

and manners of their countrymen that they had not discovered the rude elements of a diviner faith, and endeavoured to obey a diviner rule of life. Among ourselves outward conformity to nobler traditions is no sure evidence that a man is really living in God. He may inwardly resent the restraints of Christian morality while he submits to them; and while hotly zealous for the form of sound words which is accepted by his Church and his party, and which he has inherited from his fathers, the great truths of a lofty creed may for him be corrupted and degraded into the worst falsehoods by the power of an evil heart. And, on the other hand, it may be—God only knows—but it may be that there have been some, it may be that there have been many, for whom the coarsest

and the most brutal forms of faith have been touched by light from the upper heavens; some, perhaps many, who have loved and practised gracious and gentle virtues, which the temper of their countrymen permitted, though it did not encourage. When God's lost children, for whom Christ died, are feeling after their Father in the darkness, if haply they may find Him, He knows it; and, for my part, I believe that while they are yet "afar off," He will run to meet them, and will bring them safely home. But these are speculations. Our duty is clear. It is for us who have the larger knowledge to make it the common and actual possession of all nations. We are faithless to God and cruel to men if the duty is neglected.

### Notes on the Lord's Prayer.

Τὸν ἐπιούσιον.

IN the Rev. Frederic Chase's recent book, entitled *The Lord's Prayer in the Early Church* (in *Texts and Studies*, vol. i. No. 3, Cambridge, 1891), the above-mentioned expression is, as we might expect, fully discussed, and the following new explanation is propounded (p. 45):—"There seems to be evidence that considerable latitude was allowed as to the insertion in the synagogue prayers of petitions suitable to the season or the day. At least, equal freedom would be claimed in the assemblies of the 'brethren.' Thus it is no violently improbable hypothesis if we suppose that when the Lord's Prayer was used in the morning or in the evening prayers of the Hebrew 'brethren,' and of the Hellenistic 'brethren,' at first at Jerusalem, and later in Northern Syria, it became customary to adapt the one clause which speaks of time to the particular hour of prayer. Among the Hebrew and Syrian Christians the phrase as it stood, *our bread of the day*, would be appropriate for the morning prayer. When, however, the prayer was used in the evening, a slight adaptation would be necessary; and such an adaption we actually find in the word *Mahar*, which Jerome quotes from 'the Gospel according to the Hebrews.' The case of the Hellenistic 'brethren' was different. Here there was need of translation, and the

requirements both of translation and adaptation were satisfied when, ἡ ἐπιούσα being adopted in the place of *γῶμο*, the word ἐπιούσιος was coined to represent *diyomo*. This rendering would have a double advantage. It would be appropriate when the prayer was used in the morning—*our bread for the coming day*; it would be equally appropriate in the evening. Thus the petition would assume this form—τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον δὸς ἡμῖν." It is, according to my opinion, difficult to follow the hypothesis of Mr. Chase. In the first place, we know nothing, as Mr. Chase states himself, of the relations between the Hebrew and the Hellenistic 'brethren.' Further, we have no mention of the Lord's Prayer having been recited morning and evening. Finally, if a prayer is rendered into another language for devotional purposes, it would at first be merely translated literally, without any adaptations whatever. We do not lay much stress upon the omission of the word *σήμερον*. Whether the Lord's Prayer was originally in Hebrew or Aramaic we shall not discuss at present, but certain it is that it was composed in one of these two dialects, the word *מחר* occurring in Hebrew and in Aramaic. The word being used as an adjective in the expression *מחר ביום* (Prov. xxvii. 1) 'of to-morrow,' in German, 'der morgige Tag,' and much more so in the form of *מחרת*, it fully represents the expression τὸν ἐπιούσιον, 'the coming day.' The Hebrew adherents of Jesus certainly petitioned for the

bread of to-morrow, since it was necessary to do so for the sake of the Sabbath day, on which at that time everything was prepared on Friday, as is still the case amongst Karaite Jews (Exod. xvi. 23). To this the words τὸν ἐπιούσιον originally corresponded, and only later, when the Sabbath

day was fixed on Sunday, τὸν ἐπιούσιον was interpreted by 'sufficient' or 'necessary,' after the analogy of περιούσιος, 'superfluous'; so that the translation of the petition would be 'our necessary bread give us to-day.'"

A. NEUBAUER.

## The Great Text Commentary.

### THE GREAT TEXTS OF ST. MATTHEW.

MATT. ii. 1, 2.

"Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa in the days of Herod the king, behold wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we saw his star in the east, and are come to worship him" (R.V.).

#### EXPOSITION.

"*Wise Men.*" The Greek word is Magi (μάγοι). That name appears in Jer. xxxix. 3, 13, in the name Rab-mag "The chief of the Magi." Herodotus speaks of them as a priestly caste of the Medes, known as interpreters of dreams (I. 101, 120). Among the Greeks the word was commonly applied with a tone of scorn to the impostors who claimed supernatural knowledge, and *magic* was in fact the art of the Magi, and so the word was commonly used throughout the Roman world when the New Testament was written. Simon Magus is Simon the sorcerer. There was, however, side by side with this, a recognition of the higher ideas of which the word was capable, and we can hardly think that the writer of the Gospel would have used it in its lower sense. With him, as with Plato, the Magi were thought of as observers of the heavens, students of the secrets of Nature. Where they came from we cannot tell. The name was too widely spread at this time to lead us to look with certainty to its original home in Persia, and that country was to the north rather than the east of Palestine. The watching of the heavens implied in the narrative belonged to Chaldæa rather than Persia. The popular legends that they were three

in number, and that they were kings, are simply apocryphal additions.—PLUMPTRE.

"*Where is he that is born King of the Jews?*" Literally, "the born King of the Jews." Herod was not a born king. It was long since there had been a born king in Israel. The Magi expected, no doubt, to find him in the capital city and in the royal palace.—MORISON.

The question involves a deeper meaning than the Magi designed. A born King of the Jews is now the hope of the Gentiles also.—SCHAFF.

Everywhere throughout the East men were looking for the advent of a great king who was to arise from among the Jews. The expectation partly rested on such Messianic prophecies of Isaiah as chaps. ix., xi., partly in the latter predictions of Dan. vii.—PLUMPTRE.

"*King of the Jews.*" A title unknown to the earlier history of Israel, and applied to no one except the Messiah. It reappears in the inscription over the Cross (Matt. xxvii. 37).—CARR.

"*We have seen his star.*" The connection of the birth of the Messiah with the appearance of a star is illustrated by the name Barcochab, "Son of a Star," assumed by a false Messiah who appeared in the year 120 A.D.—CARR.

The star seen by the Magi was probably a temporary star, such as blazed forth in A.D. 1572, and, after passing through a variety of phases, disappeared about two years afterwards. Such a star would be the more likely to attract attention, and to be thought of as betokening the occurrence of great events in Judæa, that, a few years before the birth of our Lord, there had been no fewer than three conjunctions of the planets Jupiter and Saturn in the sign of Pisces, a quarter of the heavens with which the fortunes of the Jewish people were regarded as closely allied.—SCRYMGEOUR.