

pass first into the nation, and then into the world. And it was not rendered more easy by the fact that in doing this all that made for strength and brotherliness and religion in the constitution of the clan must be preserved and reappear in the constitution of the kingdom. It was so difficult that even when St. Paul wrote to the Ephesians, the ideal had been only partially realized. The clans and tribes had become the nation of Israel, but the nation of Israel still held itself aloof from the nations of the world.

St. Paul wrote his letter. He said he was about to engage in an act of worship. He was about to bow his knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Should he think of Him as entering into fellowship with one nation only? No. He will keep the sense of fellowship and all that makes for brotherhood in the clan, but he will bow his knees unto Him of whom every nation and tribe upon earth is named.

And not only on earth, but also in heaven. For

this man is a prophet. The God whom he worships is the God of all the tribes in the universe, the tribes on earth and the tribes in heaven. He seems to turn in that word 'heaven' to his kinsmen according to the flesh. Do the Gentiles among the Ephesians know most of the nations of the earth? The Jews have speculated most about the family in heaven. It is a saying of their Rabbis that 'God does nothing without consulting the family above.' St. Paul will leave no family or tribe outside the sweep of his thought. Be they above or be they below, the God of his Lord Jesus Christ is the God of them all.

It was a great thing to say, though it is said almost in a parenthesis. It is great in its contents as well as in its comprehension; and it is worthy of this great Epistle. Clement of Alexandria attributes the saying to our Lord Himself, associating it with St. Matthew 23⁹, 'Call no man your father upon the earth; for one is your Father, which is in heaven.' We almost admire him for the mistake he makes.

The New Testament

IN THE LIGHT OF RECENTLY DISCOVERED TEXTS OF THE GRÆCO-ROMAN WORLD.

BY PROFESSOR DR. THEOL. ADOLF DEISSMANN, OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HEIDELBERG.

II. The Importance of the Texts for the Philological Interpretation of the New Testament.

THE first great fact that impresses the investigator is that the New Testament speaks practically the same language as was spoken by simple and unlearned men of the imperial age. That is the first and most easily proven example of the importance of our texts, namely, that they have for the first time made the New Testament intelligible from the point of view of the historian of language. This thesis, when first maintained ten years ago, met with more or less lively opposition in theological and philological circles, but professional opinion has since then become so much enlightened that at the present time the

whole science of New Testament philology is being revolutionized, and all workers at this subject are agreed that historical investigation of the language of the New Testament must begin with the language of the papyri, inscriptions, etc. In the latest annual report on the progress of classical antiquities,¹ Professor Witkowski, of Lemberg, reviewed the work already done, and came to the conclusion that the language of the New Testament must be considered in its connexion with the language of the texts we are discussing. Some other scholars may be men-

¹ *Jahresbericht über die Fortschritte der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft*, 1904, i. Bd. cxx. pp. 153-256.

tioned. A short time ago Theodor Nägeli, a Swiss schoolmaster, formerly a pupil of Professor Wackernagel, of Göttingen, published a study of the vocabulary of St. Paul.¹ Page after page of this study is a confirmation of the thesis we have mentioned; page after page the young scholar regards St. Paul in the light of the texts, and he has succeeded, probably for the first time, in criticizing the language of the great apostle of the Gentiles as it must be criticized. Similarly, in James Hope Moulton's *Prolegomena*,² there is page after page in proof of our thesis, and Professor Wackernagel himself has recently spoken in terms of agreement.³

The point is this. The original language of the New Testament is Greek. Every one is familiar with this statement, and yet it is wanting in precision. It is true the scholar's working text of the New Testament is in Greek, but there are separate portions of the New Testament that were not originally written in Greek, but in a Semitic dialect. The Man from whom the decisive impulse went forth, Jesus of Nazareth, did not speak Greek in His public ministry, but the language of His native land of Galilee, Aramaic, a dialect cognate but not identical with Hebrew. Thus the gospel was first preached in Aramaic. We hear a last echo of the original words when we read in our Bibles words like *mammon*, *talitha cumi*, *abba*, or names like *Barabbas*, *Martha*, etc., which are all part of this ancient Aramaic. So, too, the oldest transcript of the words of Jesus was probably Aramaic, written for the Aramaic-speaking Christians of Palestine. Unfortunately this first record of the words of Jesus is lost in its original Aramaic dress. What would we not give to recover one thin papyrus book with the first Aramaic sayings of Jesus? We can imagine ourselves cheerfully sacrificing the whole theological literature of a century, for that one slender volume.

But such speculation is useless. It is better to ask, How is it that we no longer possess the sayings of Jesus in the original Aramaic? The answer is, Because Christianity became a world religion. An Aramaic gospel in the hands of the Christian missionary meant the impossibility of all Christian propaganda in a world which was at the same time the Greek world. With an Aramaic gospel,

¹ See above, p. 14.

² See above, p. 14.

³ In the important essay on 'Die griechische Sprache,' in the great cyclopaedic work entitled *Die Kultur der Gegenwart*, Leipzig, 1905, i. 8. pp. 303 ff.

Christianity would have remained a Galilean sect; to become a world religion it was imperative for it to speak the language of the world, and hence it comes that the Gospels assumed a cosmopolitan garb, that St. Paul and his fellows spoke and wrote the universal language, and that the New Testament became a *Greek* book.

The universal language was Greek, spoken at that period by more millions than Latin. It resulted from the great campaigns of Alexander the Great, coupled with the peaceful conquests achieved by the commerce, the art, and the learning of Greece, that at the great turning-point in the world's religion, at the beginning of our era, the ancient seats of civilization surrounding the Mediterranean basin—Southern Europe, Asia Minor, Egypt, and the rest of North Africa—were all more or less strongly Hellenized. The Greek language and Greek civilization were prevalent even in the lowest class of society, particularly in the cities. In Rome itself a countless multitude spoke Greek; we know, for example, that the large community of Jews in Rome spoke scarcely anything else.

It was not a local dialect of Greek that was spoken by the men of this Hellenized world. In earlier times various dialects were spoken in Greece, e.g. the Doric dialect, the Æolic, Ionic, and Attic dialects. But under the Empire the men abroad in the great world did not speak the old Doric, Æolic, Ionic, or Attic, but a universal Greek language, a common tongue that was understood everywhere. How this 'common' language (*Κοινή*) grew up is not altogether clear, and the question may be passed over by us; the great fact is certain, that at the birth of Christianity a universal language was in existence.

This language was not a homogeneous whole. Two strata are distinguishable in it, although the line of demarcation fluctuates. Of this universal Greek, as of every other living language, there were two concurrent forms, the one looser, the other stricter in usage. We may call these respectively the colloquial and the literary language. The colloquial language again shaded off into various fine distinctions, according as it was spoken by educated or uneducated persons. The literary language, of course, showed shades of difference also. At that time it was being influenced strongly in one direction owing to the enthusiasm for the great Attic writers of the previous age, whose style

was imitated in the belief that it constituted for all time the perfect model of 'good' Greek. This movement, the 'Atticist' movement as it is called, from its imitation of the Attic classics, was the fashion of the day in cultured and literary circles. We possess a number of works written under its influence, and are well acquainted with its linguistic theory. But we also possess examples of the colloquial language of the educated classes of the period, for several authors did not conform to the rules of the Atticists. Examples of the popular colloquial language, however, examples of the popular Greek of the period, were practically non-existent, at least for most scholars, if we go back some twenty years or more from the present date (1906); the whole of the great lower class under the Roman Empire—the non-literary, the weak and insignificant, the labouring class—a whole stratum of society, with its speech, seemed to have sunk for ever in the grave of oblivion, not for all, but certainly for most scholars.

This being so, what was the customary way of regarding the language of the Greek New Testament?

It may be said that although it was brought into close connexion with the universal Greek of the period, yet, on the whole, the tendency was towards philological isolation, and thus a special linguistic species was created under the name of 'New Testament Greek.'

Two causes led to the triumph of the isolative method. On the religious or theological side the doctrine of the mechanical inspiration of the New Testament combined with a very plastic conception of the New Testament canon in forming a sharp boundary-line to isolate the New Testament. And on the linguistic side was felt the great contrast between the language of the Sacred Volume and the classical Attic which is taught in schools. Prejudiced in the belief that the Greek world came to an end with Alexander the Great—when, as a matter of fact, it is with him that it really begins—many readers of the Greek New Testament did not take the trouble to consult Greek texts of the post-Alexandrian and imperial periods, and thus for them the New Testament remained separated by a deep gulf from the only other phase of Greek with which they were acquainted. Philologists were in the same condemnation with the theologians: as late as 1894, Friedrich

Blass,¹ the Professor of Greek at Halle, declared that New Testament Greek was 'to be recognized as something peculiar, obeying its own laws.'

That this isolative treatment of the language of the New Testament has ceased is owing to the papyri and other texts that form the subject of our inquiry. The numerous documents of the literary language, carefully disciplined as it was by artificial rules, have been supplemented by the slabs, papyri, and ostraca, which furnished documents of the colloquial, and particularly of the popular form of the language, as it had grown up in all its native wildness. The papyri and ostraca have afforded rich materials for comparison, principally as regards morphological phenomena, but the inscriptions have also yielded a good harvest, chiefly lexical.

The historical investigation of the language of the New Testament is still in its infancy, but we are already in a position to say that it has shown the New Testament to be, speaking generally, a specimen of the colloquial form of late Greek, and of the popular colloquial language in particular. The Epistle to the Hebrews alone belongs to another sphere: as in subject-matter it is more of a learned theological work, so in form it is more artistic than the other books of the New Testament. This result, like most advances in knowledge, is not an entirely new discovery. At the time when the ancient Greek culture was in conflict with Christianity, the assailants pointed sarcastically at the boatman's idiom of the New Testament, while the defenders, glorying in the taunt, made this very homeliness their boast.² Latin apologists were the first to make the hopeless attempt to prove that the literary form of the Bible as a whole, and of the New Testament in particular, was artistically perfect³—a theory which many centuries later was again vehemently disputed in the quarrel between the Purists and the Hebraists. For our part, we are not of those who think that the wild rosebush is unlovely because it does not bear Marshal Niel roses. The unlovely does not begin till artificiality and sham have arisen. In our opinion, therefore, the new method in New Testament philology by proving the splendid simplicity and homeliness of New Testament Greek demonstrates the peculiar charm

¹ *Theologische Literaturzeitung*, 1894, xix. p. 338. Blass now thinks differently on the subject.

² For details see Ed. Norden, *op. cit.* ii. 512 ff.

³ Ed. Norden, ii. 526 ff.

of the Sacred Book ; we may apply to the popular language in its relation to the artificial literary language those words of the Master's : ' Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow ; they toil not, neither do they spin : yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.'

Only by examples can the great importance of our texts in the linguistic study of the New Testament be properly shown. We refer to the ample lists in the works of Moulton and the present writer, and content ourselves with giving a few characteristic examples which are not to be found either in the *Bible Studies* or in Moulton's essays, first a morphological, and then a few lexical and syntactical examples.

(a) Though it does not occur in the New Testament, the name *Panthera* is of great interest to the student, for it plays an important part in Jewish legends of the birth of Jesus Christ, and has recently become widely known through Häcke's notorious outpourings in *The Riddle of the Universe*. The name has engaged the attention of many scholars, nearly all of whom regard it as a nickname specially invented by Jewish controversialists, and to be referred either to *πίπρος* or to *παρθένος*. Now here it is chiefly the Latin inscriptions that enable us to solve this problem in onomatology with certainty. On numerous tombstones and in other inscriptions of the imperial age the name *Panthera*, which has also been found in Attic inscriptions, occurs as the cognomen of both men and women.¹

¹ The complete evidence is given by the present author in *Orientalische Studien: Theodor Nöldeke zum siebenzigsten Geburtstag gewidmet*, Giessen, 1906, pp. 871 ff.

Probably the most interesting of all is the gravestone, dating from the very early Empire, of the Roman archer *Tiberius Julius Abdes (= Ebed) Panthera*, a native of Sidon in Phœnicia. The stone was found near Bingerbrück, and is preserved in the museum at Kreuznach. The accompanying facsimile is an excellent reproduction.

(b) In the vocabulary of the New Testament many words used to be regarded as peculiar to the New Testament, and were therefore considered one of the most important characteristics of the isolated 'New Testament' Greek. But a large number of these words are found also, as the above-mentioned investigators have shown, in the inscriptions, papyri, ostraca, etc.; they belong, in fact, to the living language of that age. To mention one example,² we read in 1 P 5^{3, 4}:

. . . but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory.

By the 'chief Shepherd' is meant Jesus Christ, the Greek word, known hitherto only in this passage, is *ἀρχιποίμην*. Commentators are fond

of seeing in this word a Christian invention; probably the word is also supposed to have had a specially official ring. It can, however, be shown that the apostle did not invent, but simply borrowed the word, and that, as might have been known, it expresses but a trifle more than the old familiar saying that Jesus is the 'Shepherd.' A wooden tablet of the Roman period in Egypt, that was hung round the neck of a mummy as a means of

² Cf. *Die Christliche Welt*, 1904, p. 77 ff.



identifying the deceased, bears the following (Greek) inscription: ¹—

Plenis the young-
er, the chief Shep-
herd's. Lived
ed . . . years.

The genitive, 'the chief Shepherd's,' on this tablet is no doubt simply a mistake in spelling—a mistake that is not without interest for us. The tablet can hardly have been carefully written for a man of rank, but must have been hastily done for a man of the people, the son of an Egyptian peasant, who was perhaps entrusted with the superintendence of three or even half a dozen shepherds. If Carl Wessely's reading ² is correct, the same title occurs on another mummy tablet ³:

Plenis
(Son) of Kametis,
Chief Shepherd.
40 years (old).

This Plenis would then perhaps be the father of the first. Judging from the facsimile, however, we are of opinion that the word does not occur on the second tablet. The first tablet is quite sufficient: 'Chief Shepherd' is a genuine popular title, not found in any learned work of antiquity, but only on the simple Egyptian tablet and, in the greatest popular work of the ancient world, the New Testament. The faith that named its Saviour 'the chief Shepherd,' placed no magnificent diadem of gold and precious stones on His head, but wreathed His brow with a simple chaplet of fresh green.

While many 'New Testament' words are thus secularized by our texts, much light is also shed on the meanings of words that were already known to belong to the common Greek language. Here, too, a single example ⁴ shall suffice. Jesus says to the apostles in Mt 10^{8ff.}:

'Freely ye received, freely give. Get you no gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses (*margin*: girdles): no wallet for your journey . . .' (R.V.).

¹ Published by Edmond Le Blant in the *Revue Archéologique*, 1874, xxviii. p. 249; a facsimile of the tablet is appended to the volume, plate xxiii. fig. 14.

² *Mitteilungen aus der Sammlung der Papyrus Erzherzog Rainer*, v. p. 17, Wien, 1892. Wessely reads ἀρχιποίμην.

³ Also in Le Blant, p. 248; facsimile, plate xxi. fig. 9.

⁴ Cf. *Die Christliche Welt*, 1903, p. 242 ff.

St. Mark 6⁸ says:

'And he charged them that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only; no bread, no wallet, no money (*margin*: brass) in their purse (*margin*: girdle)' (R.V.).

and St. Luke (9³; cf. also 10⁴ and 22^{35ff.}):

'Take nothing for your journey, neither staff, nor wallet, nor bread, nor money . . .' (R.V.).

A characteristic saying of our Lord is here handed down to us with several variations, but the original shines clearly through them all: the apostles are to take with them on their journey only what is absolutely necessary,⁵ and that includes neither money nor bread. According to St. Matthew they were forbidden not only to take money with them, but also to earn money on the road (by healing and other miracles). It has not often been asked what is meant by the 'wallet' (A.V. 'scrip'), because the answer has been assumed to be self-evident. Most of the commentators suggest a travelling-bag,⁶ more particularly perhaps a bread-bag. The Greek word *πίρα* can mean either, according to the context. The travelling-bag certainly suits this context well, the bread-bag not so well, because 'bread-bag' is superfluous after 'bread,' and one does not expect tautology in these brief, pithy commands of our Lord. But a special meaning made known to us by an ancient stone monument suits the passage at least as well as the general meaning of '(travelling-) bag.' A Greek inscription of the Roman period,⁷ has been discovered at Kefr-Hauar in Syria, in which a 'slave' of the 'Syrian goddess' speaks of the begging expeditions he has undertaken for the 'Lady.' This heathen apostle—who speaks of himself as 'sent by the Lady'—tells with triumph how each of his journeys brought in seventy bags. Here he uses our word *πίρα*. It means, of course, not bags filled with provisions and taken on the journey, but a beggar's collecting-bag. This special meaning would suit the New Testament passages admirably, especially

⁵ The only questionable point about the tradition is whether the staff rightly belongs here.

⁶ No doubt connecting the words 'wallet for your journey' closely together.

⁷ Published in the *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique*, 1897, p. 60.

the context in St. Matthew: 'You are not to earn money, and you are also not to beg.' The divine humility of Jesus would stand out anew with this inscription as background were we to adopt this possible interpretation of the word *πήρα*. In the days of early Christianity the mendicant priest of the ancestral goddess wanders through the Syrian land; from village to village the string of sumpter animals lengthens, bearing his pious booty to the shrine, and the Lady will not be unmindful of her slave. In the same land, and in the same age, was One who had not where to lay His head, and He sent out His apostles with the words:

'Freely ye received, freely give. Get you no gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses: no wallet for your journey.'

(c) Syntactical problems often receive a new and better solution. Take, for example, a passage that has been a hard *crux* to the interpreters, Jn 1¹⁴:

'We beheld his glory, glory *ὡς μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρὸς πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας.*'

Here the remarkable nominative *πλήρης* has received the most remarkable explanations. But the papyri¹ teach us that *πλήρης* in the time of the New Testament, and perhaps earlier, had become indeclinable, and the despised potsherd give us numerous examples of this use. The ostrakon No. 1071 in Wilcken, dated 16th February 185 A.D., exhibits this shrunken form of *πλήρης*, and so probably does No. 1222, of the Roman period, both ostraca being from the Egyptian Thebes. A professed literary man would, of course, have avoided this shrunken *πλήρης* as a 'mistake'; the single *πλήρης* would suffice to give the Fourth Gospel the appearance of a popular work. If it was especially syntactical phenomena that caused many scholars to overestimate greatly the number of Semitic features (Hebraisms, Aramaicisms) in the New Testament, the memorials of the Greek popular language would materially reduce that number. A good example of this is the repetition of a cardinal number to express a distributive relation, which Blass, in the first edition of his grammar, still regarded as a Semitic feature. We can follow this usage (*e.g.* Mark 6⁷) for two thousand years in the Greek colloquial language,

¹ Cf. Blass, *Grammatik des Neutestamentlichen Griechisch*, p. 81, Göttingen, 1896; and especially J. H. Moulton, *Grammar*, i, p. 50.

and a papyrus of the third century A.D. is here the missing link between the New Testament and Modern Greek.²

The criticism of the style of the New Testament books is also put on a better footing by the other contemporary popular texts. Here, too, there is a prejudice to be overcome, the prejudice that texts which do not contain the long periods of classical Attic prose cannot be pure Greek; that the short, compact sentences of the Johannine writings, for instance, must at any rate be Semitic. But as certainly as the Semitic foundation is visible here and there through the Greek version of the original Aramaic in which our Lord's words were spoken, so certainly are the simple sentences of St. John, connected by 'and . . . and,' not un-Greek. They are in reality popular Greek; the same simplicity of sentence-construction is found in popular texts of the period. The Hebraisms in the New Testament are not frequent enough to change the whole character of the book; they are only birth-marks, showing us that this Greek Book for the people originated in the eternal East.

Leaving the Epistle to the Hebrews out of account, we must say, as the result of a comparison of the New Testament with the contemporary non-literary texts, that the New Testament is the people's book. When Luther, therefore, took the New Testament from the learned and gave it to the people, we can only regard him as restoring what was the people's own. And when at some tiny cottage window, behind the fuchsias and geraniums, we see an old dame bending over the open Testament, there the old Book has found a place to which by right of its nature it belongs. Or when a Red Cross sister finds a Japanese Testament in the knapsack of a wounded Japanese, here, too, the surroundings are appropriate. We venture, therefore, further to assert that the great Book of the People cannot properly be published in *éditions de luxe*, with expensive engravings and rich binding. Moreover, it is not every artist who is able to illustrate the Book. Not to mention living artists, there have been two Old Masters equal to the task, and their names are Dürer and Rembrandt.

Time has transformed the Book of the People into the Book of Humanity. From the philological point of view it can be seen that the two ideas stand in causal relation. Because the New

² Cf. *Encyclopædia Biblica*, iii, col. 3562.

Testament came from the unexhausted forces below, and not from the feeble, resigned culture of a worn-out upper class—for this reason alone was it able to become the Book of Humanity.

Thus from the simple writings on stone, papyrus, and clay that unfold to us the nature of the lan-

guage of the New Testament and at the same time reveal the peculiar characteristic of the Book, there streams a flood of light on the fate of the Sacred Volume in the history of the world: the New Testament became the Book of the Peoples because it was first the Book of the People.

A New Commentary on the Psalms.¹

BY THE REV. J. A. SELDIE, D.D., ABERDEEN.

FOR obvious reasons there is no part of the O.T. that commands a wider interest than the Book of Psalms, which is the great manual of devotion alike to Jew and Christian. English-speaking students are not, indeed, without valuable aids to the understanding of this book, but hitherto they have lacked what Professor Briggs has now supplied, a commentary giving the latest results of modern research, and at the same time treating the materials in a way that ministers to practical needs. Probably no O.T. scholar could have been selected better fitted for the task. The work before us, as we are told, represents the fruit of forty years of labour, and the evidence of this is manifest on every page. The ease with which our author handles his vast theme could come only from familiarity with all its details; he knows *how to suppress*, and he exhibits at every turn a well-balanced judgment and a rare capacity for weighing conclusions. By his share in the great *Hebrew Lexicon* recently published (Oxford, 1906), Professor Briggs has shown himself to be one of the foremost Hebraists and O.T. scholars of the day. But this is not the only ground on which he can claim our confidence. All through the volume before us we meet not only the scholar and the critic, but the man who is in thorough spiritual sympathy with his subject, and whose admiration for the Psalms enables him to appreciate their spirit and message. It will interest many to read this testimony by Dr. Briggs:

'The Psalms are among the most wonderful products of human genius. No other writings but the Gospels can compare with them in grandeur and importance. The Gospels are greater because they set forth the life and character of our Lord and Saviour. The Psalter expresses the religious experience of a devout people through centuries of communion with God. I cannot explain either Gospels or Psalms except as books of God, as products of human religious experience, inspired and guided by the Divine Spirit' (p. viii f.).

We may now proceed to give a short account of the contents of the volume. The Introduction starts with a very informing discussion of the names applied in the Hebrew canon and elsewhere to the Book of Psalms as a whole (with which should be compared the full treatment [p. lix ff.] of the terms applied to particular psalms in their titles). This is followed by an account of the text of the Psalter. Here we may call attention to our author's remarks on the testimony of the Versions, and in particular to his contention that certain MSS of the liturgical psalms, although of late date, have preserved the most correct text of the LXX. He even goes the length of saying that where B and \aleph differ from the other MSS they are almost invariably at fault (p. xxviii). The true aim of the textual criticism of the Psalter is set forth by Dr. Briggs as directed towards the recovery not merely of the Canonical Psalter in its final edition, but of *the original text of the psalms themselves as they came from their authors*. This we have to determine by the use of additional internal evidence in the Psalter itself, and of external evidence from other books of the O.T. [p. xxxiii f.]. Among the instruments of research in this department Dr. Briggs makes considerable use of the strophical and metrical structure of a psalm. Now, Hebrew metre is a thorny subject,

¹ 'The International Critical Commentary': *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, by Charles Augustus Briggs, D.D., D.Litt., Professor of Theological Encyclopædia and Symbolics, Union Theological Seminary, New York; and Emilie Grace Briggs, B.D.; in 2 vols. Vol. I. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1906. Price 12s.