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644th ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING,

HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM B,

THE CENTRAL HALL, WESTMINSTER, S.W., on Monday,

May 29th, 1922, at 4.30 p.m.

THEODORE ROBERTS, ESQ., IN THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the previous Meeting were read, confirmed and signed and the HON. SECRETARY announced the election of the following as Members: Albert Hiorth, Esq., C.E., Wilson Edwards Leslie, Esq., and as Associate, David Smith Dow, Esq.

The Chairman then announced that the Rev. J. E. H. Thomson, M.A., D.D., the author of the paper, "The Readers for Whom Matthew wrote his Hebrew Gospel," had not been able to make it convenient to come to town, and that Lieut.-Colonel F. A. Molony, O.B.E., would kindly read it in his place.

THE READERS FOR WHOM MATTHEW WROTE HIS HEBREW GOSPEL.

BY THE REV. J. E. H. THOMSON, M.A., D.D.

It is universally admitted that external evidence is overwhelmingly in favour of the traditional view that the earliest Gospel was written by Matthew in Hebrew. Archdeacon Allen thus sums up the case in the Introduction to his commentary on Matthew (pp. lxxix., lxxx.): "We have a uniform tradition in the second century . . . to the effect that the first Gospel was written by Matthew, the Tollgatherer and Apostle, in Hebrew. . . . This tradition is directly contradicted by the testimony of the first Gospel itself." It is misleading to call this "tradition." We do not say "there is a tradition that the Persians were defeated at Marathon"; yet it was fought six years before Herodotus, our earliest authority, was born. Papias, the earliest witness to the authorship of the first Gospel, was as near the probable date of its composition as was Herodotus to the date of Marathon. But the alleged contradiction of the evidence of history by the contents of Matthew may be challenged. Archdeacon Allen in the most painstaking way tabulates the differences between the first and second Gospels; in his argument he assumes throughout that Matthew borrowed from Mark, and supplies somewhat vaguely reasons why Matthew omitted words or clauses from Mark or added them. He never considers the converse possibility that

Mark borrowed from Matthew. Against this may be placed several instances in which Mark appears to correct mistakes in Matthew. Thus compare the mission of Apostles in Matt. x. 10 with Mark vi. 8, 9; or the reward of self-denial, Matt. xix. 29 with Mark x. 29, 30; and most striking of all compare Matt. xxvi. 34 with Mark xiv. 39. Mark, it is generally admitted, had behind him the evidence of Peter, whose *hermeneutes* he was. He in opposition to all the other Evangelists, relates that our Lord in warning Peter said: "This day, in this night, before the cock crow *twice* thou shalt deny me thrice." If Matthew wrote subsequent to Mark, and "transferred almost the whole of the second Gospel" to his own pages, as Dr. Allen says he did, why did he, in making the transference, introduce such a change as omitting "twice"? Especially is this a difficulty when we remember that Matthew knew that Mark recorded Peter's evidence, which, on all the incidents connected with this painful episode, was by far the best. If, however, Mark wrote last with Matthew before him he might, on the authority of Peter, make the alteration. Dr. Allen gets over the difficulty by saying: "Mark's *dis* is of doubtful authority." Lachmann, Alford, Tischendorf, Tregelles, W. and H. retain it; the great majority of the uncials have it; it is in the Old Syriac, the Diatessaron, the Vulgate, and the Peshitta. What motive could induce a copyist to introduce this word and arrange the subsequent narrative to suit? Harmonistic reasons would strongly impel him to omit it in the three passages in which it occurs.

We then venture to maintain that internal, as well as external, evidence supports the view of Clement of Alexandria, that Mark's was the last of the Synoptic Gospels to be written.

Patristic evidence contains another element more pertinent to our present object; that Matthew wrote in Hebrew. Most modern scholars hold that this means Aramaic. For our present purpose this is not important. It is maintained rightly that our Greek Matthew presents none of the phenomena of a translation, but every symptom of a work composed in Greek. There is, however, a nearly contemporary analogy in the case of Josephus, who, as he tells in his Introduction, wrote his History of the "Wars of the Jews" first in the "language of our country" and then translated it into Greek. His history has all the appearance of having been written originally in Greek. An author who, having written a work in one language translates it into another with which he is equally familiar, really composes anew. If Matthew did as Josephus, his Gospel would read as if it had been composed in Greek. This, if it is correct, explains why the Fathers, in quoting the first Gospel, never show any consciousness that they are quoting, not from the original Gospel, but from a translation.

To limit the external evidence, it is retorted that Matthew made merely a collection of our Lord's "sayings," *ta logia*. Against this is the fact that the word *logion*, which occurs four times in the New Testament, never is translated "saying." It occurs some 60 times in the lxx., and with one doubtful exception it means either the High Priest's breast-plate or a divine oracle, never an ordinary "saying." It is a rare word; Moulton and Milligan record no instance of it in the *papyri*. The "sayings" discovered by Grenfell and Hunt are never called by the collector *logia*, always *logoi*. Irenæus regarded what Matthew had written as the Gospel. According to the text of Routh (Rel. Sac. i. 13) and Gebhardt and Harnack (Barn. Ep., p. 92), Papias applied the same term to Mark's Gospel as to Matthew's.

For whom, then, was this Hebrew Gospel written? The common answer is: "For his countrymen in Palestine." Reasonable as this answer seems, we venture to regard it as incorrect. In the first place, it was not necessary to write in Aramaic for the Jews in Palestine, as they all, speaking generally, knew Greek. It seems almost certain that our Lord addressed the multitude commonly in Greek. Had our Lord spoken to them in Aramaic, when He quoted the Law of the Prophets, He would have done so in accordance with the Hebrew, or at all events with the Targum. Practically invariably when, in the first Gospel, our Lord Himself quotes, He follows the lxx., even where it differs from the Hebrew. In the narrative when the Evangelist himself is the speaker, the Hebrew is generally followed. Other proofs might be produced. When our Lord uses Aramaic, it is marked as a peculiarity. The crowd in Jerusalem expected Paul to address them in Greek, but gave more heed when they heard that he was speaking in Hebrew. Pilate—or Lysias—needs no interpreter in his dealings with the people. The Palestine converts would be as well acquainted with Greek as a Belgian with French.

In the second place, Palestine is a small country; about the size of Wales. Not only so, but as it was incumbent on every male to present himself three times a year before the Lord at Jerusalem, the Jewish inhabitants were more closely in touch with each other than were the members of any other nationality of similar size. The fame of our Lord was soon known in Jerusalem, so that early in His ministry Scribes and Pharisees came from thence to Galilee to learn more particularly about Him. For years after His Ascension there would be no need to write or publish any account of His Words or Deeds for the inhabitants of Judea or Galilee. Paul could presume on Agrippa's knowledge of the history of our Lord. "These things were not done in a corner."

It is to be noted, in the third place, that the Christians of the first generation expected that their Lord's second coming would

not be long delayed. They thought that while men of that generation were yet living, the "Son of Man" would descend from heaven in glory, accompanied by the Holy Angels. As Jews they assumed that Judea would be the scene of His glory. There would not seem to them any need of writing an account for the Jews of Palestine of what had taken place during their Lord's life of Humiliation when that Humiliation would so soon be lost sight of in the Glory of His second Advent.

If not for the Jews of Palestine, for whom, then, was the Hebrew Gospel written? Again, we have an analogue in Josephus. In his Introduction to his "History of the Wars of the Jews" he says he composed it "in the language of our country and sent it . . . to those of our own nation beyond the Euphrates." We are apt to forget the extent and importance of this Eastern Diaspora. Without regarding as perfectly accurate, or historic the picture given in the Book of Esther of the pervading presence of the Israelites in the provinces of the Persian Empire, there are many evidences of the number, size, and the importance of the Jewish communities "beyond the Euphrates." Josephus (Ant. xv. ii., 2), speaking of the later fate of John Hyrcanus II., says: "Hyrcanus, having been brought (into Parthia), Phraates the king permitted him to dwell in Babylon, where there was a multitude of Jews." It must be remembered that the captives of Nebuchadnezzar were not the first carried east from Judea. Sennacherib claims (Schrader i. 286) to have led away captive from the land of Judah 200,750 persons; when Esar-haddon took Manasseh captive he would most likely take others also. The successive bands of captives taken by Nebuchadnezzar along with those earlier deportations imply a large Jewish community, of which only a small portion returned either with Zerubbabel or Ezra.

Although, so long as the Jewish state existed, Jerusalem was the *Qibla* of Judaism, with the capture of the Holy City by Titus, and later the crushing of Bar Cochba's rebellion, the national centre of gravity passed eastward till it definitely rested in Babylon. The official Targum of the Law, that of Onkelos, was not accepted as such till it had received the imprimatur of Babylon. The authoritative Talmud to the present day is Talmud Babil, not Yerushalmi. Though this change of centre was not completed till the 5th century, there must have been a large number of Jews in those portions of the Parthian Empire that abutted on that of Rome as early as the days of our Lord. The importance of the Jewish community in Babylon was little likely to be forgotten while the memory of Hillel, who had come from thence, was yet green.

Even had the apostles been liable to forget Eastern Jewry, Pentecost would have forced it on their notice. There was peace

between Rome and Parthia, and taking advantage of it, many Jews from the east of the Tigris were in Jerusalem. Though most of these would be only temporary sojourners, some seem, from the Greek word used, to have settled in Jerusalem. Others regarded themselves as "dwellers in Mesopotamia." To this multitude Peter preached, and many of those three thousand converts must have belonged to those four nationalities first named, as hearing in their own tongue the wonderful works of God. These, on their return to their home beyond the boundaries of the Empire, would need to be able to give a reason for the faith that was in them. The Israelites of the banks of the Tigris were as much influenced by Messianic hopes as were those of Palestine. They do not seem to have kept to themselves the expectation of some great personality springing from their midst; and this influenced their neighbours, as may be seen by the mission of the Magi. Their hopes had been of an imperial Messiah, a Lord of the Kings of the Earth. Instead they—these Jerusalem pilgrims—return home proclaiming their belief that one crucified as a malefactor was the Messiah promised to the Fathers. These temporary sojourners in Jerusalem could have seen little or nothing of Jesus, so as to be fired with personal enthusiasm; they could not take Peter with them to Mesopotamia. A written record of all that Jesus had done and taught must be their dependence. This record would need to be composed in Aramaic or Hebrew—the two languages which, as Jews, they knew. The conquests of Alexander had spread, it is true, some knowledge of Greek even to Bactria, as proved by the coins, but it was not a medium to influence the public of Parthian Judaism.

Is the Gospel of Matthew a document that would fit the purpose for which we presume it to have been written, *i.e.*, that Jesus the Crucified fulfilled all that the prophets had foretold of the Messiah, and that He was—what the prophets had but hinted—God as well as Man?

It opens by showing Christ's legal Davidic descent in the throne line. Next it shows that His place of birth was that foretold, a fact emphasized by the visit of the Magi; the mission of whom might still be remembered, even after the lapse of more than thirty years, and so confirm the Gospel. Although the interest and excitement it would cause at the time among the Jews of Parthia would have died down, yet the memory would be easily revived. Matthew alone of the Evangelists records the visit of the Magians.

An objection is anticipated: "If this Messiah in Whom you believe was born in Bethlehem, how is it that He is always called 'Jesus of Nazareth'?" Matthew answers this by giving an account of the flight into Egypt, the consequence of the Magian mission, and the return, not to Judea, but to Galilee and

to Nazareth. He proceeds to show that in both the flight into Egypt and the choosing of Nazareth as a residence there was a fulfilment of prophecy. Did not Hosea say: "I have called my Son out of Egypt," and Isaiah declare that "a branch (*netzer*) should grow out of the roots of Jesse"? As Jesus of Nazareth He was the man of the branch. The Israelites of Parthia might be as likely as the scribes of Jerusalem to have imbibed the prejudice that "out of Galilee ariseth no prophet"; this Matthew answers by showing that it was precisely in Naphthali and Zabulon that the Messianic light was to shine forth. The Mission and Message of the Baptist would be widely known; even Josephus thinks it worthy of being chronicled. Matthew relates his testimony. It is unnecessary to multiply proofs that the writer of the first Gospel relates every action of the subject of his work to prophecies going before, step by step, to the triumphal entry into Jerusalem and the soldiers casting lots on His garments at the foot of the Cross.

Another peculiarity is manifested in the record of Matthew. The Evangelist, assuming that his countrymen east of the Euphrates hoped, as did their kindred in Judea, for a royal Messiah, calls that time of coming glory a Kingdom. But while the other Synoptists designate it the "Kingdom of God," Matthew invariably calls it "the Kingdom of Heaven," or rather "of the Heavens." In this he follows the reverent practice of the Rabbins, who by this synonym avoided the undue obtrusion of the Sacred name. It was the same feeling which led the Jews to cease, in reading the Hebrew Scriptures, to pronounce the name of Jhwh, and say instead of "Lord," till now the true pronunciation is lost. The Jews in Babylon were more under scribal domination than were their brethren in Jerusalem. The influence of the Scribes was not in Babylon counter-balanced either by the party of the Sadducæan High Priest, or by the Hellenizing tendencies of the Herods. To use this term to describe the Messianic glory, is an evidence of the intention of the Evangelist to suit his message to his eastern public.

Further, some rumour of the wonderful works of Jesus of Nazareth may have reached the eastern Dispersion. Matthew narrates many of these, but in doing so makes his narrative subserve his purpose of showing Jesus had loftier claims than the Messiah they expected. In one of the first miracles he describes, the healing of the paralytic, Jesus before healing the sufferer forgives his sins. The force of this is emphasized by the objection of the Scribes from Jerusalem: "Who can forgive sins but God only?" The implied claim is not denied, but reiterated and ratified by the performance of the miracle. By the method he has adopted in describing the miracle and the attitude of the Scribes from Jerusalem, the Evangelist wishes to show that Jesus

was far greater than the Messiah they had been expecting. Nothing had been said by the prophets that the Messiah would show miraculous powers. Two of the prophets, especially Elijah and Elisha, had possessed these powers in some degree, but in nothing like the degree and character in which Jesus possessed them. The manner of His works of wonder was fitted, specially fitted, to impress those dwelling in a land where magic was practised. Jesus healed by no invocation of potent spells, but simply by a touch. In the Apocryphal book of Tobit is seen the way evil spirits were exorcised; our Lord drove out evil spirits with a simple word. He raised the dead, and stilled the tempest with a word, walked on the waters, and fed thousands with a few barley loaves and two fishes. They had expected a conqueror who would win an empire by slaughter, but a greater is here.

These miracles give point and emphasis to His teaching. In the Sermon on the Mount He assumes a place above Moses. Moses in his legislation always claimed the authority of Jehovah behind him: "The Lord spake unto Moses, saying" but Jesus enunciated His decisions with "I say." But He goes further. In the parable of the Drag-net, and still more in the parable with which He closes His ministry, the Sheep and the Goats, He represents Himself sitting on the Throne of the Most High and judging all men at the last day. Matthew, as the other Apostles, had come to realise that He, their Master, Who had eaten and drunk with them, was Divine. He knew how difficult it was for anyone to grasp this mysterious truth; he knew that it was only gradually that those who had been with Him had reached the comprehension of the nature of their Lord; hence he endeavours to lead those he is addressing by steps similar to those by which he himself and his brother Apostles had been led, to say each for himself, as Thomas did: "My Lord and my God."

Knowing that the Cross was above all the stumbling-block which hindered belief in the Messiahship of Jesus, Matthew dwells specially on it. The mockery of the soldiers; their crowning Him, if only with thorns; their thrusting into His hands a sceptre, if only a reed; their enwrapping Him in a purple robe, was a recognition, if only in mockery, that He had claimed Messiahship. Above all, was the title on the Cross, in Hebrew, Greek and Latin: "This is Jesus the King of the Jews." It was because he was the Anointed King that He was crucified. His miracles had marked Him out as being more than man. Matthew relates how marvels accompanied Him to the end. He, like the other Synoptists, tells of the mysterious darkness that enveloped the land for three hours; and of the veil of Temple rent as by a mighty hand "from the top to the bottom," so that the watching centurion was constrained to say: "Truly this was the Son of God." Matthew alone tells how the rocks were rent and the

graves were opened, and how the dead arose when the sufferer with a great cry gave up the ghost. Even in death He was victor over death.

Had Jesus been merely man, His claim to Messiahship had ended in disaster with His death. Matthew shows how, what to onlookers seemed to be His final and absolute defeat, was turned into glorious triumph by His Resurrection. He alone relates how the fact of the Resurrection was only the more emphasized by the efforts of the High Priests to prevent any false resurrection being pretended by the Apostles. The sealing of the stone and the placing of the watch only the more demonstrated the great fact. The Evangelist is careful to forestall the fable by which the Jewish priesthood strove to hide it. Those who were to carry the Gospel to Mesopotamia would most likely have heard the story. Some one of the elders, or perhaps one the soldiers, let the truth slip out. Matthew's account of the forty days of the Lord's risen life seems scanty. As do the other Evangelists, he relates the presence of Mary Magdalene and the other Mary at the sepulchre before daybreak, and the vision of Angels, but he alone tells of the earthquake and its effect on the Roman sentinels. Other inhabitants of Jerusalem may have been awakened by the shaking of the earth, but as these earth tremors are frequent in Palestine they are not noticed unless specially severe. The very scrappiness and scant amount of the records of our Lord's risen life as recorded by Matthew, as compared with the fulness and orderliness of what has gone before, suggests that this part of the Gospel was written on the very morrow of the events. The excitement, the spiritual exaltation of the six weeks between our Lord's Resurrection and His Ascension were but little conducive to calm narrative.

That Matthew wrote his Gospel in Hebrew, not for the Palestinian believers, but for the Eastern Diaspora is, to recapitulate, rendered probable by the fact that while the former knew Greek, and were familiar with our Lord's history, the latter knew little or no Greek, and had no means of being acquainted with the career of the crucified Messiah. Further, the events of Pentecost were specially fitted to impress the Apostles with the importance of Israel east of the Euphrates.

Have we any evidence that this Hebrew Gospel reached the readers for whom it was intended? It may be objected that the Book of Acts contains no record that multitudes were added to the Church through the perusal of an account of the Words and Works of Jesus. The silence of Acts is not to be pressed. To conclude, as some have done, from this that at first Christianity was confined to the Roman Empire, is to forget the very limited scope of the Book. It is in no true sense the "Acts of the Apostles." It really only narrates the Acts of Paul. What is

related even of St. Peter is only what is preparatory to the work of St. Paul. It was needful to describe the founding of the Church and its early organisation, else St. Paul would have had no starting-point. Peter's visit to Joppa, and consequent call to Cæsarea and the house of Cornelius, is related at great length, with his defence of his conduct before the Jerusalem Church, all to prepare the way for Paul's mission to the Gentiles. If used as proof, the silence of Acts proves too much, and, therefore, proves nothing. Alexandria was, out of Greece itself, the centre of Hellenism in the Roman World, and out of Palestine, the most influential community of Israelites in the Empire dwelt there. Although there is no word of any Apostle or Evangelist going there, early in the second century, Alexandria is the centre of Greek Christianity. In regard to Rome itself there is no record of the time when, or of the persons by whom the Gospel was brought thither. When Paul writes his Epistle to the "Romans" it is to a community of Christians whom he expects soon to visit that he writes. If Peter did visit Rome, as tradition has it, there is no notice of it in Acts. Even the labours of the Apostle Paul are only partially recorded. It is, therefore, not at all surprising that we have no account of the founding of Churches in Mesopotamia, any more than any account of Paul's journeys between his first and second imprisonment.

Besides the legends of the Mission of Andrew to Scythia, and of Thomas to India, and more particularly the legend in Isidore that Matthew went and preached to the Parthians, Medes and Persians, which may be shadowy memory of his Gospel being sent there, there is the Mission of Pantænus to India. Eusebius tells that not only did he find that Bartholomew had preceded him in India, but that there were many evangelists, even then, zealously engaged in preaching the Word.

Another element has to be considered. The two Empires of Rome and Parthia, even when nominally at peace, were always suspicious of each other, and Parthian subjects were apt, on crossing the border, to be arrested as spies, by over-zealous Roman officials. The Jews appear to have been placed on a special footing. They were a nation by themselves, but the Christians were a people not understood by the Roman police. Then there was the serious barrier of language; Greek was little known east of the Euphrates, and out of Palestine Aramaic was little known west of it.

But there is evidence that the Gospel was not without fruit to the east of the Euphrates. In the last chapter of his first Epistle the Apostle Peter sends greetings to the Churches of Asia Minor from "their co-elect in Babylon." The grammatically possible, but logically highly improbable view, that the *suneklekte* in this passage is an individual woman, Peter's wife in short, may be

dismissed. Assuming that it is a Church that through the Apostle sends greetings to other Churches, it is asserted that it is not a Christian community in the historic Babylon on the banks of the Euphrates, but the Church of Rome that is intended. Except in the Revelation of St. John no trace is to be found in Apostolic or post-Apostolic times of Babylon being a pseudonym for Rome. Babylon was an important city, important enough for Trajan to recross the Tigris to besiege and capture it, about sixty years after the probable date of this Epistle. There must then have been a regular Christian Church in Babylon not later than A.D. 60, over which the Apostle Peter was presiding, accompanied by Mark. As the various Jewish communities in Babylonia maintained a close intercourse with each other, it may be assumed as likely that Churches would be set up in other Jewish centres, as Nahardea and Sura.

In Christian tradition another city, Edessa, claims precedence even of Babylon. According to the well-known legend, the king of Edessa, Abgar, sent a letter to our Lord praying Him to come and heal him. In the answer which our Lord sent, He promised to send one of His disciples after His Ascension to do for him what he desired. He concludes with the promise: "Thy town shall be blessed, and no enemy again shall have dominion over it for ever." This promise was falsified when (A.D. 116) Lusius Quietus captured, sacked and burned Edessa. Admitting that this letter is a forgery, the promise it contains would not be forged *after* it had already been falsified; it must have been written before A.D. 116; and long enough before to have got such a hold on the people, that even when events falsified it the promise was still treasured. The Christian community in Edessa must have been both numerous and influential for a prophecy uttered by their founder to take such a hold on the inhabitants. The legend proceeds to tell that after our Lord's Ascension, Thomas sent Addai to heal king Abgar and evangelize Edessa. Without being committed to the truth of this legend, we venture to hold that Christianity must have been introduced into Edessa not later than A.D. 70. We are aware, that in assigning so early a date to the Christianization of Edessa we are at variance with the formidable authority of Dr. Burkitt, who would date that event in the latter half of the second century. He arrives at this conclusion on the evidence of the epilogue to the "Doctrine of Addai," a document of uncertain age, which, assuming Addai to be the founder of the Church in Edessa, gives him only one successor till Palût, who, as his predecessor Aggai was martyred, is ordained by Serapion, Bishop of Antioch. The Episcopate of Serapion lasted from A.D. 190 to 202. There is something wrong in this; either the traditional date of Addai is much too early, or Palût's connection with Serapion is a mistake, or there were more

Bishops between Addai and the end of the second century. While Dr. Burkitt considers it incontrovertible that Palût was contemporary with Serapion, he admits that some authorities say that Barsamya, one of Palût's successors, was put to death under Trajan; but Trajan died A.D. 117, before Christianity was introduced into Edessa, according to Dr. Burkitt. Further, in the account which Dr. Burkitt gives of Bardaisan, from Michael the Syrian, Hystasp was Bishop of Edessa in A.D. 179—eleven years before the Episcopate of Serapion; he was the successor of Izani.

An incident falls to be introduced here, which has a bearing, not only on when the Syrian Churches were founded, but also as affording a reason why so few notices of them have been preserved. Bishop Medlycott (*India and the Apostle Thomas*, p. 18) relates on the authority of Bar Hebræus and Assemani, that in the year A.D. 139 Jacob, Bishop of Seleucia-Ctesiphon, sent two presbyters, Achadabues and Kam-Jesu, to Antioch, in order that one of them should be chosen and consecrated for the episcopacy by the Bishop of Antioch; this was in accordance with prevailing ecclesiastical usage. On their arrival at Antioch, they were denounced as Parthian spies and arrested. Achadabues escaped and went to Jerusalem, but Kam-Jesu was executed. This unfortunate occurrence terminated the relationship between the metropolitan See of Parthia and the Patriarchate of Antioch. It is to be noted that there was a fully organised Christian Church in Seleucia-Ctesiphon before the date preferred by Dr. Burkitt for the introduction of Christianity into Syria. We venture then to continue to hold to our opinion that Christianity early found its way into Mesopotamia and Parthia. That now it is represented on the banks of the Euphrates by a few weak communities of Armenians and Nestorians, and has disappeared altogether from regions further to the East, is due, first to the fierce persecution of the Sassanide princes, and then to the submergence of the whole country under the flood of Islam, with the sword in the one hand and the Qûran in the other.

It is somewhat confirmatory of our contention as to the destination of the Hebrew Gospel that it so early and so completely disappeared from the West. Jerome was the last man who professes to have seen a copy late in the fourth century in Palestine. There is, as is well known, a translation of the New Testament into Eastern Aramaic, the Peshitta. The version of the first Gospel in it was sometimes regarded as representing the earliest form of the Aramaic Matthew. A more thorough knowledge of the history of the Eastern Church, and of the Aramaic versions used in it, compelled the abandonment of that view. It is recognised now that from the beginning of the third century to the Episcopate of Rabbula, Bishop of Edessa (412-435), the Syrian Churches used in their Sunday services, not the separate Gospels, but Tatian's

Diatessaron in Syriac. As Tatian was a heretic, Rabbula commenced a crusade against the use of his work in Divine service. So successful has this crusade been, that not a single copy has come down to us in Syriac. Two Arabic translations were found in the Vatican Library, and have since been translated. Another source of information is found in the commentaries of Ephraim Syrus, accessible to us only in an Armenian translation; Ephraim used the Diatessaron, and quotes from it as he proceeds. Another factor in the question, however, had to be considered. Dr. Cureton published, in 1858, a copy of the Gospels in Syriac, representing a very much older recension than the Peshitta. This discovery was emphasized by the discovery some thirty years later of the Sinaitic Palimpsest by Mrs. Lewis and Mrs. Gibson, a copy of the Curetonian recension. Rabbula is credited with having had the Gospels translated from the Greek to replace the Diatessaron. A comparison of the Peshitta with the Curetonian does not confirm this view; it is rather a revision of the earlier, and so stands to it very much as our Revised does to the Authorised Version.

This conclusion again brings us into conflict with Dr. Burkitt. He holds that Tatian's Diatessaron, or to give it its Syriac name, *Euangelion-da-Mehallete*, was the earliest form in which the Gospels reached Syria. His view on this matter is conditioned by that which he has on the date at which Christianity reached Edessa. We have, we think, exhibited the insufficiency of the grounds on which he has come to his decision, and have advanced reasons for claiming a date much earlier than his for the founding of the Syrian Church. On literary grounds the priority of the *Euangelion-da-Mepharreshe* may be shown. The dependence of the Peshitta on the Curetonian suggests it as well known. There is the difficulty of imagining the occasion for anyone undertaking a translation of the separate Gospels to rival the Diatessaron used in the Churches. Besides its obvious independence of the text of the Diatessaron, there is the impossibility of anyone tearing to pieces the Diatessaron, and assigning to each Gospel what belongs to it, taking account of the fact that in duplicated narratives the slight variations are preserved. The title given to the Diatessaron, "the Gospel of the Mixed," impeies to knowledge that the Gospel existed in separate narratives. Convenience for liturgic purposes would easily explain the adoption of the combined narrative, in preference to the separate Gospels.

A study of the Curetonian exhibits its strongly Semitic character. This is more marked in the Gospel of Matthew, than in that of either Mark or Luke or John. This impression is intensified when it is compared with the parallel Matthæan passages in the Palestinian Lectionary found by Mrs. Lewis. The form proper names assume in the latter clearly proves that it has been trans-

lated from the Greek. Our Lord is called *Yesous*, not *Yeshu'a*, the Apostle Peter is always *Petros*, not as in Peshitta and the Curetonian, *Kepha*. So with the other Apostles, *Matai* instead of *Mati*, *Ya'qobos* instead of *Ya'qob*, and *Yohanos* instead of *Yohanan*. As has already been noted, Dr. Cureton was under the impression that in the version of Matthew which he discovered he came upon a transcript of Matthew's original Hebrew Gospel. Nearly a score of years ago Professor Hjelt, in Zahn's *Forschungen*, published a study of the Curetonian Matthew, in which he came to the conclusion that "Matthew" is the work of a hand other than that which has translated the other Gospels. The force of Hjelt's arguments Dr. Burkitt admits to some extent, and fails, as it seems to us, to turn. While differences between the Syriac in the version of Matthew's Gospel and that in the other Synoptists are obvious to the careful student; no one can fail to be struck with the general resemblance in style and mode of rendering. This may be explained if Matthew's Gospel was much the earliest to reach the East, and, as it did in the West, secured a place as a sacred writing before the arrival of the others; in that case the other Gospels would naturally be translated in a similar style. When the missing fragment of the Apocryphal book of Esdras was discovered, it was translated into the "Bible English" of three centuries ago.

Whether Dr. Cureton's supposition is correct, that we have in the Syriac version discovered by him the original Aramaic Matthew or it be a translation from a Hebrew original, does not matter for our thesis; it is very early, and is not translated from Greek. This, combined with the fact, which we have endeavoured to make clear, that the Palestinian converts did not need a Hebrew or Aramaic Gospel, and the further fact that, *circ.* A.D. 189, Pantænus found a copy in India, enables us to claim that we have at least rendered the truth of our thesis probable.

DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN said: I am sure we shall all feel we are very much indebted to Dr. Thomson for his extremely interesting and instructive paper, which has given me more food for thought than any other lately read here. I must confess that it has never occurred to me to regard St. Matthew's Gospel as written for the purpose of circulation in the countries east of Palestine, but I think our lecturer has shown good reasons for holding this view. Its chief importance for us as students of the Gospels is the new reason which it gives for the differences between this Gospel and the other synoptic Gospels, a subject, to my mind, of surpassing interest.

I still, however, believe that Mark's Gospel was the first written, as I think is shown by its commencing sentence, "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ," if we remember that the four evan-

gelist were always regarded in early days as forming one Gospel. I do not myself see why those who spread Christianity in the East should require a written Gospel earlier than those who spread it in the West.

I agree with Dr. Thomson in the reasons he has given for the earliest preachers not requiring any written account of our Lord's life, but should think these applied to those who worked in the East as well as to those in the West.

I think that the only way in which the verbal similarities in the synoptic Gospels coupled with their divergencies can be explained is by supposing that these three Evangelists made use of a common oral tradition. In days when much writing and reading have permanently impaired our capacity for memorizing, we are unable to realize how readily the *ipsissima verba* of long narratives were in those days retained in the memory.

St. Matthew, from his former occupation of tax-gatherer, was probably the most accustomed to writing among the Apostles, and therefore, the preparation of a Gospel for the Eastern Christians would more naturally fall to him than any other of the Twelve.

I must say that the lecturer has not convinced me that St. Peter wrote (or dictated) his first Epistle at Babylon. I agree with Dr. Hort and Professor Ramsay that this Apostle lived for several years at least after the death of St. Paul, and wrote his Epistle at a time when the book of Revelation may have been already current; or if not, at a time when Rome was already known in Christian circles as Babylon. I think the early tradition of St. Peter in connection with Rome, however distorted, could not be wholly without foundation, and I should judge from the districts mentioned in his first Epistle that his labours had not been carried so far east as Babylon.

I do not quite understand why Dr. Thomson speaks of the Sinaitic Palimpsest discovered by Mrs. Lewis and Mrs. Gibson as a copy of the Curetonian recension. I thought it was generally regarded as older than what Dr. Cureton published.

As regards the name "kingdom of heaven." I think it is based on Daniel iv. 26, "after thou hast known that *the heavens do rule,*" and sets forth the acceptance on earth of the rule of heaven, which is at present confined to those who acknowledge the One seated at the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens (Heb. viii. 1) as their Lord and Master. It is important to notice that even in Matthew's record, our Lord changed the name to the Kingdom of God when He was speaking of the time then present while He was on earth (xii. 28), and also when He was speaking of the privilege and blessing of the Kingdom (xxi. 43). Our lecturer has overlooked these instances in saying that Matthew invariably uses the title "kingdom of the heavens."

I agree with Ernest Renan's remark that the Gospel of Matthew is the most important book ever published in the world, setting forth as it does the change from Judaism to Christianity, than which there could be no greater event in the history of God's dealings with men. Matthew is the only one of the four Evangelists, who records our Lord's prophecy of the foundation of the Christian Church, and gives the formula for Christian baptism. He also alone quotes and applies to our Lord's parabolic teaching the Psalm of Asaph, "I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things kept secret from the foundation of the world," an exact parallel with Paul's statement that the mystery of the Church had not been made known to men in previous ages. In the great eschatologic discourse in Chapters xxiv. and xxv., we have a more detailed account of the second coming of our Lord than appears in any other Gospel, which also contravenes a merely Jewish view.

I therefore ask you to pass by acclamation a vote of thanks to Dr. Thomson.

Dr. SCHOFIELD, in thanking Dr. Thomson for his able paper, which he had read with great interest, wished to accentuate the doctor's words on page 182: "It opens by shewing Christ's legal Davidic descent *in the throne line.*" This, as we know, was through Joseph, and with this view before him one would suppose Matthew would leave to others any mention of the fact that Jesus was not actually Joseph's son at all. It is rather remarkable that such is not the case, and Matthew gives very strong evidence twice over—once directly and the other indirectly—that such was *not* the case. In Matthew i. 20, the Evangelist gives the direct statement as from the "angel of the Lord," that Christ "was conceived (or begotten *Mary*) in Mary of the Holy Ghost," and this after Joseph had found (v. 18) that Mary was with child, as Matthew adds, "of the Holy Ghost."

The other indirect statement is the extraordinary character of v. 16, which instead of saying, as all through, "and Joseph begets Jesus, who is called Christ," avoids any such statement, which, if true, would certainly be made, by the curious circumlocution, "Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ."

The fact that it was to Matthew's interest to pass over the virgin birth in a way that did not concern Luke, renders these two statements of the greatest importance to our Lord's unique conception; and Matthew himself our greatest witness as to the truth of the Virgin Birth, although, for the esoteric account, we must study Luke.

The Rev. J. J. B. COLES said that, beyond and above the interesting question as to the readers for whom St. Matthew wrote his Gospel, was the great object of portraying the glory of Christ in

the special aspect as Jehovah's Messiah. In St. Mark He is Jehovah's Servant, in St. Luke He is Jehovah's Man, in St. John He is Jehovah Himself. It is in this light that the Jewish Remnant—after the Church has gone—will read the four Gospels from the Jewish standpoint, in connection with the Old Testament prophecies.

“The kingdom of the heavens,” an expression found 32 times in St. Matthew's Gospel, points, as most of us know, to the future actual reign of the heavens over the earth under the glorious reign of Christ, as foretold by Daniel and by the Lord Himself in Matthew xxiv. and xxv.

The parable of the sheep and the goats should be interpreted according to the context.

Lt.-Col. MACKINLAY said: It is, of course, very generally supposed that St. Mark's Gospel in Greek was the first of all; but Dr. Thomson is not, I believe, alone in thinking that St. Matthew wrote first, and in Hebrew. Our author claims that St. Matthew wrote for the Jews long dispersed in Babylonian dominions; he gives many excellent reasons for these conclusions, which are very probably correct, though whether Matthew wrote before Mark hardly seems to affect the question.

Looking at the details of the paper, the differences between the Synoptists are hard to explain, particularly the “dis” of Mark, to which our author alludes on page 179; they may be due to various causes, but it is difficult to see how they demonstrate that Matthew wrote his Gospel before Mark.

On page 180 the fact that our Lord quoted the Septuagint *looks* as if He spoke in Greek. But then we have records of the actual Aramaic or Hebrew words which He employed on certain definite occasions. Apparently, our Lord used both languages; we ourselves have but little practical experience of bi-lingualism in the part of the country in which we live, but some Welshmen, our Prime Minister, for instance, appear to be equally fluent in their native language and in English, and thus able to give an account of events equally graphically in either tongue. The labouring countrymen, on the other hand, are only at home in their own language, consequently the bi-lingual capacities of a people differ among themselves.

Why does our author, on page 181 suggest any doubt of the historical accuracy of the book of Esther? All will agree that large numbers of captive Jews were taken into Babylonia or Assyria in Old Testament times, and their descendants remained there in great measure.

Pages 182 to 184 are valuable, and are worthy of careful study, as they enumerate many of the distinctive features of the Gospel of St. Matthew, specially the fulfilment of prophecy, the Davidic genea-

logy of our Lord, His claims to Divinity in forgiving sins, and of authority in teaching; the record of the symbols of kingship at the Crucifixion, although given in mockery, tend in the same direction.

The study of the special features of each Gospel is attracting much attention at the present time, and this part of the paper is a useful contribution to this subject.

On page 181 our author speaks of the shifting of the Jewish centre of gravity from Jerusalem to Babylon after the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus. At the present day, modern Jews observe many ceremonies of the Passover not enjoined in the Bible, but which they declare have come down to them from the times of the Jews in Babylonia.

Now that Mesopotamia has come under our influence, we may perhaps hope to discover some traces of the Jews and even of the early Christians in that part of the world, notwithstanding the subsequent persecutions of the Sassanide princes and of the Moslems. We know that in North Africa, though long under Mahomedan sway, there are many vestiges of former Christian worship and customs. Possibly, similar vestiges may be found in Mesopotamia; the features and some of the tribal customs of the Afghans resemble those of the Jews in Old Testament times.

The Diatessaron is mentioned several times in the paper before us; it aims at being a connected narrative of our Lord's life, or a harmony of the Gospels. I happen to have examined a translation of it with some little care a few years ago, to see if its chronology agreed with that which I had deduced from a study of all the Gospels, particularly from that of St. Luke, but agreement could not be found, except with that of St. Matthew; in fact, it appeared that St. Matthew's Gospel had been taken as a framework, and events not narrated by him had been inserted by the author in a somewhat careless manner sometimes, being in positions quite contradictory to their places in the other three Gospels. Possibly, future investigators may find other resemblances between the records of St. Matthew and the Diatessaron.

Our warm thanks are due to Dr. Thomson for his careful and very able paper.

Rev. F. E. MARSH said: Miles Coverdale, in his translation, lays down the following rules in reading any section of the Scriptures. These rules are of primary importance:—

“ It shall greatly helpe ye to understande Scripture, if thou mark
Not only what is spoken or written,
But of whom,
And to whom.
And what words,
At what time.

Where,
 To what intent,
 With what circumstances,
 Considering what goeth before,
 And what followeth."

We could not have better rules in pondering the Gospel before us. Matthew was written *specifically* for Hebrew Christians, but *generally* for all believers in Christ; hence, while the Gospel leads us back to David and Abraham in its commencement, its close has its Gospel message to all nations.

The message of Matthew is about the King and His Kingdom. All the evangelists emphasize that Christ was crucified as "The King of the Jews," but Matthew unfolds the character of the Kingdom in the Sermon on the Mount, and the mysteries of the Kingdom in the parables of Matthew xiii.

There are several outstanding proofs that Matthew's Gospel was written for Hebrew Christians.

The opening words, "The Book of the Generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham," connects the Gospel with the Old Testament, where we find thirteen other generations mentioned.

Thirteen is an incomplete number, therefore we need the generation of our Lord to make the double perfect number, namely, twice seven. The peculiar thing is, Abraham's and David's generations are not spoken of, but these several heads are linked up with Christ in the New Testament. This fact would be of peculiar interest to Hebrew Christians.

The peculiar designation of the sphere of God's rule in "The Kingdom of the Heavens" is confined to Matthew, and occurs 32 times. "The God of Heaven" is the One who rules, as all the Jews believed.

The definite sentence, "The end of the age," is peculiar to Matthew, and refers to the end of the Jewish age (xiii. 39, 40, 49; xxiv. 3; xxviii. 30), which has its consummation after the parenthetical period of the Church.

Again, the formula—"That it might be fulfilled which was spoken," or "written," "by means of the prophet"—is exclusive to Matthew, and also their equivalent, "That which was spoken," or "it was spoken." These occur 32 times, and connect the two Testaments.

There are many other points which confirm the fact, that the Gospel of Matthew was written to Hebrew Christians. The reference to the building of the Church in the future of Christ's time, and His reference to the judgment of the nations because of their treatment of His brethren according to the flesh, make it of special import to the Hebrew Christians, although its application is to all God's children.

Mr. SIDNEY COLLETT said that the arguments and conclusions advanced by Dr. Thomson as to Matthew's account of the Gospel having been written first, did not appeal to him. There seemed to be too much supposition, hypothesis, legend, and tradition relied upon for the argument to carry any weight with him. But that was a small matter.

The really serious thing that did matter was the way in which the Divine inspiration of the Word of God was ignored, first on page 179, second line, where the lecturer says: "Mark appears to correct mistakes in Matthew"; and again on page 181: "Without regarding as perfectly accurate or historic the picture given in the book of Esther."

Now, if there are "mistakes" in Matthew, and if Esther is "inaccurate" and "unhistoric," then what becomes of the inspiration of the Bible as is claimed in such passages as these: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God" (2 Tim. iii. 16); or "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter i. 21)?

But, in addition to these, there are numberless instances which prove conclusively the Divine inspiration, and therefore the minute accuracy of the Holy Scriptures.

Take, for example, Gal iii. 16, where Christ is shewn to be the promised seed by the letter "s" in our authorized translation, i.e., the difference between the singular and plural of the word "seed": "He saith not, and to *seeds*, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ."

Mr. W. HOSTE said: Dr. Thomson's thought on page 183 that Matthew, in his use of the expression, "Kingdom of Heaven," "follows the reverent practice of the Rabbis in avoiding the undue obtrusion of the Sacred Name," seems suggestive, and valuable as a corrective to certain fanciful distinctions, as they seem to me, drawn by some between this and the other phrase, "Kingdom of God." There is a difference, of course, but it cannot be profound, seeing, for one thing, that the terms are used interchangeably in the same parables, of the mustard seed and leaven, in Matthew xiii. and Luke xiii. The "Kingdom of Heaven" would emphasize the source of the authority, the kingdom of God, the one who exercises that authority, its sovereign ruler.

I am afraid I cannot agree with the Chairman, in spite of the glamour of Renan's name, whom he calls as witness that the object of Matthew throughout is to shew the supersession of Judaism by Christianity. The ministry of our Lord was confined to the lost sheep of the House of Israel, and He warned the twelve not to trespass those limits. It seems to me a gross spiritual anachronism to bring in Christianity into, at any rate, the first 27 chapters of Matthew, except prophetically in chapter xvi., "I will build my

church." "Grace and truth" came by Jesus Christ, but that is not Christianity, but the principles on which the Kingdom was to be set up. It is important to remember that during our Lord's mission, Israel had not been set aside nationally, the true branches had not been severed from the olive tree (see Rom. xi.). They were still in the place of national privilege. Christianity, which recognizes no national preference, is incompatible with the Jewish position of most favoured nation. The two cannot co-exist. Christianity depends on the ascended Christ and a completed Pentecost. Every intelligent Jew of our Lord's time would be familiar with the prophet Daniel. They had no "higher critics" among them to explain that Daniel was a forgery! They knew that of Daniel's four world-empires, three had fallen, that they were under the fourth, and that what would follow would be the Kingdom which the God of Heaven would set up, which would break in pieces and consume all the other kingdoms. What else could the "Kingdom of the Heavens" announced by the Baptist, by Christ and His Apostles, be than that fifth Kingdom.

It was only when they rejected the Kingdom on the King's terms that the testimony was modified, and works of power—the miraculous signs of the Kingdom—were largely replaced by words of power—prophetic parables expounding the mysteries of the Kingdom. What are these mysteries? That a Kingdom should be set up in the hearts of the disciples in the absence of the rejected King. This is the present aspect of the Kingdom, "not meat and drink," that is, consisting of outward rules and rites; but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, an attitude of heart to the absent Lord.

Mr. AVARY H. FORBES expressed a doubt as to the ignorance of Greek east of the Euphrates, which the lecturer assumed. After the defeat of the Persians by the Greeks, the latter mixed largely in Persian affairs, as enemies, allies or partisans. Many of these Greeks remained in Persia. Alexander's invasion, later on, was not that of a vulgar conqueror. He sought to spread Hellenic culture in Asia, and amalgamate the East and the West. He founded towns along his route, he encouraged his soldiers to marry Asiatic wives, and set the example himself; and he induced many Asiatics to enlist under his banner. At Persepolis, he found *many hundreds of Greeks*, who, for some offence, had lost an eye, a hand, a foot or an ear—according to the cruel Persian laws. These he offered to send back to Greece, and support them himself. But, ashamed of their mutilated condition, they preferred to remain in Persia. In the Persian armies which Alexander encountered, moreover, there was often a phalanx of Greek mercenaries. These facts suggest that Greek was more widely understood east of the Euphrates than assumed in the paper.

The AUTHOR'S reply:—I would begin by thanking the Institute

for its kindness in receiving my paper in my absence, and in providing one to read it.

To begin with Mr. Roberts, the Chairman. I do not think that any reason in favour of the chronological primacy of Mark can be deduced from the opening sentence of his Gospel—it only means that the prophecy of John the Baptist was really “the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.” According to Papias, the early preachers in the locality in which he lived interpreted the Hebrew Matthew as best they could. As he belonged to Asia Minor, his evidence applies to the West. His evidence in date may be regarded as relating to a time which he remembered, but was long past when he wrote, therefore probably not later than A.D. 70. At that time, the Christians had Matthew as a written Gospel, cf. the quotations in the *Didache*. The alleged special accuracy of Oriental Memories is to me more than doubtful. Sir William Muir’s account of the special selected traditions concerning Mohammed is evidence of this. Mr. Roberts has not advanced any evidence that “in Christian circles” Rome was “known as Babylon.” Clement writes from Rome, not from Babylon, to the Corinthian Church. Ignatius, a score or so years later, writes to “Rome,” not by the pseudonym of “Babylon.” There is an ambiguous phrase in “the ascension of Isaiah,” which, while capable of being understood as identifying Babylon with Rome, is susceptible of another and more logical interpretation. Moreover, “the Ascension of Isaiah” is an “apocalypse,” while the first Epistle of Peter is not. Dunedin is a poetical name for Edinburgh. Were I dating a letter so, my correspondent would think I had emigrated to New Zealand, unless the letter were in verse. Peter, in his epistle, is not an apocalypticist. While the Sinaitic palimpsest is older than the M.S. discovered by Dr. Cureton, it represents the same recension, as indicated by the use made of it by Dr. Burkitt in his *Evangelion Da-Mepharreshe*. St. Matthew’s Gospel was only “Jewish” in this respect, that it was directed to meet the prejudices of the Jews.

I agree with Dr. Schofield’s remarks on the Matthaean account of our Lord’s birth. Personally, I think Mary must have had no brothers, else they would have taken notice of her condition before marriage. She probably was an heiress, whose residence was in Bethlehem, but came to be betrothed to Joseph in Nazareth. As an heiress, she would be obliged to marry into her own family, hence it was necessary that she should accompany her husband to Bethlehem. Thus, it was needless to show her connection with Davidic stem. The relation of the Lucan genealogy with the Matthaean has already been wrought out in the article on that subject in Smith’s “Dictionary of the Bible,” by Lord Arthur Hervey. Luke’s gives the natural actual genealogy, whereas Matthew’s is the legal, in which are combined the natural and the adopted descendants.

With what Rev. J. J. B. Coles says I am in agreement.

I value the agreement which Col. Mackinlay expresses to some extent with my thesis, from his careful study of the Gospel of Luke. However, it is the points in which we differ that I have at present to consider. My acquaintance with bi-ligualism is with it as it appears in the Scottish Highlands. The example of our Premier is very pertinent. I may have been unguarded in my statement in regard to the book of Esther, but my reference was to Haman's statement (Esther iii. 8), in which he calls the Jews "a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed in all provinces of thy kingdom." One need not be anxious to maintain Haman's accuracy. I venture to doubt Col. Mackinlay's statement that the Magi were probably Jews. The Jews would not desire to be reckoned Magians, nor would the Magians receive them. They were a hereditary priesthood.

In Rev. Mr. Marsh's remarks, I am interested, but do not find anything to answer.

To Mr. Sidney Collett's objection that there is too much hypothesis and tradition about my theory, I would recall him to what I say on page 178, that Papias' evidence really makes the view that Matthew wrote in Hebrew and was the primary Gospel as much history as is the belief that Marathon was a Persian defeat. In regard to my saying that St. Peter corrected Matthew, I do not know how Mr. Collett would explain how Matthew (x. 10) represents our Lord forbidding "staves" *rabdous* in Receptus (*Shabta, Peshitta*), while Mark says, "Save a staff only." Again, Matthew says our Lord forbids *shoes*, "sandals," that is, whereas in Mark the Apostles are bidden to be shod with "sandals." These differences have all the appearance of being corrections. There are many other cases of similar phenomena. If Paul might correct Peter's conduct, (Gal. ii. 11) surely Peter might correct Matthew's statements.

I welcome Mr. Hoste's testimony in regard to the authenticity of Daniel. It is glaringly unlikely that the Jews of our Lord's day would accept as ancient a book forged so recently as the days of the Maccabees.

I am afraid I cannot agree with Mr. Avary Forbes in believing that Greek was generally known east of the Euphrates. I have in this matter the authority of Dr. Burkitt on my side. He declares that the barrier of language is the main reason why we know so little of the history of the Eastern Church. It is quite true that Alexander wished to cause an amalgamation of races when he promoted marriages between his soldiers and Persian women. This would not tend to spread Greek. The children of such marriages would speak Persian. A case in point is to be found in Canada. Early last century, a number of Scotch Highland soldiers were placed in lower Canada as colonists. They married French-Canadian wives. Their descendants now all speak French, and are Romanists.