy way.” Matthew, however, literally preserves the sacredly classical usage of Christ. Hitherto Christ had not accosted the woman, but in this address all is at once granted: “O woman.”—STIER.

“Great is thy faith.”—The greatness of the woman's faith consisted in this, that in spite of all discouragements she continued her plea; and not

only so, but accepting and laying to her account all adverse circumstances, she out of them made reasons for urging her request.—ALFORD.

Here, again, as in the case of the centurion, our Lord found a faith greater than He had met with in Israel. The woman was, in St. Paul's words, a child of the faith, though not of the flesh, of Abraham (Rom. iv. 16), and as such was entitled to its privileges.—PLUMPTRE.

“Be it done unto thee even as thou wilt.”—It had seemed as if He would give nothing; but He ends with giving all, putting the key of the storehouse into her hand, and bidding her take, not a crumb, but “as thou wilt.”—MACLAREN.

“And her daughter was healed from that hour.”—Though the Saviour's body was at a distance, His energy was at hand.—MORISON.

As in the case of the Gentile centurion, the cure was performed at a distance. The intermediate link in both cases was strong faith combined with