

TATIAN'S DIATESSARON.

It has now been seen that the work on which Ephraem commented in the treatise published by Dr. Moesinger in a Latin translation was Tatian's Diatessaron in Syriac, and that this Diatessaron corresponded closely with the Latin Harmony which has been preserved by Victor of Capua. Tatian succeeded in producing a work which, as Theodoret bears witness, was popular in the Church for two or three centuries afterwards, and, as appears from the way in which it was treated in Victor's Harmony, was freely transferred into other versions, received additions and perhaps modifications. There is good reason, however, to believe that Ephraem has preserved for us, on the whole, the original form of the Diatessaron; and Harnack's judgment (Brieger's *Zeitschrift*, 1881, pp. 90, 91) appears a just one: "While reserving a more exact examination, the conclusion seems to be well founded that in Ephraem's Harmony we must recognize the work of Tatian. From Ephraem's commentary the text of the Diatessaron may be restored to a very considerable extent, though certainly not as fully as could be wished; and, above all, a conclusion may be formed as to its plan and arrangement. There remains certainly the abstract possibility that in the course of two centuries the Diatessaron had been already altered; and, having regard to the fates which other non-catholic writings underwent in the period between A.D. 200 and 400, such a possibility may even appear probable. At the same time, so far as I see, there is not one single certain observation to be made on the Harmony handed down by Ephraem which points to such a conclusion. On the contrary, the peculiar readings, bearing the characteristics of great antiquity, and the abbreviations (such as the omission of the genealogies and of references to the Davidic Sonship) which Ephraem had before him, shew that the

text of the Diatessaron must have been preserved with substantial accuracy."

It remains to offer the reader some instances of those peculiar readings. It should be observed, in the first place, that while, as has been said, the genealogies and anything corresponding to them are omitted, references to our Lord's succession to the throne of David are not similarly excluded. Thus the blind man, in St. Mark x. 47, exclaims, "Thou Son of David, have mercy on me" (p. 181); and, again, on occasion of the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, the exclamation is recorded (p. 207), "Blessing to the Son of David" (St. Matt. xxi. 15). On the other hand, there would seem, as Harnack thinks, to be some significance in the manner in which references to David are omitted or modified in the angelic announcements of our Lord's birth. Thus of the announcement to the shepherds (St. Luke ii. 11), the only words quoted are, "This day is born unto you a Saviour" (p. 27); the message to Joseph (St. Matt. i. 20) is simply, "Fear not" (p. 22); in the annunciation to Mary (St. Luke i. 32) the first quotation is (p. 15), "The Lord God shall give unto him the seat of David (*sedem David*)"; "that is," as Ephraem immediately adds, "because it had been foretold, *Non deficiet dominator et princeps donec veniet* (Gen. xlix. 10)." But on the next page the passage is quoted differently (p. 16): "The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David," and Ephraem proceeds to lay stress on Mary's belonging to the house of David. The difference in the two quotations, as Harnack observes, may very possibly indicate that Ephraem, as in many other instances, is supplementing the text before him from his own recollection of the Gospels; but it must be allowed to be remarkable that his commentary at this point betrays no apprehension, such as Theodoret expresses, of the work before him being defective or heretical in respect to our Lord's descent from David after

the flesh. In one other passage, however, the reference to our Lord's position, as Son of David, is omitted in a marked way. The story of the Canaanitish woman is introduced (p. 138) by the quotation: "The woman cried out and followed Him saying, 'Have mercy on me'; but He answered her not a word." On the whole, if we draw a distinction between our Lord's position as David's successor and as his son, and allow for Ephraem's habit of occasionally reading into his text from his memory, we may accept Harnack's conclusion that the Harmony on this point agrees substantially with Theodoret's account. It is clear that, whatever its omissions, it cannot have been conspicuously heretical on such matters, or it would never have met with such wide acceptance in orthodox circles as Theodoret describes.

We pass to the principal readings which seem worthy of attention, referring first to the select passages which Mr. Scrivener notices in the concluding chapter of his *Introduction*. In St. Matthew i. 18, Tatian supports the reading "Jesus Christ," Ephraem's quotation being *Generatio Jesu Christi sic erat* (p. 20). No light appears to be thrown upon the reading and interpretation of the Lord's Prayer. Only a few heads of the Sermon on the Mount are noticed, and the passage containing the Lord's Prayer is not among them. There is no reason whatever to conclude from this circumstance that it was not contained in Ephraem's text, for, as has been seen, he frequently notices only a few words out of a long passage, or one incident out of a story. In St. Matthew xix. Tatian supports the old reading, "Why callest thou Me good?" (p. 168.) The next single text in Mr. Scrivener's selection on which Ephraem throws any light is the Angelic Hymn in St. Luke ii. 14; and here his evidence, although chiefly indirect, is very interesting. The only words he quotes are, "*Gloria in excelsis Deo, et pax in terra*" (p. 27), but the accompanying commentary seems to imply that he read the third clause in the familiar

and cherished form, "Good will to men." He says that as the Divine grace and mercy give joy to sinners on earth, so their repentance gives joy to angels in heaven; and proceeds: "*Deo Gloria ex liberâ voluntate*" (which Moesinger interprets, "Glory to God from those who serve him voluntarily and cheerfully"), "*et iis quibus iratus erat, pax et reconciliatio, et iis qui rei erant spes et remissio.*" It would seem that we have here each of the three clauses paraphrased. "Glory in the highest" is interpreted by "Glory to God from free will," or "from those who serve him freely"—meaning, perhaps, from the angels; "peace on earth" by "peace and reconciliation to those with whom he was wroth;" and the remaining interpretation, "hope and remission to those who were guilty," can hardly correspond to any other reading than *ἐν ἀνθρώποις εὐδοκία*, "goodwill to men." The word "hope" seems again to correspond to *εὐδοκία* in a subsequent explanation. Ephraem quotes once more, "*Gloria in excelsis Deo et pax in terra,*" and adds as his own commentary, "*non bestiis et brutis sed spes bonis filiis hominum.*" It might be thought for a moment that *bonis filiis* indicates the reading "men of his good pleasure." But in that case the word *spes* would be at least superfluous; and when we have it in the sentence before coupled with *remissio*, as parallel to *pax* in the second clause of the hymn, it is far more natural to suppose that Ephraem was translating "Goodwill to men." Another very precious passage which Westcott and Hort place between double brackets, and on which the margin of the Revised Version casts a doubt (St. Luke xxiii. 34), is supported by Tatian; Ephraem quoting the words: "They know not what they do" (p. 265). His authority is against the disputed phrase in St. John iii. 13, *ὁ ἄν ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ*; the quotation standing "*Nemo ascendit in cælum, nisi, qui descendit de cælo, filius hominis*" (p. 187). The text is quoted a second time (p. 189), and again stops short at

“the Son of Man,” nor does the commentary appear to refer to any addition to those words.

On the Verses in St. John v. 3, 4, containing the account of the angel troubling the water, our new evidence is again only indirect. Ephraem comments on the narrative and quotes several phrases from it; but he does not quote these words. His commentary, however, seems to imply that he accepted the account of the angel's interposition. His quotation begins (p. 145) with Verses 5-7: “And a certain man was there,” etc., and on this he observes: “By which saying the Jews are confounded, who do not believe that baptism remits sins. For if they believe that by the water of Siloam an angel healed the impotent man; how much more ought they to believe that the Lord of angels purifies by baptism from every stain.” And, again, on the words, “My Father worketh hitherto and I work,” Ephraem says: “For if created things, angels, and lights and dew and rain and springs and streams, are not restrained on the Sabbath day; if on the Sabbath day neither are the angels taken from their service and servitude, nor,” etc., which again shews that angelic interposition was in his thoughts. At the same time it is always possible in such instances that his memory is supplementing his text. Passing to the passage on which Porphyry based one of his objections, St. John vii. 8, “I go not up,” or “I go not up yet,” unto this feast, Ephraem's quotation from the Diatessaron gives the former reading “*non ascendo*” (p. 167), but he adds a remarkable comment, “*i.e., ad crucem. Non dixit: non ascendo ad festum hoc, sed in festo hoc.*” There appears no other authority for the latter reading “in this feast”; but Epiphanius gives a similar explanation of the saying: “He spoke mysteriously and spiritually to his brethren, and they understood not what He said: for He told them that He would not go up to the temple in that feast, nor to the cross, to complete at that time the economy of his passion.”

(Tisch., ed. 8, vol. i. p. 812.) Finally, to complete these references to Dr. Scrivener's selected passages, the story of the woman taken in adultery is not quoted by Ephraem.

We pass to some of the more important passages to which Harnack has called attention. In St. John i. the third and fourth verses are read in the manner which is supported by so many ancient testimonies: "without Him was not anything made. That which was made was life in Him" (p. 5). St. Matthew i. 25 is again and again quoted, "*In sanctitate habitabat cum ea, donec peperit primogenitum*" (p. 25), and Ephraem insists urgently upon the belief that Joseph continued to live *in sanctitate*, and that Mary had no other children. Dr. Moesinger observes in his Preface (p. ix.) that this is one of the instances in which Ephraem's text agrees with the Curetonian Syriac, which has "*Caste habitabat cum ea, donec peperit filium.*" Ephraem mentions one other curious variation in this passage. He says: "The words are spoken in inverted order. For he first took her, and afterwards lived with her in sanctity. But so it is read: 'He lived with her in sanctity and took her'" (p. 25). A very singular reading is contained in one of the Armenian Codices in St. Luke ii. 35. Instead of "a sword shall pierce through thine own soul," this Codex reads "*Pertransibis gladium,*" "Thou shalt pass by the sword" (p. 28), and it is quite clear that Ephraem had this reading before him, as he proceeds to give a striking explanation of it. "For the sword which fenced Paradise on account of Eve was removed through Mary," the flaming sword, which kept the way of the tree of life, being removed by the redemption. There appears no other trace of this reading or interpretation. As is more than once the case, however, Ephraem proceeds to give the other reading, and another interpretation of the passage, and his words are worth quoting for other reasons. "A sword shall pass through, *i.e.*, a denial. But the Greek text clearly says,

'that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed,' namely, of those who doubted. (And when he says, 'A sword shall pass through,' that is, 'thou too shalt doubt,' for indeed Mary believed Him to be the gardener)." Moesinger says of the passage in brackets that, as the context shews, it is an interpolation, although contained in both Codices. But it is to be remarked that in another part of the commentary (p. 270), in the narrative of our Lord's resurrection, Mary the mother of our Lord appears to be confounded with Mary Magdalene. On the words "Touch Me not," and "I ascend unto my Father," Ephraem observes: "Because she had doubted He said to her, 'until I ascend unto my Father, thou shalt not approach Me,' as in that saying 'The sword shall pass through thine own soul, that is, the denial.'" There is another point worth notice which is illustrated in this passage. Ephraem, it will be seen, refers to the Greek text, and on its authority gives the preference to the reading *Pertransibit gladius*. This he does again (p. 116) on St. Matthew xi. 25, where he quotes from Tatian "*Gratias ago tibi, Pater cœlestis,*" but adds "*in Græco dicit: Gratias ago tibi, Deus Pater, Domine cœli et terræ.*" Again (p. 53), in the narrative of the miracle in Cana, he observes, "*Græcus scribit, Recubuit et defecit vinum.*" In the two previous places the Greek quoted agrees with the common text. In the third place Moesinger observes with justice that the quotation from the Greek version is unmeaningly inserted, and that he cannot conjecture from whence it was taken. Once more (on p. 228) Ephraem says: "*Scriptura,*" (or, as Dr. Moesinger gives it in a note), "*Lectio sic habet et aperte dicit, Glorifica me ea gloria quam habui coram te, antequam mundus fieret;*" where again the quotation agrees with the ordinary text. It is natural to conclude, as Harnack does, from these expressions that Ephraem refers in such passages to the Greek text, not of the Diatessaron, but of the Gospels themselves;

and that the latter text, and not that of Tatian's work, was read in the Churches, and had the special authority of *Scriptura*. Incidentally, this confirms the belief that Ephraem had sufficient knowledge of Greek to turn to it for critical purposes, although he preferred using a Syriac Diatessaron. (See Dr. Payne Smith's article on Ephraem in the *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, vol. ii. pp. 143-4.) The Diatessaron, we may presume, was popular for private reading, as in the time of Theodoret; but it had no canonical authority, nor was it used in public service.

The next reading to be noticed is a very remarkable one. In St. Matthew xvi., Verse 15 and those which follow are thus quoted (p. 153): "*Vos autem quid dicitis de me quod sim. Simon, caput et princeps, locutus est: Tu es Christus, filius Dei vivi. Et respondit: Beatus es Simon. Et portæ inferi te non vincent.*" There is thus an omission of the important words "For flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church." Ephraem proceeds, indeed, to quote and to comment upon the words "*tu es petra*"; but his observations apply our Lord's assurances to St. Peter alone, instead of referring them to the Church. Thus immediately after the words just quoted, "The gates of Hell shall not prevail against thee," Ephraem proceeds, "That is, because his faith shall not be destroyed. For what the Lord builds who can destroy, and what the Lord overthrows who can raise up again? . . . The Lord, when He was building his Church, built a tower, the foundations of which were able to bear all that was to be built upon it." For as, he says, "at the confusion of tongues, the earthly tower and the enduring building and the refuge of labour was frustrated, so afterwards the Saviour himself made a tower which leads up to heaven, and a tree the fruit of which is the healing of life." Then he continues,

“*Tu es petra*, that stone which He set up that Satan might stumble against it. On the other hand, Satan desired to oppose this stone to our Lord that He might stumble against it, when Peter said to the Lord, ‘That be far from Thee, Lord.’ . . . The Lord took this stone and cast it behind Him, that the followers of Satan might stumble against it, as ‘they went backwards and fell to the ground.’” We have given the substance of the commentary, and, combining it with the text first quoted, it would certainly appear improbable that Ephraem had before him the passages which speak of the building of the Church upon the rock of Peter’s confession, or of the binding and loosing. The one point to which Ephraem and his texts direct attention is, that Peter’s own faith would not be suffered to fail, and perhaps he implies also that, in thus laying firmly the foundation of Peter’s faith, a foundation was at the same time being laid for the faith of the Church. Harnack thinks it not too bold to conclude that, at the time of Tatian, the omitted passages did not exist in St. Matthew’s text. Considering that the words *Tu es petra*, though omitted in the first quotation, are subsequently commented upon, this seems to us too much to conclude. But the quotation “the gates of hell shall not prevail against THEE,” combined with the tenour of the comment, seem to shew that Ephraem understood the promise simply to refer to Peter’s own faith, and to the importance of his work in the foundation of the Church.

One interesting saying appears to be attributed to our Lord by Ephraem, though it is not printed by Moesinger as an actual quotation. On the parable of the unjust steward, Ephraem observes (p. 163): “Purchase for yourselves, he says, O sons of Adam, with these transitory things which are not yours, that which is yours, and which does not pass away.” Dr. Moesinger says in a note, that he does not know what is meant by the insertion “he says,” *ait*.

Harnack, however, observes that, if it be supposed to refer to our Lord, we are reminded of the saying mentioned by writers of the second and third century, "Be ye good moneychangers." Another interesting reading is given at pp. 90 and 115, referring apparently, from the respective context, to the mission both of the Twelve and of the Seventy, in St. Matthew x. and St. Luke x.: "*Misit eos binos juxta similitudinem suam,*" as though "after his likeness" were the meaning of the words we translate "before his face." Dr. Moesinger particularly observes that the words "*juxta similitudinem suam*" are in both Codices written in red, and must be regarded as a quotation. In the former of these two narratives we have, also as a quotation from St. Matthew x. 23. (p. 95), "*Amen dico vobis, non poteritis consummare has urbes, donec venero ad vos.*" In St. Matthew xviii. 20, there is a singular variation (p. 165): "*Ubi unus est, ibi et ego sum. Et ubi duo sunt, ibi et ego ero.*" St. Cyprian, it will be remembered (*De Unitate Ecclesie*, ch. xii.), insists from this text on the necessity of unity: "most is given not to the multitude but to the unanimity of those that pray. 'If,' he says, 'two of you shall agree on earth:' He placed agreement first; He has made the concord of peace a prerequisite." But Ephraem uses his peculiar reading for the consolation of the solitary, doubtless meaning the monks. "As Christ consulted for his flock in all its necessities, so He consoled those who lead a solitary life in this sad condition, saying, 'where there is one, there am I also,' lest any solitary one should be saddened; for He Himself is our joy, and He Himself is with us. 'And where there are two, there will I also be,' because his mercy and grace overshadow us." In St. John xvi. 7, we have a striking addition (p. 225). "It is good for you that I go away; for if I go not away the Comforter will not come to you, and all truth will not become known

to you," "*et omnis veritas vobis non innotescet.*" In St. Luke xxii., Verse 44, which with Verse 43 is placed in double brackets by Westcott and Hort, and is marked as doubtful in the Revised Version, is supported by Tatian. Ephraem gives the quotation (p. 235) "*Et factus est sudor ejus, ut guttæ sanguinis,*" and adds the characteristic comment: "His sweat was in order to cure the sickness of Adam. 'In the sweat of thy face,' he says, 'thou shalt eat thy bread.' And He prayed in a garden that He might bring Adam back again into a garden."

These appear the more important readings which Ephraem's text affords us. There are a good many minor variations, some of which are noticed by Harnack; but those above mentioned will probably be sufficient to shew that we have been furnished by Dr. Moesinger with an original and independent authority, which will justly claim further attention. On one or two omissions upon which Harnack dwells, we cannot lay any stress. Thus he sees an indication of the antiquity of Ephraem's text in the absence of any quotation from the last verses of St. Mark, or from the narratives of the Ascension. But the fragmentary nature of Ephraem's quotations renders any deduction from such omissions untrustworthy, and it is of much more weight on the other hand that we have quotations from St. John xxi.; while Ephraem speaks in his commentary of the ascension of our Lord to his Father's right hand (p. 273). The commentary, in fact, seems somewhat abruptly concluded, the last Chapter, the 22nd, containing simply the quotation, "*Sed vos permanebitis in Jerusalem donec accipietis promissionem Patris mei*" (p. 274), which appears to be taken from Acts i. 4, rather than from St. Luke xxiv. 49. On the whole, the commentary is useful for the positive information it gives us concerning Tatian's work; but it is rash to draw negative conclusions from its omissions.

It concludes with some prayers, and with some interest-

ing observations on the composition of the Gospels, which must be taken to represent the current tradition in Ephraem's time, and which it will be worth while to quote in full: "The words of the apostles are not all equal and the same, because they did not write the Gospel at the same time. For they did not receive the command to write as Moses was ordered to make the tables; but, as the prophet says, 'I will give them a covenant, not like the former one; but I will put my law in their mind and will write it in their heart.' But they produced their writings as occasion moved them. Matthew wrote a Gospel in Hebrew, which was afterwards translated into Greek. Mark followed Simon; and when they were come into the city of Rome, that there might be a perfect remembrance of things—lest, perhaps, in consequence of the lapse of time something should be forgotten—they asked Mark, and he wrote whatever he had received. Luke began from the baptism of John; for he spoke of his incarnation and of his kingdom from David, while the other began from Abraham. Then came John; and, finding that the words of those who had written concerning the genealogy and the human nature of the Lord had aroused various opinions, he wrote that He was not only man, but that from the beginning He was the Word. Matthew wrote the Gospel in Hebrew; Mark in Latin, from Simon, in the city of Rome; Luke in Greek; John also wrote in Greek at Antioch, for he remained among the living up to the time of Trajan." The most remarkable point in this tradition is the statement that John wrote his Gospel at Antioch. Harnack observes that there appears no other authority for such a belief; but Wittichen has concluded from internal grounds that the Gospel had a Syrian origin.

We have confined ourselves to the most salient points in the work which has been thus singularly preserved to us, and so singularly overlooked. It cannot fail to be the

subject of much further investigation, and it seems in many respects to point us beyond or behind itself. We may well believe that it is but a pledge of many more such discoveries in the hidden treasures of the East. But even the preliminary examination we have been able to bestow upon it will, we hope, have helped to illustrate the unity of Christian tradition, to confirm the received conclusions of Christian criticism, and to exhibit in a new and interesting light some important passages of the Gospels.

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*THE REVISED VERSION OF THE NEW
TESTAMENT.*

II. THE TRANSLATION.

(2) THE RENDERING OF GREEK GRAMMATICAL FORMS.

IN a former paper I discussed the degree of success attained by the Revisers in their rendering of Greek nouns and verbs. I shall now discuss their rendering of Greek inflexions and particles. My former paper embraced matters pertaining to the Lexicon; this paper will deal with those which belong to Grammar.

The subject now before us is both more difficult to discuss, because more indefinite, and less interesting and perhaps less important, than that of my earlier paper; for it consists chiefly of insignificant details scattered over almost every verse of the New Testament. Moreover, as it seems to me, in the matters now before us the New Version presents predominant excellences strangely associated with unaccountable defects. To form a reliable estimate of this element of the Revisers' work, is therefore exceedingly difficult. And to give satisfactory reasons for a general estimate is absolutely impossible. All I can attempt in this