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ORTHODOXY FROM THE HEBREW  
POINT OF VIEW.

PART II.

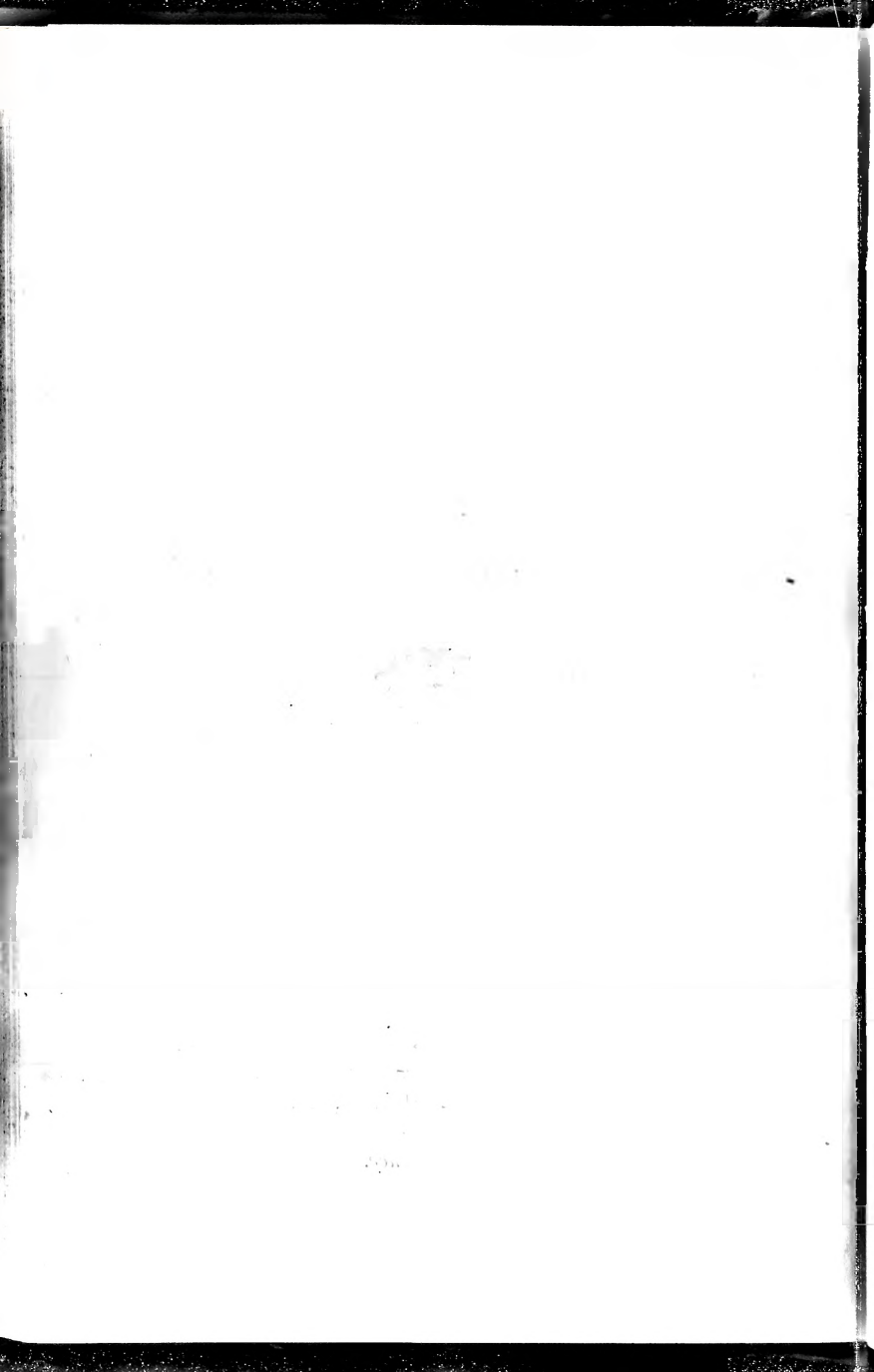
BY THE

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### PART II.

BEFORE the dispersion of the clerical party, it was necessary, by the rule, to decide upon the place of the next monthly meeting, as well as upon a subject for discussion. It was the turn of Mr E. the next time to entertain his brethren, and to preside ; but he had unluckily disappeared. The majority present were easily convinced by Mr P., that the debate on the language spoken by our Lord and the apostles ought to be continued ; and, above all, from this consideration, that one side only had been heard. Nobody doubted that the learned Dean Alford had what appeared to him valid grounds for his statement, that Greek was in these days almost universally understood in Jerusalem ; and all the clergy of the club, who had sufficient leisure and reading, engaged to give to the question, during the coming month, the best attention in their power. It was decided that Mr P. should endeavour to obtain the consent of Mr. E. to the desired arrangement. Dr Marcus promised, at the request of the party, to be present at the next meeting ; and I also had the good fortune to receive an invitation.

In the forenoon of the day on which Mr. E. received the communication of Mr P., as he was pondering about the answer he should give to it, the archdeacon and the rural dean walked into his vicarage, having occa-

#### 4 *Orthodoxy from the Hebrew point of View.*

sion to inspect his registers. He gave to them an account of the discussion in the house of P., which we have related, and desired the opinion of the two divines. On the lawfulness or unlawfulness of baptising the Jew, neither of them was prepared to decide at the moment; but after Mr E.'s account of the arguments of Dr Marcus, drawn from Josephus, the archdeacon exclaimed—"Quotations from Josephus against the Gospels! How utterly ridiculous! A fig for Josephus! He was a bigotted Jew, and a bitter enemy of the truth. Can any sane man treat him as an unprejudiced witness? Not a word that he has to say against the testimony of the primitive apostolic church can deserve one moment's attention." "I agree with you about the value of arguments drawn from Josephus against the teaching of the church," said the rural dean; "but I am by no means certain that he was the mere Jew that you term him. The learned editor of my Whiston's 'Josephus' affirms that he was a Nazarene Christian, and gives what I consider to be good reasons for his opinion."

Mr E. was at this moment called out to speak with a parishioner, whereupon the archdeacon found it convenient to change the topic of discourse, saying—"What an awful thing it is to find these parochial clergy and their curates debating such perilous points as these, and that in the absence of any controlling dignitary!" "It is bad enough," replied the rural dean, "when the dignitary is there; for I suppose you consider a rural dean to be a dignitary, don't you?" "Assuredly," was the reply; "I am but a deacon, but you are a dean. The whole diocese holds you to be a Ruler Dean, the greatest swell among us."

"Then," said the dean, "you will not ask me again how it comes to pass that, while other rural deans invite their clergy to a debate three or four times a year, I do that only once. I find once rather more than enough. I disapprove utterly, as the bishop well knows, of these ruri-

decanal gatherings ; and if I had the power, I would prevent all discussion, except under a dignified and discreet president, at the meetings of the clerical book-clubs ; for nothing but mischief can possibly come of this spirit of debate among the inferior clergy." " You told me," said the archdeacon, " that the subject of discussion at your annual gatherings is chosen by the members of the chapter. What would you do if they determined to handle in your house this question of the language spoken by our Lord and the apostles ?" The rural dean answered, with a little laugh—" They shall never meddle with such a topic before me. The subject would be formally announced, of course ; but I should fall back upon our fundamental regulation, that a subject proposed by the bishop must take precedence of all others. I have a stock of such always on hand. Diocesan finance is a capital one. I could easily occupy half the time with a speech about that, much to their instruction ; for, I am sorry to say, they know and care little about it, and do not raise half the money that they might." Here Mr E. came in again, and the two dignitaries urged and implored him to refuse the permission asked to continue such an unprofitable discussion in the house, and to protest against the debate anywhere. They were, as the reader can imagine, quite eloquent about the danger of corrupting the minds of curates and young divines, and on the utter absurdity of attempting to mend the historical decisions of such men as Dean Alford, on whom, from their superior learning and leisure, was specially devolved the task of investigating such questions. Mr E. listened respectfully to all they had to say, but did not pledge himself to more than a serious consideration of their counsel. The truth was, that although the two gardeners of these highly connected and splendidly beneficed gentlemen had together about twice the income of Mr E.'s vicarage, he firmly believed—and for good reasons—that the two dignified heads were very

## 6 *Orthodoxy from the Hebrew point of View.*

far from containing twice his own brains and learning. Soon after their departure, he took his stout cane, and walked six miles to the Independent College, of which the Rev. Dr Jones, F.R.A.S., was the Principal, a gentleman of great ability and erudition, with whom Mr E. had the liberality and good taste to be cordially intimate. Brought up in the school of the evangelical Simeon, he and his friend Jones were heartily together in their abhorrence of the rising tide of conjuring and pardoning sacerdotalism, and held fast to the leading principles of the Nicene theology, and to the doctrine of the Atonement; but their reverence for the old dogmatic anathemas, and their early faith in the infallible inspiration and correctness of canonical Scripture, had been more shaken by their frank interchange of thought than either was accustomed to confess to others.

Dr Jones rubbed his hands with delight when Mr E., after placing the whole case before him, asked his advice. "'Tis the luckiest thing in the world," said the doctor. "That question has been completely set at rest by my friend, Dr Roberts. Here is his book (removing from the shelf a volume of 600 pages): take that with you and read it. I know it well. Accede by all means to the proposal made, and ask me to be of the party. Together we shall utterly demolish the Jew." The book was "Discussions on the Gospels," by Dr Alexander Roberts. Mr E. was so pleased, after turning over a few pages, that he at once wrote a note to Mr P——, expressing his consent, and begging that all the members of the club, including Dr Marcus, should come early enough to begin the resumed debate at eleven o'clock on the day appointed. He added, after a little conversation with Dr Jones, that he thought it of the highest importance, and that as president he should insist upon it, that the question to which all the speakers should address themselves, should be, not whether Greek was understood by the

learned and the higher classes in Palestine, but what tongue was commonly spoken by the class to which our Lord and his disciples belonged ; and that all collateral and dependent inquiries should be at present avoided, such as the shewing reasons why the gospels were written and preserved in Greek only, or the demanding of reasons why no Hebrew documents have come down to us. For he was sure that there would be time little enough for the main discussion of the main question. He wished to see an honest attempt to decide that, or to prove that no decision is attainable. From either issue, results would follow too vast for one day's debate.

The day arrived. The little vicarage was crowded with guests. Warm was the welcome, and delicious the cup of fine home-brewed ale which awaited the smiling visitors, all, for a distance, foot travellers. Mr and Mrs E. were advanced in life ; and by the practice of self-denial and economy, which our equally rich artizans and miners will not learn for centuries to come, had always been able to exercise, on occasion, a refined though not ambitious hospitality. Mr E—— had grown old on a clerical income little more than the wages and the perquisites of his late enormously endowed Rector's confidential valet ; he had done in his vast parish ten times that Rector's work in his splendid park and pretty little village, and, by wonderful energy in writing and teaching at home, he had made for himself a literary name, brought up a family, and turned out a son as second wrangler, fellow of a most distinguished college, and a rising barrister. The reward of his talents and virtues had been not merely neglect ; that can easily be borne ; but insult of peculiar cruelty, the true story of which this is not the place to tell.

Mr E—— took the chair at the head of a table, on which lay his own Philo, Mr P.'s Josephus and Eusebius, Dr Robert's "Dissertations," with other

books. The party was composed of just the persons of the preceding meeting. Dr Jones, after all, was not there, as certain members of the Book Society had objected to the assistance of a non-member who had not been present at the preceding debate. The book of Dr Roberts had been read by several of the divines.

Mr E—— stated his wish to confine the discussion to this one question—What was the language commonly spoken in Judea in the time of our Lord by persons of the class to which he and his disciples belonged? “Before we consider what reply can be given to Dr Marcus’s inference from the works of Josephus, that Greek was not commonly spoken by his countrymen, but was a foreign tongue unknown to all but a few, I should wish to have his whole argument before us, and I would ask him what other passages in Josephus he can adduce in support of his opinion.” “There is something to the purpose,” said Dr Marcus, “in the autobiography of Josephus, prefixed to his works. He speaks of one Justus of Tiberias, the son of Pistus (of course translations of Hebrew names), the leader of a faction in Tiberias, thus § 9 : ‘and, as he said this, he exhorted the multitude (to go to war against the Romans) ; for his abilities lay in making harangues to the people, and in being too hard in his speeches for such as opposed him, and this by his craftiness and fallacies ; for he was not unskilful in the learning of the Greeks, and in dependence on that skill it was that he undertook to write a history of these affairs.’ Of the said Justus, he speaks thus in § 65 :—“But if thou art so hardy as to affirm that thou hast written this history better than all the rest, why didst thou not publish thy history whilst the Emperors Vespasian and Titus, the generals in that war, as well as King Agrippa and his family, who were men well skilled in the learning of the Greeks, were all alive ? for then thou couldst have had the testimony of thy accuracy ?”

“If,” continued Dr Marcus, “Greek, the good



grammatical Greek of the New Testament, was commonly understood in Jerusalem before Justus was born, and, as Dr Roberts, whose book is on the table, maintains, by all classes, even the rabble, all over Palestine, it would have been a matter of course, that a leader of a faction in Tiberias should know the language well, and still more, that King Agrippa and his family should be familiar with it. How then could it have come into the head of Josephus to observe of his opponent Justus, and of those royal personages, that they were not unskilled in the learning of the Greeks? According to Dr Roberts, Greek was more spoken in Palestine than English is now in Wales. Would any educated Welshman think of remarking about his superior or equal in that country, that he was not unskilful in English? I submit that the words of Josephus are not consistent with the supposition that Greek was commonly understood. It is most absurd to imagine that a Jewish writer, born in a country where the Greek of the New Testament was spoken by everybody, should treat as a noteworthy accomplishment that King Agrippa, born and bred there, should be able to understand the Greek of Josephus or Justus, which is not a bit more difficult than that of any literary or diplomatic document of the day. Josephus evidently speaks of Justus as well able to stir up the people in Hebrew, and to wrangle with officials and others in Greek.

“There is another important passage which should be well considered by those who argue from the confessedly wide dissemination of the Greek language after the conquests of Alexander, that it must needs have become familiar to all in the jealous land of Israel, although they have no evidence in the world that it was, except that which is founded on the theological necessity that the first, second, and fourth gospels should be the writing of Palestinian Jews. In the first book against Apion, § 12, we read thus—“As for ourselves, we neither inhabit a maritime country, nor do we de-

light in merchandise, nor in such a mixture with other men as arises from it ; but, the cities we dwell in are remote from the sea, and having a fruitful country for our habitation, we take pains in cultivating that only. Our principal care of all is this, to educate our children well ; and we think it to be the most necessary business of our whole life, to observe the laws which have been given us, and to keep those rules of piety that have been delivered down to us. Since, therefore, besides what we have already taken notice of, we have had a peculiar way of living of our own, there was no occasion ever offered us in ancient ages for intermixing with the Greeks, as they had for mixing among the Egyptians, by their intercourse of exporting and importing their several goods ; as they also mixed with the Phœnicians, who lived by the sea-side, by means of their love of lucre in trade and merchandise." It is plain that Josephus, though he knew that the central port of Cæsarea, the seat of the Roman government, was a Greek speaking city, and that there were fortified cities in the country where many foreigners dwelt, is here describing his native land as unaltered by communion and mixture with the Greeks ; and how is it possible, that without such mixture the Greek tongue could have become as familiar as the Hebrew or Aramaic of the country ? Cæsarea, though considered by geographers to be in Judæa, is spoken of by Josephus, as the land of the foreigner ; *e.g.*, he begins the 18th chapter of the second book of the Wars thus :—" Now the people of Cesarea had slain the Jews that were among them on the very same day and hour," &c. In the fourteenth book also, he speaks of the people of Cesarea as distinct from the thousands of Jews who dwelt there ; as when he says, " the Jews that dwelt at Cesarea had a synagogue near the place, whose owner was a certain Cesarean Greek," evidently a heathen Greek, who is described as taking pleasure in insulting the religion of his Jewish tenants.

“In the preface to the Antiquities,” continued Dr Marcus, “in section 2, Josephus says, in giving an account of the difficulties he had overcome: ‘In process of time, as usually happens to those who undertake great things, I grew weary, and went on slowly, it being a large subject, and a difficult thing to translate our history into a foreign, and to us, unaccustomed language.’ I ought also to have read to you the words immediately preceding those to which I first referred (Part I., p. 14): ‘And I am so bold to say, now that I have so completely perfected the work I proposed to do, that no other person, whether he were a Jew or a foreigner, had he ever so great an inclination to it, could so accurately deliver these accounts to the Greeks as is done in these books. For those of my own nation freely acknowledge that I far exceed them in the learning belonging to the Jews; I have also taken great pains to obtain the learning of the Greeks,’ &c., as before quoted.

“Here Josephus calls Greek a language ‘foreign and unaccustomed’ (more correctly foreign and outlandish) to his countrymen. And he had taken great pains to learn to write it. What need was there of such great pains to a scholar born and bred where it was commonly spoken? What Welsh or Highland gentleman will place it on record that he has taken great pains to obtain the learning of the English? And, make what allowances we may for his vanity, it is a remarkable thing for him to declare his conviction, that no man living, Jew or Greek, could have written his book. We can understand why no Greek could do it—because none had the requisite knowledge of the ancient Hebrew Scriptures. But why no Jew? there were numbers of learned Jews at Alexandria who knew far more of Greek literature than he did: but these he plainly considered disqualified by their ignorance of the Hebrew, the Septuagint being the only form in which they studied the scriptures. What then

disqualified all the learned Jews of Jerusalem? they surely were not all incompetent to throw the Old Testament into such a narrative as that in the Antiquities. They could be disqualified only by their want of Greek. And yet they were, as your divines pretend, educated men, the sons of fathers who had continually heard the good grammatical, though not most elegant, Greek of the New Testament, spoken by all classes, high and low, in Judea."

When Dr Marcus had ended his remarks, the chairman said: "As Josephus is the only Jew born in Judea in those times, whose testimony distinct from that of our gospels we have before us, I think we had best examine carefully the passages of his writing, which Dr Marcus has adduced, and try to satisfy ourselves whether they prove, as Dr Marcus holds, that Greek was an unspoken and completely foreign tongue in Judea in the time of our Lord, or whether, as Dr Roberts maintains, they prove nothing of the kind. Dr Roberts, in his chap. viii., part I., considers the objections from the writings of Josephus to his thesis, that Greek was the prevailing language."

"Before you read Dr Roberts's criticisms," said Mr G——, "let me beg you, for the information of myself and others, who have not read his large volume, to give us in his own words, the exact statement of his thesis." Mr E——. assented, and opening the volume, said, "at page 4, Dr Roberts observes: 'The Greek language I believe to have been almost universally prevalent, and to have been understood and employed, more or less, by all classes of the community. But I believe that the Greek, though thus generally used, was attended by the Aramæan, which was frequently spoken by all ranks of the native population, was made use of by such, at times, on public as well as private occasions; but was, for the most part, employed only in homely and familiar intercourse, and might still be said, though with difficulty, and amid many exceptions, to maintain

its position as the mother-tongue of the inhabitants of the country." "So that," said Mr G—, "is the result of six hundred pages of historical inquiry! To me it sounds very like—whichever you please, my dear, you pay your money, and you take your choice. Is there anything more definite?" "Do not be in such a hurry, friend G—," said B—; "on page 5, he says: 'What I maintain, and shall endeavour to prove, is that Greek was, in several important respects, the then prevailing language (PREVAILING in capitals) of Palestine; that it was, in particular, the language of literature and commerce; the language generally employed in public intercourse; the language which a religious teacher would have no hesitation in selecting and making use of, for the most part, as the vehicle for conveying his instructions, whether orally or in writing; and the language, accordingly, which was thus employed both by our Lord and his apostles.'" "Hmm!" said Mr G—, "he begins by maintaining in capitals, and then endeavours to prove, I fear, in very small. Evidently, he cares little for mere historical inquiry, but is about to fight his way through thick and thin, as special pleader for the utterance in Greek, by our Lord and the apostles, of all their words recorded in Greek. I do not expect from him much aid in our examination of Josephus. Does he allow that Jesus ever spoke Hebrew?" "I cannot find that he does," was the answer. "At page 486, he winds up thus: 'We must discard such notions and errors, whosoever may sanction and maintain them, and cling to that one simple and satisfactory hypothesis, by which, as has been shown, the whole facts of the case are easily explained, and by which alone they become intelligible—that (here all that follows is in capitals) 'OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST SPOKE IN GREEK, AND THE EVANGELISTS INDEPENDENTLY NARRATED HIS ACTIONS, AND REPORTED HIS DISCOURSES IN THE SAME LANGUAGE WHICH HE HAD HIMSELF EMPLOYED.'"

#### 14 *Orthodoxy from the Hebrew point of View.*

At this, G——, P——, and a few others, laughed heartily, and one gentleman was facetious enough to venture something funny about capital logic. "I suppose," said one, who had not seen the book, "he allows, at least, that our Lord said, *talitha cumi*." "He does," said the reader, "and gives a reason for it thus, at page 92: 'The person on whom the miracle was performed, was of tender years, and being the daughter of a strictly Jewish family, she was probably, as yet, but little acquainted with the Greek. At any rate, Greek was to her, as to every native Jew, a language not generally employed in the domestic circle; and it was to Hebrew that her ears, from infancy, had been accustomed. How beautifully accordant then, with the character of Him whose heart was tenderness itself, that now, as he bent over the lifeless frame of the maiden, and breathed that life-giving whisper into her ear, it should have been in the loved and familiar accents of her mother-tongue!'"

Later in his book, in his concluding chapter, he claims to have established that our Lord and his apostles *habitually made use of the Greek language*. "And the conclusion which I have sought to make good amounts to this—that throughout the whole of his public ministry: . . . in the house of Mary at Bethany, as well as in the city, our blessed Lord continually made use of the Greek language" (p. 519).

"G—— is quite correct," said Mr P. in his estimate of Dr Roberts. "He is the most daring and dogmatic of special pleaders. His one great argument is—the words of Jesus have come down to us in Greek—*ergo*, He uttered them in Greek. He is grand in maintaining and affirming. At page 16, he says, 'What I maintain and mean to prove is, that Greek was the language which they habitually used in their public addresses; so that if any one affirms that Hebrew was used on some occasions, when their discourses have been reported in Greek, it remains with him to shew

it. I may be inclined to believe that some such occasions are possibly to be met with in the Gospel history; but, at any rate, I affirm that these were altogether exceptional, and that Greek was the language usually employed in addressing even the very humblest of the people.' He allows you as much Aramaic as you like, attending the Greek, as he says, Aramaic in homely and familiar intercourse, Aramaic maintaining its position 'as the mother tongue of the inhabitants of the country,' Aramaic as the language employed in the domestic circle, even in the house of rulers of the synagogue; but not a word of it ever uttered by our Lord, unless you can demonstrate it. The only general notion which he allows me to frame, so far as I can understand him is this;—that the moment a Jew, in any part of Palestine, put his nose out of doors, he changed his language and began to talk Greek, or else held his peace, except on the rarest occasions; afraid, I fancy, that his old mother tongue would catch the rheumatics."

"Enough," said the chairman, "and more than enough, about the thesis of Dr Roberts. Let us consider his replies to objections from Josephus." "Are the replies lengthy," demanded Mr G. "Only seven pages," was the answer. "Then we ought to hear every word of them," said Mr G. The chairman read as follows, from page 286 of the chapter "Consideration of Objections:" "The first passage calling for remark is found in the preface to his 'History of the Jewish War:'—'I have devoted myself to the task of translating, for the sake of those who live under the government of the Romans, the narrative which I formerly composed in our national language (*πατρίῳ γλώσσῃ*), and transmitted to the Barbarians of the interior (*τοῖς ἄνω βαρβάροις*). In section following, he explains that his object in re-writing his history was, that the Greeks and Romans, as well as the Parthians, the Babylonians, the further Arabians, and the Jews beyond the



## 16 *Orthodoxy from the Hebrew point of View.*

Euphrates, might have access to a true narrative of events. Dr Roberts concludes his argument thus:—“Josephus, in composing his history in Greek, intended it for the use *generally* of those who lived *under the government of the Romans*—manifestly, therefore, though not exclusively, for his brethren in Palestine. The same thing appears from his not enumerating the Jews of Palestine, among those for whom the Hebrew edition of his narrative was designed.” The inference drawn is,—“That a history intended for the natives of Palestine, among others, would naturally be composed in the Greek language.” “Bravo! Dr Roberts,” cried Mr G. “From that inference, and from the remark that the Jews of Palestine were not named as the intended readers of the Hebrew history, we all see what a dunce Dr Marcus was for telling us that the book written by Josephus in his native tongue was meant (Part I., p. 25) for the information of his countrymen! It was the translation in the foreign and outlandish tongue which was naturally composed for their reading.” The fun of this was too much even for the chairman’s gravity, and there was a peal of refreshing laughter all round. Mr E. went on—“there are two other passages generally quoted from Josephus, in the former of which (the third quoted above by Dr Marcus, page 11) he speaks of the Greek in which he wrote his antiquities as a *ξένη καὶ ἀλλοδαπή διάλεκτος* (literally a foreign and outlandish speech or dialect); and in the latter—” “Pardon me,” said Mr P., “it will save time to take one passage at once. Tell us how he gets out of the ‘foreign and outlandish.’” “They are dealt with together, and I can find nothing,” said the reader, “besides these two sentences in the page following. ‘It was not his purpose merely to write in Greek, but as far as possible in *pure and classical Greek*. The Hebraistic Greek to which he was accustomed, might almost have been reckoned a different language from that employed by the classical historians.’”



"Here," said Mr P., "we have completely changed our ground. Instead of the merry inference just drawn, that the Greek, into which Josephus translated his work in his native tongue, was the language in which information for his countrymen would be 'naturally composed,' we learn now that, compared with that translation, the Greek to which his countrymen, even polished scholars like himself, were accustomed, might almost have been reckoned a different language—so different, that Josephus calls his own historical Greek a 'foreign and outlandish tongue' to his countrymen! And this laughable juggle of contradiction is an answer to the objection founded on the plain words of Josephus! Just now we heard, and Dr Roberts is never tired of repeating it, that the Greek of our Gospels is the very Greek which fell from the lips of the Saviour and the Apostles, and the Greek spoken by all classes of Jews. Now, we are told that the Greek of the most polished society in Jerusalem was, from its corruptions, almost a different language from that strange and outlandish classical Greek. Still more corrupt, then, must have been the Greek of the fishermen of Galilee. But this we have, word for word, says the Doctor, in the New Testament; and we can compare it with the classical—with what result? The fact is, that the difference is so small, that none of us ever saw it, till after the labour of years we had learned the refinements of the language. Both are studied from the same grammar and dictionary; not one of us, I fancy, is able to point out anything ungrammatical in one more than in the other, vast as the complexities of Greek grammar are. Nor do I believe that all of us together can recal half-a-dozen phrases in the utterances of our Lord and the apostles, which can be termed Hebraistic Greek."

"I am astonished," said Mr C., "at all this fuss about ξένη διάλεκτος. It means either strange tongue, or strange dialect. Evidently Josephus is speaking of

two dialects of Greek. You may shake your heads, but you cannot deny that, with the grammarians, *διάλεκτος* means simple *dialectus*, *dialect*. We have no right to affirm that the Greek spoken by our Lord and the apostles, and by Jews of their station, was quite as pure and grammatical as our present text. Broad Scotch or broad Lancashire may well be called a strange outlandish dialect in comparison with classical English."

"That may be," said the chairman; "but it is not the same thing as if a writer of classical English should term his own language strange and outlandish in comparison of the ruder speech, as you seem to think Josephus did."

"And what harm in that? That's another thing," said C., who was that scarce commodity an Irish high-churchman; "I say that, if a divine teacher were to appear speaking either dialect, his words might be handed down in pure grammatical English, with perfect faithfulness as to the phrases used, but modified for all mankind, not in the tongue spoken, but in dialect only. I say that the thesis of Dr Roberts is not damaged at all by this phrase of Josephus." "That," said the chairman, "demands full consideration, and I am partly inclined to agree with C. Indeed, I intended to state, if not to maintain, his view of the matter. You had best hear Dr Roberts out on these two passages." He read on—"and in the latter he tells us he had devoted himself to the study of Greek learning, but had not been able to acquire a correct pronunciation, on account of the habit which prevailed in his native country." (Vid. the Greek, Part I., p. 24). These passages have been much insisted on by those who deny the prevalence of Greek in Palestine. But the whole difficulty which they seem to present vanishes when we take into account the object which Josephus had professedly in view. It was not his purpose merely to write in Greek, but, as far as possible, in *pure and classical Greek*. And it is in perfect consistency

with the position which I uphold as to the linguistic condition of Palestine at the time, that he should have felt great difficulty in accomplishing his purpose. His *πάτριος συνήθεια* greatly hindered it. The Hebraistic Greek to which he was accustomed, might almost have been reckoned a different language from that employed by the classical historians. He adds in a note: 'I may observe that it is not uncommon to find Scottish writers of the last century speaking in their prefaces of the pains which they had taken, often, as was felt, with but partial success, to write in correct and classical English—Comp. *e. g.*, the Preface to Campbell's work 'On the Gospels.' "I confess," added the chairman, "that if it could be maintained that such Hebraistic Greek was familiarly spoken by the Jews, the reply of Dr Roberts to objections from Josephus, is to me satisfactory."

"That exactly amounts," said Mr B., "to this: that in your judgment, if the thesis of Dr Roberts be first vastly altered, and then granted, without one word of historical proof, the thesis, in spite of Josephus, will stand. The Greek posited in his thesis is the good grammatical Greek of the New Testament; the alteration required, and ready for use, is to put for that a Greek as different from it, as broad Scotch or broad Lancashire is diverse from decent English. Don't you twig this sleight of hand? The doctor is conjuring with two cards, not one."

"That is precisely so," said Mr P., rising, "there's not in Dr Roberts' large book a shadow of demonstration that Greek was commonly spoken in Judea 1800 years ago, except his argument from the New Testament books, assumed as authentic. And the only considerations worth notice in that argument, besides simple assumption of the matter in debate, are these; first, that no hint is even given by the narrators that they are translating into Greek what was said in Aramaic; and secondly, that no mention of interpreter between Jew and Greek is ever made. By the help of

these two considerations and Dr Roberts' capitals, it would be easy to write a book proving that the Iberian, Celtic and German tribes, with whom the Roman generals had so much intercourse and correspondence, all spoke commonly the Latin tongue along with their vernacular. Such a book would be probably more difficult to confute from cotemporary history than is Dr Roberts' volume. Where could we find a direct negative, that they did not know Latin? With respect to these passages from Josephus, I observe, first, that they all conspire to agree exactly, without qualification or quibble, with the flat negation of Dr Roberts' thesis. Josephus is for him never a witness; he pleads only against the evidence of that writer. The enormous argument from silence is dead against him. No terms in the Greek language can be found to describe the strangeness and difficulty of a foreign tongue, though it were Chinese, stronger than those used by Josephus about Greek to a Jew, a life-time after the days of our Lord. In order to make Josephus in any way agree with Dr Roberts, we must first get this Hebraistic Greek into Judea, in spite of the evidence of that author which Dr Marcus has read to us, concerning the jealous seclusion of his people from Greek intercourse. Next, we must conceive of Josephus, a noble and a priest, a renowned scholar, a famous warrior and diplomatist of the capital, so drenched in these vulgar Hebraisms, that, in spite of all the reasons which would have urged him to obtain more knowledge than the rabble, whom Dr Roberts describes at page 188 as perfectly familiar with Greek, and in spite also of the close relation into which he was brought for years as a public person, with men, both friends and enemies, round about Judea, who spoke and wrote Greek perfectly—we must conceive of such a man, with such early training, such opportunities and motives, as content to place on record, when over forty years old, what very great pains he had taken to learn Greek, how he had become skilled in the gram-

mar of it, how at great he cost had put himself under tuition in the Greek tongue at Rome, how he had never managed to pronounce it properly, and how with the help of others he had surmounted the mighty difficulty of writing a Greek book, which after all the rhetorical touching of his "Græculus esuriens," is far from being a model of classic elegance.

"This may be natural and pardonable in a man who had never had nor been supposed to have opportunities of learning Greek; but most ridiculous in a scholar brought up in a capital city where Greek was commonly spoken before he was born.

"Yet, far the greatest difficulty in our way to Dr Robert's thesis, is the getting that Hebraistic Greek into Palestine. Such a result is contrary to all that is known of the diffusion of a superior language, which is always introduced and established by government officials, military men, or the better class of proprietors and employers of brains and labour. A tongue so diffused over a land invariably corrupts the vernacular, but is not corrupted by it. The Welsh, Irish, and Gaelic spoken in these islands are ungrammatical and mixed with English words; but the men who speak them utter a grammatical English, free from the vernacular, and which they have learned from their superiors. A Hebraistic Greek is just as much a nonentity as a Cymricised English. Your Welsh, Irish, or Highland peasant speaks far better English than hundreds of wealthy employers in Lancashire.

"Mr C.'s notion of a Scotch or Lancashire sort of Greek spoken in Judæa is a chimera: it is the cart before the horse. Our provincial dialects are all ancient speech which has lagged behind in improvement, not modern speech imported and degraded, so that they have no likeness to this fancied Hebraistic Greek. If we examine the languages of Europe sprung from the Latin, at least this is true of French, we find scarcely

## 22 *Orthodoxy from the Hebrew point of View.*

any mixture in them of the Celtic and Teutonic displaced by them. The only book of the New Testament which deserves to be called Hebraistic Greek is the Apocalypse. There is not a tittle of evidence that such Greek was ever a spoken language. The book is probably the work (I allude here not to its poetic splendour) of a Jew, poorly educated, who, late in life, and with imperfect opportunities, set himself to learn and write a foreign tongue, just as a half-educated and ambitious Englishman might turn out a French book full of Anglicisms. I have read what a writer in *Macmillan's Magazine* has to say concerning the pigeon English about our factories in the Chinese ports; but there is no reason to believe that such a jargon ever was or ever will be commonly spoken by all classes of a community. Yet I can well imagine that such a pigeon Greek was current among a meaner sort of Jews in Cæsarea, if there were any who chose to sell their labour to the Gentiles, and perhaps among the few who sold their produce there.

"I shall not debate with Dr Roberts the meaning of *πάτριος συνήθεια*; that is of little moment; but I do not admire his concealing from the English reader the statements of Josephus in two of his passages, that he had taken lessons in Greek at Rome, and had got hold of the Greek grammar; and the doctor has no right to say that the "custom of his country" prevented his writing, but only his pronunciation." Mr P. sat down.

"It is really wonderfully hard to see one's way to the truth in this question," said the chairman. "We must read the reply to the remaining passages; and here I shall not have to read all that is written. The author says: 'Other passages are frequently referred to ("Wars," v. 9, 2; vi. 2, 6) in which Josephus speaks of himself as having, by command of Titus, addressed his besieged countrymen, *τῇ πατρίῳ γλώσσῃ* (in their native tongue), and *Ἑβραϊζῶν* (in Hebrew). The only part of Dr Roberts' answer to them which appears to

me worth reading is this : "They were in arms against the Roman invaders, and we know that the greatest fanaticism then prevailed among them. There was a violent recoil from all that savoured of Gentilism, and this feeling would be sure to display itself in regard to language as in other particulars. In fact, as was formerly mentioned, we find a statement in the Mischna to the effect that the employment of Greek for certain purposes was formally prohibited during the war with Titus ; so that we have no difficulty in understanding why, on the occasions referred to, Josephus should have made use of the Hebrew language."

"That appears to me a sufficient reply," said the president.

"With all my heart," answered Dr Marcus ; "but I beg you not to suppose that there is one word in the Mischna which indicates that Greek was commonly spoken. Dr Roberts and the host of writers who have before handled this question would have produced such evidence, if it had been there. There were many things connected with property, marriage, and divorce, about which the Roman Government had decreed for their own convenience that legal documents in Greek should be as valid as those in Hebrew."

Hereupon Mr B. remarked : "In the utter absence of historical evidence that Greek was a familiar language, the use of Hebrew by the heralds of Titus will still found a very strong suspicion, although it supplies no proof, that no other language would have been understood. And no more can be urged, from these passages of Josephus, besides what P. calls the enormous historical argument of silence. Josephus has preserved two long orations which he delivered to his countrymen by command of Titus in Hebrew ; and tells us, that at the final conference of Titus in person with the mad generals, an interpreter was employed. And yet we are to believe that Greek was as familiar to those generals from their earliest days as to Titus himself."



## 24 *Orthodoxy from the Hebrew point of View.*

“One more passage,” said the chairman; “that in which Josephus affirms (Cont. Ap. 1-9) that he was the only person who understood (*συνίην*) the reports brought by deserters from the city. The answer of Dr Roberts is: ‘I would be inclined to take *συνίην* not in the sense of *understood*, but of *became acquainted with*, a meaning which the word might possibly bear. If this explanation of the difficulty be not accepted, I see no other resource than perhaps the most natural one of all—that of regarding the statement as one of the many exaggerations by which, in the course of his writings, Josephus seeks to magnify his own importance.’”

At this there was another laugh all round, and a great relief we all felt it to be.

One observed that if Dr Roberts chose to maintain that the ancient Gauls and Britons talked Latin, he would soon floor arguments from Cæsar’s Commentaries.

Here Mr D. rose and said: “Before we finish our study of Josephus, I would make a remark which to me appears of weight. The evidence is strong to my mind that Josephus grew up without a knowledge of Greek, such as enabled him either to speak or to write it. Very likely he never studied it till he was the prisoner of the Romans, as he affirms (Cont. Ap. 1, 9) thus: ‘Vespasian also and Titus had me kept under a guard, and forced me to attend them continually. At the first I was put into bonds; but was set at liberty afterward, and sent to accompany Titus, when he came from Alexandria to the siege of Jerusalem; during which time there was nothing done which escaped my knowledge; for what happened in the Roman camp I saw and wrote down carefully; and what information the deserters brought out of the city, I was the only man that understood them. Afterwards I got leisure at Rome,’ &c. (v. part i., p. 25 for the rest).

“I agree,” continued Mr D., “with Dr Alford and



Dr Roberts as to the prevalence of Greek in Judæa ; but I do not see how any one can read the accounts given by Josephus of his own studies and acquirements, without perceiving that he meant the reader to conclude that he himself was unacquainted with that language. The explanation of all that is easy, and I am amazed that it never occurred to Dr Roberts. Josephus was a priest, brought up in the house of a priest, educated among priests, who, as is very well known, despised and hated the literature and language of the Gentiles. After his imprisonment, kept as he was about Vespasian and Titus, who determined to employ him, he would have both leisure and the strongest reasons, with good opportunities, to study Greek ; and he doubtless acquired enough of it to make himself of great use to Titus in the siege. I think that explains, better than the supposition of Dr Marcus, how Josephus acted as interpreter."

To this Dr Marcus, rising, said in reply : "I grant that Mr D.'s explanation of the last-named matter is better than mine, which was given at the moment without due consideration. But I think he will soon confess as much about the error of his persuasion that the priests could remain ignorant of Greek in a country where it was, as he fancies, generally spoken. Priests know their own interests too well for that. You have only to read the account given by Josephus of the distribution of the highest military offices among the priests. In Book II. of the ' Wars,' c. 20, 4, we read : 'They also chose other generals for Idumea ; Jesus, the son of Sapphias, one of the high priests, and Eleazar, the son of Ananias, the high priest. . . Nor did they neglect the care of other parts of the country ; but Joseph, the son of Simon—both high priests—(Antiq. xx., 8, 117) was sent as general to Jericho, as was Manasseh to Perea ; and John, the son of Matthias (evidently brother of Josephus), was made governor of the toparchies of Gophnitica and Acrabattene, as was

Josephus, the son of Matthias, of both the Galilees (*i.e.* the historian himself.)' Now, on your supposition, that these little governments were not only, as all well know, surrounded by fortresses full of Greek-speaking officers, but also crowded with a Greek-speaking population, it is certainly the most comical of all blunders that can be attributed by you to the Sanhedrim of Jerusalem, that they should choose for their generals, diplomatists, and governors the only men in the country, namely the priests, who were ignorant of Greek! The truth is, that not half a dozen men in Judæa proper, resident natives of the country, were familiar enough with that language to be able to speak it."

Here the chairman rose and said, "We have done all in our power, I think, to discuss the information supplied by Josephus, about this puzzling question. He was a sad blunderer who called history an old almanack. I never was so baffled in making out the meaning of an almanack as I am by this folio of Josephus, on a subject which he every moment knew as exactly as the number of his fingers, and which to me, as a theologian, is of unspeakable importance. If he had only used the word *φωνή* or *γλώσσα* or *λέξις*, instead of *διάλεκτος*, all would have been clear as the noon. The words are frequently equivalent, but the ambiguity in the last is undeniable. I must produce for your consideration the only passage which I can find in Philo, which bears upon our inquiry; but I know that Dr Roberts could fairly argue that it is not decisive. In his tract *Περὶ τοῦ πάντα σπουδαῖον εἶναι ἐλεύθερον*, he praises the Essenes of Judea thus: *τοὺς οὗτους ἢ δίχα περιεργείας ἑλληνικῶν ὀνομάτων ἀθλητὰς ἀρετῆς ἀπεργάζεται φιλοσοφία, γυμνάσματα προτιθεῖσα τὰς ἐπαινετὰς πράξεις, ἐξ ἧν ἡ ἀδούλωτος ἐλευθερία βεβαιούται*, *i.e.*, "Such athletes of virtue has the philosophy made them, which, without the superfluous apparatus of Greek names (or words), sets before them for exercises those honourable deeds by which the noblest liberty is

established." I want to know, if any of you can inform me, what was Philo's exact meaning in this, 'without the needless fuss of Greek names?' Does he mean to affirm that those Essenes knew nothing of Greek?"

All agreed that the words might bear the meaning, though oddly expressed. Some thought he meant to affirm that: others would have it that the *ὀνόματα* were the phrases of Greek philosophy: others that the variety of sects and the names of sophists and philosophers are intended.

I begged the chairman's permission to look for a clue. I turned to the next tract, *Περὶ Βίου θεορητικόν*. Here Philo compares with the piety of the Egyptian Therapeutæ, a sort of monastic Jews more contemplative than the Essenes, that of the heathen, which filled its strains with such names as Hephæstus, Hera, Poseidon, Demeter, and the like, and with their derivations from fanciful connection with the elements. He goes on to say, *ἀλλὰ τὰ μὲν ὀνόματα σοφιστῶν ἔστιν ἐυρήματα τὰ δὲ στοιχεῖα ἀψυχος ὕλη καὶ ἐξ ἑαυτῆς ἀκίνητος* (but the names are the inventions of sophists, and the elements are lifeless matter of itself immovable). He compliments the Therapeutæ on thinking of something higher than such empty names and mere elements. They were, as we all know, all Greek-speaking Jews. But he introduces the epithet *ἑλληνικῶν* into his compliment to the Essenes, not so much, I think, by way of making an affirmation about their language, as by way of allusion to what everybody knew, that they were encumbered neither with the empty names of Greek piety, nor with the language in which they were coined. "I submit," said I, "that this phrase of Philo, vague as it is, is a testimony not for, but against the thesis of Dr Roberts."

Here Mr B. rose and said—"We have given time enough to Josephus and Philo. One thing I am curious to know. How does Dr Roberts dispose of the fact established by all ecclesiastical history and tradi

tion, if they are to be held competent to establish anything, that the first record of our Lord's words was written in Hebrew by the apostle Matthew? If none of our Greek evangelists has translated the words of Jesus into another tongue, Matthew, at all events, must have been a translator."

"To that question," said the chairman, "Dr Roberts devotes 80 pages 'on the original language of St Matthew's gospel.' It is a weary tissue of other men's opinions. He assumes that he has proved that our Lord spoke in Greek all that is recorded of his words, except a very few. From this it follows, of course, that the first record must have been in Greek; but he does not quite press that. He appeals to evidence. The internal evidence he shews in his way to be overwhelming that our Greek Matthew is an original. The external he makes light of, because nobody ever saw that Hebrew gospel; and he concludes triumphantly (page 448) that there is no sufficient ground for believing that Matthew ever wrote a gospel in Hebrew at all. He considers that the 'Gospel of the Hebrews,' of which Eusebius and Jerome speak, was an early translation from the Greek Matthew, afterwards corrupted."

"No sufficient ground for believing?" said Mr G. "I say, because I have taken the trouble to examine for myself, that there is quite as much ground for believing the testimony to a Hebrew Matthew, as for believing anything else of what is called primitive external evidence for the authenticity of our gospels. The whole story must stand or fall together. This blow in the mouth from the staff of Dr Roberts leaves hardly a tooth in the gums of our poor Church Clio! Dr Roberts is almost a match in penetration into antiquity for our wise and modest Manning. He alone is worthy to stand cheek by jowl with that dolichouatous dignitary, and cry to us all, 'Were you ever in antiquity, or any that belong to you? We two were

there!' To which the classical mitre could not fail to wag the rejoinder,

Istis "florentes ætatibus, Arcades ambo,  
Et cantare pares, et respondere parati."

"I am grievously disappointed," said the president, "with the result of our labour. I am not convinced either that our Lord spoke Hebrew only, or Greek only, or sometimes Greek, and sometimes Hebrew. One of these must be the truth; but I declare to you honestly, that with my present light and learning, I am unable to determine which. I can only conclude that this is one of those things which it is not necessary for me to know. You may be, or may not be, in a less embarrassed state of mind; but I have a wish to know what that state is. There are fourteen of us here, besides Dr Marcus, and our friend Mr Kirkman. I put a question to you thirteen. As many of you as have come to a defined conclusion, satisfactory to your judgment, about the language in which the Lord Jesus conveyed his teaching, hold up your hands." Six hands were raised. "Then," said he, "there are eight of us not satisfied in our judgments. Now, of the six who are satisfied, let as many as are convinced that our Lord taught in the Greek language, hold up their hands." Three hands were held up. "Then the other three are convinced that our Lord taught in Hebrew. I heartily wish we could have arrived at a result more unanimous."

Upon this Dr Marcus rose with sparkling eyes. "Allow me to express my admiration of the learning, the patience, and the thorough honesty, with which you have faced my argument from Josephus. Your result has doubled the power of my general comparison between the boastful pretensions and the actual *assets*, as you say in your Bankruptcy Courts, of your orthodox faith and truth. I beg to repeat my statement of those pretensions, and to write under them your own valuation of your stock of real knowledge; that with all your ecclesiastical pomp and pride, with all your

Fathers and your pedigrees, the most learned synod you can assemble is unable to determine in what human language your Incarnate God delivered to you your church authority and your dogmatic revelation, 'which whosoever keepeth not whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.'

"The chairman regrets that no statement is producible, at least from cotemporary history, of the direct negative, that no other tongue than the Hebrew of the day was spoken by Jesus and his disciples.

"In the discussion which we had about that famous letter of Jesus to the King of Edessa, you heard evidence that ought to count among you almost for that of an ear witness. If you doubt the story that the correspondence was to be seen in the day of Eusebius, in the public records of Edessa, in the Syrian tongue; if you doubt his having translated into Greek, or even his having seen, that Syrian document, or a copy of it; you cannot doubt that it was the belief and conviction of Eusebius, the learned bishop of the chief city in his day of Palestine, that Jesus corresponded in Syrian, if at all, and that his apostle Thomas delivered his words in Syrian. Now, by Syrian, Eusebius meant exactly the language of the Jews at the time of Jesus. Proof of this is in that book of Dr Roberts, and along with it the direct negative which the chairman desires to find; but it is pretty well concealed from the English reader in the Greek in the small of a note, without translation. The chairman will kindly read that note, in which there is nothing but what has been adduced by Milman and a crowd of writers on this question."

The note was read thus, from page 24, "Euseb. Dem. Evang., Lib. iii. In one passage of this book, Eusebius speaks of the apostles, as τῆς Σύρων οὐ πλείον ἑπαιόντες φωνῆς, (speaking no other tongue but the Syrian). And in another passage, he represents the apostles as (but for the promise of Divine assistance) being in circumstances to reply to their Lord's com-

mand to go and teach all nations," in such words as these; *ποια δὲ χρησόμεθα λέξει πρὸς Ἕλληνας, ἄνδρες τῆ Σύρων εντραφέντες μόνῃ φωνῇ;* (but in what language shall we preach to the Greeks, we who have been born and bred to speak the Syrian tongue only?) To the same effect, Chrysostom in several passages; Comp. Milman, "Bampton Lect." p. 173.

"How in the world does Dr Roberts dispose of those familiar passages?" said Mr G. "I cannot admire his tactics here," said the president. "His treatment of Eusebius is very summary. In the text over that note I can find nothing more than this: 'Eusebius may tell us again and again, that the apostles understood no language except Syriac; but let not that deter us,' &c."

"That's right," said Mr G., "bundle him out, neck and shoulders. I could have sworn he would do it, when I heard his wonderful thesis. Poor Eusebius! He is very old, and he is all we have; but he is plainly gone mad. He has contradicted Dr Roberts; so lock him up, lock him up, at page 24, and leave the doctor at peace with his capitals and small, to display his genius for composing.

"Here we are left, with a riddle to solve, which beats all the rest. We have the demonstration of Dr Roberts, that the true story was at the beginning correctly handed down from bishop to bishop, from sire to son, in the Churches of Palestine, that our Lord and the Apostles habitually and continually spoke Greek. In less than two centuries, antecedently to a period within certain reach of the learned Pamphilus, the friend of Eusebius, who did so much for the library of Cæsarea, the true tradition of the Greek speech had been rooted out of the land, and the opposite falsehood read in Eusebius had been established in its place, namely that of Syriac, or what is here the same thing, Hebrew speech and that only, in the mouths of Christ and the apostles. We can understand the growth of a



complex legend, by gradual accretions about some nucleus of fact, especially in a story which has travelled far, and supports some great interest, but where is the brain that can comprehend this mystery ; how a simple and clear affirmative, capable of no accretion or ornament, that of this Greek speech, an affirmative about public fact most conducive to the interests of Greek orthodoxy, should have become transformed in the mouths of the greatest Greek bishops, such as Chrysostom and Eusebius, into its distressing negative ; and this, too, without travelling at all, the marvellous transformation having occurred at home in Palestine, in the very focus of ecclesiastical light, in that library of Cæsarea ! How many thousand Roberts's would it take to accomplish that in all the documents and in all the memories ? It is a mad impossibility !

“To me the evidence of Eusebius on this question of national fact, the language spoken by our Lord and his disciples, notwithstanding my low opinion of his general trustworthiness in what concerns church pedigree and orthodoxy, is as certain a bit of history, as the report that King George the first and his family talked German.” To this speech of Mr G——, no reply was attempted.

The reader will not suppose that I am reciting all that was uttered by sixteen speakers, none of whom was silent, in a debate of five hours before and after luncheon. My wish is to place on record just the cream of what was said.

Some time was devoted to the evidence of the Acts on this question. One urged the inference from Acts xxii. 2 : “And when they heard that he spoke in the Hebrew tongue to them, they kept the more silence ;” that they were not accustomed to be always addressed in Hebrew, but often, perhaps usually, in Greek. Against this was placed the inference, from the surprise of the Chiliarch, who said, on being addressed by Paul, ‘Canst thou speak Greek ?’ that Greek was



quite unusual in the mouth of a Jew in custody in the streets. The surprise was by some denied, as referring to a Jew ; it was Greek from an Egyptian which was surprising ; to which it was replied that all the Jews in Egypt and all other men there likely to travel, spoke Greek continually. One gentleman created some amusement by producing Dr Adam Clarke's evasion of the argument from surprise ; according to whom, by reason of the noise, the Chiliarch never heard Paul's ' May I speak with thee ? ' nor knew that he could speak Greek, till after putting the usual ' Canst thou speak Greek ? ' preliminary to examination. All agreed that that was capital commentating. The result was, that the inference from xxi. 37, about balanced that from xxii. 2. One divine was wicked enough to ask significantly how the parenthesis (xxii. 2) came to be there, with its repetition of what precedes, and its odd interruption of the speech. Nothing of importance was made out of the Acts on the subject, for the chairman disallowed debate on quotations from the Septuagint, as I thought, very properly, on that occasion.

Mr D—— enquired whether any answer had ever appeared to the "Dissertations" of Dr Roberts. No one present could give account of any reply to it. I then begged leave to draw their attention to a paper entitled "An enquiry into the original language of St Matthew's Gospel," by John Newton, Esq., M.R.C.S., in Vol. xx. of the Proceedings of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Liverpool, 1865-66. Mr Newton says: "By far the most able and zealous advocate for the Greek view is Dr Alexander Roberts, whose recent work, 'Dissertations on the Gospels,' if one may judge by the numerous commendatory notices of it that have appeared in the Reviews, and also in recent standard religious works, appears to have quite turned the tide against the ancient opinion." [Dr Roberts in the preface to his second edition is able to quote a very flattering report of his convincing logic

from the *Saturday Review*.] Mr Newton fills more than ten pages with an account of Dr Robert's positions, and then fills fifty pages more with a scholar-like, convincing, and very interesting refutation. He states forcibly the argument from the obstinate conservatism of the Jews, and from the well-known adherence of the Welsh (to whom it did not suit Dr Robert's game to make allusions) to their native tongue. He states also fully the argument from Josephus; but makes no attempt to show the weakness of Dr Roberts in his reply to that argument; and this omission is the defect of Mr Newton's excellent paper. One or two passages I may read:—"If Dr Roberts had been able to tell us that the Jews of Christ's time had so intense an appreciation of the beauties of the Greek tongue, that the wealthier sent their children to Athens to be educated, and that the Greek literature was known to all classes of the Jews, through translations into Hebrew, this would have been something to the point. All this and more might have been said of the Romans. Yet it would be taken for no evidence that the people of Rome, the Latin race, living in the country of their fathers, habitually spoke in Greek! Take another illustration. The French language is familiarly taught and cultivated among ourselves. French books abound. All educated persons are well acquainted with French literature. Many English authors have even written works in French. If Dr Roberts' mode of argument be worth anything, there would be here abundant evidence to some foreign writer, ages hence, that our Wesleys and Spurgeons must have spoken and taught in French. I have been putting the argument at the strongest, that we might better see its absurdity. But the fact is, that Dr Roberts, with all his industry, has not been able to adduce the slightest proof that the Palestinian Jews of Christ's time had any acquaintance whatever with the Greek language" (p. 78).

“To this end he (Ezra) founded the Great Synagogue, as a new centre of religious life among them. The ‘Sopherim,’ as their first care, collected the sacred writings and established the canon. They authoritatively expounded the book of the law, and regulated, by their decisions and teachings, the whole social and religious life of the Jews. From this beginning arose that vast literature, which, at first transmitted orally, was at length, after the destruction of Jerusalem and the final dispersion of the Jews, carefully committed to writing by successive Rabbis, and, with ever increasing amplification, has descended to our times. As Talmud, it is divided into Mischna, or authoritative exposition, and Gemara, or the later supplement of Jerusalem and Babylon. As Midrash, or exposition, it is divided into Halachah, or authoritative law, and Haggadah, or sayings, teachings, homilies. In these vast collections we find recorded the sayings and doings of the great leaders of Israel during the very life-time of our Lord. Yet they are entirely written in Shemitic dialects,—the older in literary Hebrew, the latter portion in Aramaic. Not a single one of the innumerable writings and traditions has come down to us in Greek. Ample materials are thus furnished for judging of the state of national education, manners, and opinion in the days of our Lord. A few extracts will illustrate sufficiently the exclusive spirit of ancient Judaism. ‘Saith Abraham to God, didst thou not raise up seventy nations unto Noah? God saith unto him, I will raise up that nation from thee, of whom it shall be written, How great a nation is it!’ The gloss is, ‘That peculiar people, excelling all the seventy nations, as the holy language excells all the seventy languages.’ ‘The holy blessed God created seventy nations, but he found no pleasure in any of them, save Israel only.’ ‘A wise man (that is, one learned in the law of Moses) is to be preferred before a king; for if a wise man die, he hath not left his equal; but

### 36 *Orthodoxy from the Hebrew point of View.*

if a king die, any Israelite is fit for a kingdom.' 'The nations of the world are like to dogs.' 'The people of the earth do not live.' The Talmudists speak very ill even of proselytes. After all, they were not of the Jewish stock. 'Our Rabbins teach that proselytes and Sodomites hinder the coming of the Messiah.' 'Proselytes are as a scab to Israel.' The lawyer who asked Christ, 'And who is my neighbour?' might well put the question, for he had been taught, the law 'excepts all Gentiles, when it saith "his neighbour."' Again, 'An Israelite killing a stranger doth not die for it by the Sanhedrim, though it saith, "If any one lift up himself against his neighbour;" he must not be condemned on account of a Gentile, for they are not to be esteemed as neighbours.' In other places it was taught that a Jew was not bound to point out to a Gentile the right path, nor to save him from drowning, since their law as to neighbours did not apply, 'for such a one is not thy neighbour.' What Juvenal said of them was strictly true:—

Non monstrare vias eadem nisi sacra colenti,  
Quæsitum ad fontem solos deducere verpas.

Into this Jewish world, then, Christ was born. He was the contemporary of three most illustrious teachers and presidents of colleges; Hillel I., his rival Shammai\* Simon ben Hillel, and Gamaliel I., the teacher of Paul. It was enjoined that at five years

\* A curious story of these two famous teachers is told in the Babylon Gemara. "A heathen came to R. Shammai and offered to become a proselyte, if he might learn the whole law whilst he could stand upon one foot. But Shammai, who was a hot tempered man, drove him away, as asking an impossibility. Then he went to R. Hillel, and he found him taking a bath. But R. Hillel folded a sheet hastily around him, and hearing his question he answered, 'Yes, my son; whatsoever thou wouldst not have done to thyself, that do not to thy neighbour. This is the whole law.' And he admitted him as a proselyte." Many other sayings of this enlightened Rabbi bear a striking resemblance to the teaching of Christ.

old, a boy should commence the study of the Hebrew Bible, at ten years old the Mischna, at fifteen the Gemara. Thus the sum and substance of Jewish education was, after all, their Holy Scriptures, and the expositions of their Rabbis thereon. Accordingly, our Lord is represented as lingering behind his parents, when a boy of twelve years, forgetting his food, everything, that he might listen to the teachings of the Rabbins, and question them in his turn. Traces of the influence of Rabbinical teaching are to be found in abundance in his discourses ; as any one may see who will go through the numerous parallel passages to our Lord's teaching, from Rabbinical literature, given by Dr Lightfoot in *Horæ Hebraicæ et Talmudicæ*. Every phrase in the Lord's Prayer was already familiar to the Jews. In the Gemara of Babylon we find the parable of Dives and Lazarus ; also the parable of the wise and foolish virgins ; in the Jerusalem Gemara, the story of the husbandman and the vineyard. These examples might be multiplied indefinitely. And since these parallels to, nay often the sources of, the teaching, were certainly delivered in Hebrew only, surely the probabilities are overwhelming against our Lord having delivered them in Greek" (p. 81).

"It (the LXX.) was regarded from the first by the Jews of Palestine with intense dislike. They even instituted a fast-day to commemorate the origin of so great a calamity. It is said in the Jerusalem Talmud, "That day was bitter to Israel, even as the day when the golden calf was made. For the law could not be translated according to all things proper for it." Dr Roberts would have us believe that Christ himself read from this Greek version when he stood up in the synagogue at Nazareth, because the passage of Scripture is given by Luke (iv. 18) from the Septuagint. But if the Greek translation had thus usurped the Hebrew verity, even in the synagogues of Judea, of course the change would be still more complete out of

the Holy Land. How comes it, then, that not a single copy of the Septuagint has ever been found in a Jewish synagogue, or has ever been traced or derived from one? The ancient MSS. of it which we possess have all been obtained from Greek monasteries. Again: if in the Holy Land itself, nineteen hundred years ago, and in a time of peace, this Greek version had taken the place of the Hebrew Scriptures, even in the service of the synagogues, three events must have happened. *First*, a new school of Jewish expositors would have sprung up, using the new version, commenting on it, and writing in Greek. No trace of such a school exists. Philo is no exception to the rule; he was a Greek Jew of Alexandria, not a Palestinian Jew. *Secondly*, the Hebrew Scriptures would have utterly disappeared; instead of which, every synagogue, every library throughout the world, affords a ready contradiction to Dr Roberts's theory. *Lastly*, the traditional interpretation of the Hebrew text might have been lost" (page 92).

I received many thanks for introducing the instructive and well-written paper of Mr Newton to my brethren. "So then," said Dr Marcus, "it devolved upon a scholar of the medical profession to expose these arguifications of Dr Roberts, which have turned the tide of belief in England! But why should he entomb his thoughts in those 'Proceedings?'"

"Simply," answers Mr P——, "because he had not the slightest chance of being heard by the English public, not even by theologians. He might have printed his tract, and given away a thousand copies, presenting one to each of the Reviews—the *Saturday*, among the rest—who were so fascinated by Dr Roberts; but he would not have been noticed by any one of them. If he had written a book as large as Dr Roberts's, and made up his mind to throw away £100 for the benefit of printers and publishers, some notice of it would have appeared, but not with the unctuous

compliments paid to the genius of Dr Roberts; and there is no public in England who would have bought it. We have a religious world which spends vast sums in books, but it is a world which has a thorough contempt for either logic or information; and it is the business of reviewers to write what pleases them and their publishers, and to pander to their small sectarianisms."

"I think," said Mr G——, "it is very much to the honour of the Philosophical Society of Liverpool that they not only heard, but printed, that valuable paper. The majority of those societies have a most unscientific dislike for the grandest questions of human thought, for the noblest problems of human history, and for all the topics even of learned and critical divines. I know one of them, of no mean fame, in which, if the reader of a paper should happen to pronounce the word Theism, he is very likely to be called to order by the president for violating the rule against theology; and if, in a purely philosophical sense, and with the greatest respect for gentlemen of that school, he should pronounce the word Atheism, he is more loudly called to order for 'giving a dog a bad name.' Let us hope that, in another hundred years, we may have room in England for such a science as Theological and Biblical Criticism. At present, I do not think there is a journal of any kind in the country which would lay before its readers a concise account of the debate which we have all enjoyed in this and in our last meeting. And if we were silly enough to print such a report, we should have to stamp all our copies, and give them away; nor is there more than the very faintest probability that any editor would condescend to notice, or even to read it."

Mr P——, Dr Marcus, and I, staid a short time at the vicarage after the departure of the rest. Nothing of our conversation needs to be recorded, except Mr E——'s account of the sentiments of his friend, Dr Jones. "He is a Welshman, a determined adherent of Dr Roberts, and expresses himself with great force



and heat on the subject. From his point of view he puts the matter somewhat in this way. Suppose that the claims of divine commission and catholic authority made in these islands by the bishops, from Cardinal Cullen to the Colonials, were laid down thus,—that God had appeared on earth three or four hundred years ago in the form of one of my countrymen; that he had lived a human lifetime in Wales, a Welshman with Welshmen, among whom he had taught in their own tongue, laying the foundation of a church for all the world, and choosing only Welsh disciples: suppose that these bishops presented to me, as the title-deeds of their pedigree, power, and dignity, four little English books containing an account of the works and teachings of their Divine Founder, I should certainly ask, Where are the Welsh originals? If they replied that the Incarnate and his countrymen had in those days spoken English habitually, I should be sure they uttered falsehood. If they affirmed that the Divine Welshman had spoken only the Welsh of his day and country; that what he said had been committed to the love and loyalty of his countrymen, and by them recorded in their language; but that somehow, by pure chance and forgetfulness, every scrap of Welsh writing on the subject had disappeared, and English, by Divine Inspiration, had taken its place,—then nothing, not even a visit of God's Mother in person, nor any miracle that she could work, would induce me to believe their story. Vainly would they point out to me how much more useful to the world were English documents than Welsh. I should feel quite sure that there had been falsehood and foul play somewhere; and every Welshman alive, with brains in his head, would agree with me. Now, if Dr Roberts is not in the right, this supposition states the truth of the case, as it stood in the time of the first great Councils."

"Here," said Dr Marcus, "you seem to have a key to that amazing mystery of Hebrew infidelity, which,



from the days of the apostles, your Greek and Latin saints have with such affectionate piety deplored, and, with hands so murderous, punished. Do you wonder that, in their bright roll of dignitaries, they have not one authentic Jewish name?"

"Is it true," I enquired, "that the supposition just stated describes the case of Jerome's day, late in the fourth century, a lifetime after Eusebius? He tells of something more than a scrap of Hebrew document: he says that he saw what went in Palestine for the original Hebrew, 'quod vocatur à plerisque Matthæi authenticum,' of the first Gospel."

"Yes," answered Dr Marcus, "and he translated it into Greek! There seems to have been little need to do that, if it was the true Hebrew original of your translated Greek Matthew. How comes it to pass that neither the Hebrew, which he says he found current and saw, nor the Greek version which he says he made of it, has been permitted to come down to us? Not a single line of either is known to exist, or was ever heard of! Has there been no falsehood nor foul play of those Greek and Latin saints and fathers, think you? Jerome was a most learned scholar, employed by a learned pope to hunt for such documents; and they had all power to preserve and to destroy, all power both of burking and forging. Our libraries are crowded with ponderous folios of their day. Dr Manning could inform us, because 'I was there,' who it was that with his holy poker punched that Hebrew Gospel in the same fire with Jerome's Greek translation of it."

CROFT RECTORY, near WARRINGTON,  
Jan. 24, 1874.