

office intrusted to him, but I repeat that it was not one to be envied, and that in spite of the young king's earnestness, and the apparent success of his reforms, these visions pointed to a darker side, and spoke chiefly or entirely of chastisement and endurance.

R. PAYNE SMITH.

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*DID CHRIST SPEAK GREEK?—A REJOINDER.*

I AM sorry that Dr. Roberts should think the difference between us greater than I had supposed it to be. It is true that I wished to make as little of it as I could. At the same time I thought the reader would see precisely in what respect the difference seemed capable of being minimized, viz., so far as it related to the purely critical and historical question to what extent and in what proportion Greek and Aramaic respectively were spoken in Palestine at the time of our Lord.

I purposely excluded other considerations, from the fear that they might prevent the question from being decided upon its own merits, and excite a prejudice which it ought to be our object rather to allay. The question is one of fact and evidence, not of feeling; and if feeling is introduced, it is only too apt to make "the wish father to the thought."

And yet even here I think Dr. Roberts is inclined to overstate his case. Even supposing that the discourses in the Gospels were all originally delivered in Greek, there would still be the most serious difficulties in the way of supposing that we had received an exact transcript of them. But even if we could put these difficulties on one side, it might still be asked whether to insist upon such syllabic exactness was not

to attach too much importance to the "letter." It is one of the singular excellences of the Gospels that they lose so little by translation. Many most devout and learned men have lived and died quite content with the belief that they were reading a Greek version of words spoken in Aramaic. Nor is the beauty of our own Version destroyed—it is hardly even diminished—by the knowledge that it is not the original. There is more than one passage—such as, "Consider the lilies, how they grow," and parts of 1 Corinthians xiii. and xv. — where the English seems even to surpass the Greek. And if the theory which I have upheld be true, there is nothing irreverent in allowing ourselves to think so.

I am obliged to confess that both Dr. Roberts's original articles and his reply do not make upon me the impression of a strictly impartial and unprejudiced judgment. Perhaps it was not to be expected that one who has made a particular subject his specialty for years should sit down to consider quite calmly the arguments brought against his own view of it. In such a state of mind any sort of weapon seems good enough that first comes to hand. The main point appears to be that it should deal a ponderous and resounding blow. The real justice and validity of the argument is little considered. A very slender argument goes a long way when it makes for his thesis. A considerable argument is thrust aside, or met by some irrelevant appeal, when it tells against it. And the deficiencies of the argument are made up by peremptory challenges and rhetorical declamation. A hasty reader might easily be misled by these. Confident and emphatic statement, however insecure the foundation on which it rests, is

apt to carry with it conviction. Few have the time and patience really to test an argument when it is put before them. And yet, in order to get at the truth, some trouble, I am afraid, will be necessary. I shall be obliged to ask those who take sufficient interest in the question to follow carefully the whole course of it, to place statement and answer side by side, rigorously to sift out all irrelevant matter, and to take the arguments on either side strictly for what they are worth.

I propose to take Dr. Roberts's points one by one, not knowingly omitting any, though some are really of very slight importance, and then briefly to review the position of the question. As Dr. Roberts, I believe, followed the order of my paper, I shall follow the order of his. At the end perhaps it may be possible to arrange the different items of the evidence a little more according to the weight that ought to attach to them.

1. The first point that Dr. Roberts mentions is one that has a quite insignificant bearing upon the main issue. I observe in a note that Dr. Roberts is too ready to infer from the use of the words, *Ἕλληνι*, *Ἑλληνίς*, that any other language than Greek is excluded. He calls this a "pretty strong assertion," and adds, "that people styled 'Greeks,' and that cities styled 'Greek cities,' made use of the Greek language, is surely the dictate of common sense." This is just the kind of argument to draw down cheers from the gallery, but I did not expect it from a scholar like Dr. Roberts. Indeed, I think I can safely leave him to answer himself; for in the sentence immediately preceding that in which he speaks of the "pretty strong assertion," he states that, "as every one knows, Greek and Gentile are in the New Testament convertible

terms." "Greek" is in fact often simply equivalent to Gentile, or non-Jewish. It cannot, therefore, be concluded with certainty that the term necessarily implies the use of the Greek language.<sup>1</sup> The probability is that many of the inhabitants of the cities described by Josephus as Greek were Syrians, who spoke Aramaic themselves, and would not have to "learn" it at all.

2. I maintain, then, that there is no sufficient proof that the people from Decapolis who were present among the audience of the Sermon on the Mount understood no language but Greek. It makes very little difference if they did understand no other, but even as to this preliminary step no unambiguous evidence is forthcoming. Dr. Roberts is very confident as to this portion of his argument. He speaks of the "linguistic conditions of the cities of Decapolis as really decisive as to the language of the Sermon on the Mount, and therefore decisive as to the whole question at issue." But this is evidently running on very fast. Dr. Roberts himself will hardly deny that if the Decapolitans understood only Greek, some of the Galilean villagers understood only Aramaic. But if so, as I asked in my first paper, why should these be

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Roberts hardly seems to be aware when the *onus probandi* is on his side and when it is on mine. For instance, he accuses me of "begging the question" on the point before us. But I was not endeavouring to shew (what, indeed, it was not incumbent on me to shew) that all the inhabitants of Decapolis actually spoke Aramaic. All I said was that the arguments adduced by Dr. Roberts do not suffice to prove that they spoke nothing but Greek. When I maintain a conclusion myself, I shall be quite prepared to prove it positively. In regard to the arguments put forward by Dr. Roberts, it is enough for me to disprove them negatively; *i. e.*, to shew that the premises do not bear out the conclusion. If I can shew on other grounds that the Jews of Palestine spoke in the main Aramaic, it is for Dr. Roberts to shew that the particular inhabitants of Decapolis who were present at the Sermon on the Mount *cannot* have understood that language. The mere statement of the case within its proper logical form is enough to shew how very insufficient Dr. Roberts's reasoning is.

sacrificed to the Decapolitans, any more than the Decapolitans sacrificed to them? Really the premises are quite insufficient to bear out the conclusion. It would be just as easy to argue that the proceedings of an Eisteddfod must be conducted in English, because Englishmen were to be found amongst the audience.

3. The same remarks apply to the argument from the presence at the same Sermon of a contingent (we are not told how large) from Tyre and Sidon. Here again Dr. Roberts insists, with equal confidence and vigour, first, that the inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon spoke no other language but Greek; and then, as a necessary consequence, that the whole discourse must have been delivered in the Greek language. Neither point can in the least be made good. The inhabitants of Phœnicia doubtless spoke Greek to some extent, but there is no proof that they spoke no other language as well. The old Phœnician language, which was a dialect nearly akin to Hebrew, "with large elements of Chaldee" (*Deutsch*), *i. e.*, Aramaic, did not become extinct until the third century A.D.<sup>1</sup> Besides, a narrow strip of territory like Phœnicia, with a people much engaged in commercial pursuits, would be sure to be penetrated by the language of its neighbours, whatever that language was. But even were it clear that the particular Phœnicians who joined the crowd that gathered round our Lord spoke nothing but Greek, still many possibilities would intervene before we came to the inference that the Sermon on the Mount itself was delivered in no other tongue.

4. I am next charged with the "sweeping assertion" that the "mass of the nation hated all that was Greek."

<sup>1</sup> Kneucker, in Schenkel's *Bibel-Lexikon*, iv. 579.

I had hoped that I had guarded myself sufficiently against sweeping assertions. I fully admitted, not only that Greek was used in Palestine, but that it was largely used. I tried to define amongst what classes this was the case, and to what causes it was due. I was therefore prepared for statements which went to shew a considerable prevalence of Greek; but inasmuch as the great rebellion against the Romans was practically a rising against Hellenism in all its forms, I thought myself justified in saying that the "mass of the nation was hostile to everything Hellenic."

Dr. Roberts admits this in regard to the Greek religion or philosophy: he denies it in regard to the Greek language. But no such distinction can really be drawn. There is direct evidence to the contrary. I quoted an emphatic statement to this effect from Rabbi Akibha. Dr. Roberts himself says that "the study and employment of the Greek language were formally prohibited during the course of the wars conducted by Vespasian and Titus." What could more entirely bear out my statement? For the war against Vespasian and Titus was only the furious outbreak of passions that had long been gathering. And yet in the very next sentence after making this admission, Dr. Roberts reads me a schoolboy's lesson on the *Fallacia a dicto secundum quid ad dictum simpliciter*. I can assure him that it was not needed. Besides the evidence above given, there are the express statements of Josephus in a passage to which we shall have to return presently, and also of Origen, οὐ πάνυ μὲν οὖν Ἰουδαῖοι τὰ Ἑλλήνων φιλολογοῦσι. "The Jews are not at all given to the study of Greek."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Contra Celsum*, ii. 34. Dr. Roberts is welcome to amend the translation as he pleases. It is not easy to give the exact force of φιλολογοῦσι and at the same time to leave τὰ Ἑλλήνων as open as it is in the original.

5. Ewald, it is true, speaks of "an irruption of Greek culture and art," and again of "an intrusion of the Greek element by no means limited to Alexandria or other Greek cities, but that spread also speedily and powerfully to Jerusalem, and especially to Samaria." This is exactly for what I contend. A very considerable "irruption" or "intrusion" I not only admitted, but described. But the very words signify that it was not so universal as Dr. Roberts would have us believe. We speak of an "irruption" or "intrusion" of that which *partially* displaces something else, but not of its *complete* displacement. In like manner we might speak of an "irruption" or "intrusion" of French at the Norman conquest, but that did not make French the language of England. Dr. Roberts cannot claim the authority of Ewald for his main proposition, that our Lord spoke Greek. But if so, an isolated sentence should not be quoted in support of a conclusion that its author was very far from holding.

6. What was said in regard to the Epistle to the Hebrews I have no hesitation in repeating. Dr. Roberts has added nothing to his previous argument, and hardly seems to be aware of its logical weakness. In order for it to hold good, it would be necessary, first, that it should be certain or in a high degree probable that the Epistle was written to Palestinian Jews; and, secondly, that it should follow from this that it would not have been written in Greek unless Greek had been the dominant language in Palestine. The two propositions depend upon each other, so that any uncertainty in the first doubly tends to weaken the second. But really both propositions are most uncertain. The ordinary reader naturally supposes that the

title "to the Hebrews" must mean to the Jews of Palestine. The instructed reader knows far differently. Without going into the argument as to the address of the Epistle, a brief and simple proof that no stress can be laid on it for Dr. Roberts's purpose is to be seen in the list of critics who assign to it another destination than Judæa. The following suppose that it was intended for the Jews of Alexandria: Schmidt, Ullmann, Schleiermacher, Schneckenburger, Köstlin, Credner, Ritschl, Reuss, Volkmar, Hilgenfeld, Bunsen, and Wieseler, who has argued the point in much detail. Nicolas de Lyra held that it was addressed to Spain; Bengel, Schmid, and Cramer, to Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Bithynia, and Asia; Wall and Wolf to Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Greece; Semler and Nösselt to Thessalonica; Storr and Mynster to Galatia; Baumgarten-Crusius and Röth to Ephesus; Stein to Laodicea; Böhme to Antioch; Michael Weber, Mack, and Tobler, to Corinth; Credner (at an earlier date) to Lycaonia; Ewald to Italy; Wetstein, Alford, and recently Holtzmann, to Rome. Such discordance of opinion is proof enough in itself that the address of the Epistle to the Jews of Jerusalem cannot be taken for granted. Nor, if it could, as I think I have shewn, would it really prove anything in favour of the thesis Dr. Roberts is maintaining. The author of the Epistle may just as well have written to the Jews in Greek, though their "proper tongue" (Acts i. 19) was Aramaic, as the Apostle Paul write in Greek to the Church at Rome.

7. I have no wish to deny that St. Peter occasionally, and perhaps even frequently, spoke Greek, though the narrative of the betrayal seems to prove



that his native and natural dialect was the Galilean Aramaic. My chief object in pointing to his connection with St. Mark was to shew how many possibilities intervene between the premises and conclusion of Dr. Roberts. Nor is the suggestion that St. Mark (or some one else) may have had a share in the composition of his Epistle a hypothesis so "totally gratuitous" as Dr. Roberts seems to suppose. I stated my reasons for making it, and I do not think that Dr. Roberts should have applied to it such an epithet without attempting to answer those reasons. They were, first, the frequency of the practice of using amanuenses; and, secondly, the express statement of Papias, Irenæus, and Tertullian, that St. Mark acted as the interpreter of St. Peter. I may add to this the apparent necessity of some such assumption if both the Epistles attributed to St. Peter are to be considered genuine. Nor is it any argument at all against this that in the Epistle to the Romans the amanuensis, Tertius, sends a greeting to the Church in his own name. The First Epistle to the Corinthians, Galatians, and the Second to Thessalonians, were certainly written by amanuenses, and yet in none of these is there any distinct greeting. But the point has really the very slightest bearing on the subject before us. I should not have mentioned it if Dr. Roberts had not done so.

8. It is otherwise with the next paragraph of Dr. Roberts's reply. Here we are taken up to what is really the main question at issue. Nor have I so much to object to in the first half at least of Dr. Roberts's statement. It only illustrates what I said, that the difference between us as to the extent to which Greek and Aramaic were spoken in Palestine is not really so very great.

Dr. Roberts admits that Aramaic was the vernacular tongue. He says: "Aramaic might still be said, though with difficulty, and amid many exceptions, to maintain its position as the mother tongue of the inhabitants of the country." I should only be inclined to strike out here the words "with difficulty." Considering that forty years later every inhabitant of Palestine was, by Dr. Roberts's own shewing, expected to speak it, and that the rival language Greek was entirely prohibited, I do not think we can say that it maintained itself "with difficulty." The encroachments of Greek upon it did not amount to so much as this. At the same time I am quite ready to allow that there were "many" —or at least not a few—exceptions.

The strangest thing appears to be that Dr. Roberts should think it possible to make this admission and yet to maintain that our Lord habitually spoke Greek. We know that He addressed his teaching especially to the poor. Our own version tells us that "the common people heard him gladly;" and though this is a paraphrase rather than a translation of *ὁ πῶλος ὄχλος*, "the great multitude," it does not really misrepresent its meaning. Dr. Roberts, I suppose, would not question this. But if so, it is to me quite incredible—and I ask if it is not to every one else — that our Lord should have preached the gospel to the people in any other language than their own vernacular. If He had done so, can we believe that it would have had the effect it had? Let us transfer ourselves to modern times. Suppose some great evangelist were to arise in Wales: is it not absolutely certain that he would preach in Welsh? Dr. Roberts quoted the case of the Scotch Highlands. He says: "Celtic may be said to be the vernacular

tongue of many Scottish Highlanders, who yet scarcely ever hear it on public occasions. Gaelic may be said to be their mother-tongue, but the language which they read in books, and what they listen to in public, is English." I do not know how this may be. Dr. Roberts ought to be a better authority on the subject than I am. Yet my own experience has not been quite what he describes. I once spent a Sunday at Balma-carra, opposite the coast of Skye. We went to the nearest Scottish kirk, and I distinctly remember that though there was a service in English it was preceded by one in Gaelic, and, as we might naturally expect, the Gaelic service was evidently the more popular. One is more familiar with the condition of things in Wales, and I put it with confidence to my readers whether a preacher who sought to obtain a real hold upon the people could possibly address them in anything but Welsh? Has not this been notoriously the cause of the want of success of the clergy of the Established Church? English is, it is true, the language of notice-boards, of the hustings, the language even of books, but it fails to touch the finer chords of religious feeling.

9. Dr. Roberts proceeds in a somewhat peremptory manner to demand some reason for the occurrence of Aramaic expressions in the Gospels. It is superfluous to give him this, because even he cannot maintain, after what has been said in the last paragraph, that the few fragmentary phrases embedded in the Gospels are all that our Lord really spoke in Aramaic; and if that is the case it is as much for him to say why there are so few as for me to say why there are no more. It is always a precarious matter assigning motives to persons far removed from ourselves in time and circum-

stance, but I suppose the reasons would be somewhat similar to those which might lead to the insertion of a few French phrases here and there in an English story the scene of which was laid in France. (a) Some of the phrases, like *Ephphatha*, *Talitha cumi*, are single short emphatic sayings, which produced an instantaneous miraculous effect, and they are therefore retained for the sake of graphic realistic presentation. It is to be observed that both these phrases occur in the graphic Evangelist, St. Mark. (b) Words like *Rabboni* (in Mark x. 51, John xx. 16, which is insisted upon by Dr. Roberts) are introduced for the sake of the touch of reverential and tender regard which was not conveyed by the cold *διδάσκαλε* of the Greek. The word is not translated, and the Evangelist says (in effect) that he does not translate it because it is untranslatable.

10. I do not care to lay very much stress on the next point, the statement that *Acelandama* in Acts i. 19 belongs to the "proper tongue" of Jerusalem, though Dr. Roberts's treatment of it is entirely beside the mark. The argument from authority is out of place where as many or more authorities can be quoted on the other side. Besides, it is hardly ingenuous to leave it to be inferred that I am going against authority when the "majority" of commentators are really on my side. I do not rest my case on authority, but I used certain definite arguments to which Dr. Roberts has given no answer. The main point, however, I suppose I may take for granted, that the "proper dialect" of Jerusalem was Aramaic. At the same time I admit that the passage is not decisive, because it tells us nothing about the proportions in which the two languages were spoken.

II. I postpone for a moment what I have to say on the subject of Talmud and Targum, and come to Josephus. Dr. Roberts thinks it unfair in me to attach so much weight as I do to this writer, "since we have in the New Testament itself no fewer than eight different authors of the period, who ought all to have a voice in determining the matter." I need hardly say that I was not measuring the evidence by quantity. My only reason for attaching importance to Josephus was that his evidence is direct and definite, while that which is gathered by inference from the New Testament is not. The point of the *relative* extent of Greek and Aramaic is a nice one, and more difficult to prove with any precision than Dr. Roberts seems to think. My belief is not in the least degree shaken that Josephus affords the best, and indeed conclusive, evidence upon the subject.

Dr. Roberts quotes as a set-off against the two passages adduced by me, a third, which I venture to think tells so far as it goes in the same direction. Josephus tells us that he wrote his History of the Jewish War originally in "his native tongue," and afterwards translated it into Greek. The Aramaic version he sent to the "barbarians of the interior," *i.e.*, probably in the first instance to the Jews of Babylonia and the East. The Greek version, he says, was destined for "those who lived under the government of the Romans." There is nothing to shew that he meant by this the remnant that still remained in devastated Judæa. The last persons who would need the history would be those who had been the foremost actors in it. He meant rather the whole body of Hellenistic Jews, of whom there were a million in

Alexandria alone. Besides these, he had in view, as he himself says,<sup>1</sup> the Roman court and the educated Roman world generally. No argument at all can be drawn from the address of the work; but, on the other hand, there is some slight weight in the expression which Josephus uses to describe the Aramaic in which he wrote. He calls it distinctly "his native tongue" (*πάτριος γλῶσσα*), and though I do not suppose that Dr. Roberts would question the epithet, it falls in well with the description in the next passage that I am going to touch upon.

It is quite true that I laid stress on the concluding chapter of the "Antiquities." I thought it, and I think it still, the clearest piece of evidence that can be produced. Dr. Roberts seeks to turn the edge of it by confronting with the conclusions which I draw from it two statements by Grinfield and by Renan. I infer that "a knowledge of Greek was common enough among the middle and lower classes." Grinfield would confine it "chiefly to the upper orders," and Renan uses similar language. I was simply paraphrasing the language of Josephus: *διὰ τὸ κοινὸν εἶναι νομίζειν τὸ ἐπιτήδευμα τοῦτο οὐ μόνον ἐλευθέρων τοῖς τυχοῦσιν ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν οἰκετῶν τοῖς θέλουσι*. It is for the reader to say whether the paraphrase is a just one. But in any case the fact that Grinfield and Renan seem to have overlooked this passage, does not affect my argument in the least. To reconcile their statements with the language of Josephus is their concern. But to introduce such conflicting statements in an answer to me is something more than irrelevant: it is an *argumentum ad invidiam*, which ought to be excluded from a controversy conducted on the terms that I hope this is.

<sup>1</sup> *Vita*, § 65.

The point of what I allege is that Josephus speaks of Greek throughout as a foreign and "intrusive" tongue, which might be easily acquired, and was acquired to a considerable extent among the classes that I named; but nothing can be more opposed to his views than the supposition that it was habitually in use, as superseding the language of the country. Such a supposition is, as I said, "contradicted in every line," and Dr. Roberts has brought nothing to shew that it is not.

The same applies to the next passage adduced by me. The answer—if it is intended for an answer—that Dr. Roberts gives to this flies wide of the mark altogether. Josephus says that he alone understood the Aramaic of the deserters who came into the Roman camp. I explain this by saying that Josephus means himself alone of the immediate *entourage* of Titus, and that there may be in it some little exaggeration. On that explanation there would be no contradiction of importance to any other portions of the narrative.<sup>1</sup> But however gross the exaggeration may be, it is still an exaggeration of the statement that he (Josephus) alone understood the reports of the deserters. This must have been because they were in Aramaic. Greek every one would have understood. Aramaic would only be understood by a few Syrians. Dr. Roberts does not meet this inference in the least. He says: "Either another meaning than 'understood' must be given to *συνίη*, or the passage must be regarded as one of many in which Josephus seeks, at the expense of

<sup>1</sup> Of the two passages which Dr. Roberts quotes in proof that others in the Roman army besides Josephus understood the speech of the Jews—in one (*B. J.* iv. 1, 5) it is expressly stated that the party which overheard a conversation in a Jewish house understood what was said "because they were Syrians" (*i. e.*, because they spoke Aramaic themselves); in the second, a single Jew addresses Titus—very possibly in Greek.

perfect truthfulness, to magnify his own importance." The suggestion that another meaning should be given to *συνίημι* may, I think, be left to itself, as the meaning of the word is perfectly plain. The rest of the sentence leads nowhere. Suppose we grant all that is asked for, that Josephus does "seek to magnify his own importance:" what then? Unless his statement is absolutely and glaringly false, whether he alone understood the deserters, or some few, or even many understood them besides, still they must have spoken Aramaic, and not Greek.

Such are the answers that Dr. Roberts has given to arguments that he describes as "flimsy." I leave it for the reader to decide whether they are "flimsy" or not, but I must also ask the reader to decide as to the way in which they have been met.

12. The last point upon which I shall touch is the evidence of the Talmud and Targums. I did not enter into this before for reasons which I gave. At the same time I expressed my opinion that it was precisely in this direction that a really full and scientific treatment of the subject ought to be sought. I quoted from Credner some minute but very sound and accurate reasoning in favour of the use of a Targum by the first Evangelist, which Dr. Roberts meets with his own subjective opinion, that when our Lord said "Search the scriptures," He cannot have referred to an Aramaic translation.<sup>1</sup> He adds further, that of these Aramaic translations, or Targums, "we hear nothing in Jewish or patristic antiquity;" and again he speaks of "those

<sup>1</sup> I doubt if the reference in these words is to a translation at all. They would be directed, in the first instance, to the scribes and lawyers, the authorized exponents of the Law, whose duty it was to study it in the original.



interpreter are to raise their voices one above the other; . . . 'the Meturgeman is not to lean against a pillar or a beam, but to stand with fear and with reverence; 'he is not to use a written Targum, but is to deliver his translation *vivâ voce*,' lest it might appear that he was reading out of the Torah itself, and thus the Scriptures be held responsible for what are his own dicta; 'no more than one verse in the Pentateuch and three in the Prophets shall be read and translated at a time.' Again (Mishnah Meg. and Tosifta *ad loc.*), certain passages liable to give offence to the multitude are specified which may be read in the synagogue and translated; others, which may be read, but not translated; others, again, which may neither be read nor translated. . . . The same cause which in the course of time led to the writing down—after many centuries of oral transmission—of the whole body of the traditional Law, . . . engendered also, and about the same period as it would appear, written Targums, for certain portions of the Bible at least. The fear of the adulterations and mutilations which the Divine Word—amid the troubles within and without the commonwealth—must undergo at the hands of incompetent or impious exponents, broke through the rule that the Targums should only be oral, lest it might acquire undue authority (comp. Mishnah Meg. iv. 5, 10; Tosifta, *ib.* 3; Jer. Meg. 4, 1; Bab. Meg. 24 *a*; Sota 39 *b*). Thus a Targum of Job is mentioned (Sab. 115 *a*; Tr. Soferim, 5, 15; Tosifta Sab. *c.* 14; Jer. Sab. 16, 1) as having been highly disapproved by Gamaliel the Elder (middle of first century A.D.), and he caused it to be hidden and buried out of sight. We find, on the other hand, at the end of the second century, the practice of

Aramaic Targums which have so often, without the least ground of evidence, been conjured into existence."

I do not know how to characterize a statement like this with due regard to the moderation which I have wished to observe. It certainly seems to reckon upon an amount of ignorance which I should hope is not to be found amongst the readers of THE EXPOSITOR. We have only to take up the first standard authority on the subject. I gave a reference in my previous paper to Deutsch's "Literary Remains." As this has passed unnoticed, I now write it out in full. After giving an account of the gradual substitution of Aramaic for the ancient Hebrew after the Captivity, Mr. Deutsch proceeds to trace the origin and growth of Targums.

"If the common people thus gradually had lost all knowledge of the tongue in which were written the books to be read to them, it naturally followed (in order 'that they might understand them') that recourse must be had to a translation into the idiom with which they were familiar—the Aramaic. That further, since a bare translation could not in all cases suffice, it was necessary to add to the translation an explanation, more particularly of the more difficult and obscure passages. Both translation and explanation were designated by the term *Targum*. In the course of time there sprang up a guild, whose special office it was to act as *interpreters* in both senses (*Meturgeman*), while formerly the learned alone volunteered their services. These interpreters were subjected to certain bonds and regulations, as to the form and substance of their rendering. Thus (comp. Mishnah Meg. *passim*; Mass. Sofer. xi. 1; Maimon. Hilch. Tephill. xii. § 11 ff.; Orach Chaj. 145, 1, 2), 'neither the reader nor the

reading the Targum generally commended, and somewhat later Jehoshua Ben Levi enjoins it as a special duty upon his sons. The Mishnah even contains regulations about the manner (Jad. iv. 5) in which the Targum is to be written." <sup>1</sup>

The vague and indiscriminating censures which Dr. Roberts passes upon the Talmud in his larger work <sup>2</sup> are not the slightest answer to definite and coherent statements such as these. Granting that some of the evidence made use of by Mr. Deutsch is comparatively late, much of it is drawn from the Mishnah itself, which dates from about 200 A.D., and was then only the codifying of a much older oral tradition. If Dr. Roberts wishes to continue this controversy, it would be instructive to know what are his views on this matter. And I would ask that the discussion of it might be really to the point, and not consist in a few selected quotations which were written without any reference to the question at issue.

I have thus taken up in all twelve different points : (1) The linguistic inference from the use of the word "Greek;" (2) the argument from the presence of people from Decapolis at the Sermon on the Mount; (3) the like argument from the presence of people from Tyre and Sidon; (4) the relation of the Jews to the Greek language; (5) the special statement of Ewald as to the "intrusion" of Greek into Palestine; (6) the Epistle to the Hebrews; (7) the Apostle Peter; (8) the Galilean dialect; (9) Aramaic expressions in the Gospels; (10) Aceldama; (11) Josephus; (12) Talmud and Targums.

Of these, I do not care to press 10, though, as far as

<sup>1</sup> Deutsch, "Literary Remains," pp. 324-328.

<sup>2</sup> "Discussions," p. 297.

it goes, it is in my favour. Neither is much to be gathered either way from 7 and 9. On 1 and 2 (which should be taken together), 3 and 6, Dr. Roberts's premises are doubtful, and, if they were certain, the conclusion would not follow from them. 5, which is quoted against, tells really for the view which I have maintained. On 4 and 12 the existence of evidence is denied where clear and definite evidence has been produced. On 8 a conclusion follows from Dr. Roberts's own admissions which is fatal to his theory and which he has done nothing to remove. 11 remains as decisive against him as it was, the answer given being quite irrelevant.

Apart from the positive evidence which has been adduced in support of the opposite conclusion, Dr. Roberts himself has made admissions which are enough to prove that his own position is untenable. He admits that Aramaic was the "vernacular language" of Palestine. He admits that in the wars of Vespasian and Titus "the study and employment of the Greek language were formally prohibited." From the first admission it follows that our Lord *must* have taught, for the most part, in Aramaic. From the second admission it follows that Greek *cannot* have been, in the generation before the Jewish wars, the dominant tongue.

I have been much disappointed with Dr. Roberts's reply. I expected at least to have the subject treated in a scholarly and critical manner, and I have seldom read anything less critical. By "critical" I mean exact in definition, cautious in statement, strictly relevant and logical in reasoning. I have met with many rough-and-ready arguments that are such as

an advocate might urge before a popular jury ; I have hardly met with one that would carry weight with a scholar who took the trouble to give it a few moments' consideration. Anything like a judicious and impartial weighing of objections is very far to seek. I do not know what the readers of *THE EXPOSITOR* may think, but Dr. Roberts has lost at least one convert who might easily have been made if the case would have admitted it. I am now more convinced than I was before that he is spending his powers on a quite untenable cause.

W. SANDAY.

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### *STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST.*

#### III.—THE PERSONALITY OF JESUS.

THE Person of Christ is the perennial glory and strength of Christianity. If the life of our faith had depended on its signs and wonders, it had perished long ago. If they win the ages of wonder they offend the ages of inquiry ; and as the world grows in years credulous spirits die and critical spirits increase. But the Person that stands at the centre of our faith can never cease to be winsome while men revere the holy and love the good. His moral loveliness has been as potent to charm the human spirit into obedience as the harp of the ancient mythical musician was to charm nature into listening and life ; has by its soft strong spell held the wicked till he ceased to sin and learned to love, and the tender and guileless heart of a child began to beat within his breast.

The Person of Christ makes the Christian faith, is its sacred source and highest object. In it lie hidden the causes of what He afterwards became. Circumstances