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ESSAY XIV.

**NEW TESTAMENT GREEK IN THE  
LIGHT OF MODERN DISCOVERY.**

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## SYNOPSIS.

"Modern" for this purpose means the last fifteen years or so.

I. Change of standpoint in N.T. Greek study produced by

- (a) the regeneration in Comparative Philology, which stimulated the study of Greek in every epoch, with no preference to the classical;
- (b) the extensive discoveries of Hellenistic inscriptions and papyri;
- (c) growth of interest in the vernacular dialects of Modern Greece;
- (d) convergence of research upon the new material under the philologist Thumb (and others) and the theologian Deissmann. Significance of the latter's *Bibelstudien*.

Homogeneity of Hellenistic vernacular as *lingua franca* of the Empire.

Bearing of this upon an objection to "Deissmannism," viz. that alleged Semitisms paralleled from papyri may be due to real Semitic influence upon Greek-speaking Egyptians. Dr A. S. Hunt's view. Evidence from Modern Greek.

Restatement of the writer's doctrine as to Semitisms, in reply to objections.

II. The linguistic position of the several writers of the N.T.

Preliminary notes on the LXX and the nature of its Greek. Relation between literary and colloquial Greek. Phenomena of "Atticism."

(a) The Lucan Books. Unity endorsed by grammar. Luke's sense of style, producing conscious assimilation to LXX and to the rough Greek of Aramaic-speaking natives.

(b) Pauline Writings. Paul as Hebrew and Hellenist alike. His contacts with Greek literature and philosophy. Vocabulary popular.

(c) The Epistle to the Hebrews. Its literary quality. Blass on avoidance of hiatus and observance of rhythm.

(d) The "Second Epistle of Peter." Its Greek artificial.

(e) The First Gospel. Hebrew parallelismus membrorum. Methods of abbreviating Mark's phrases and correcting his Greek. Evidence that he similarly treats Q.

(f) Johannine Gospel and Epistles. Simplicity of Greek. How new knowledge affects grammatical exegesis.

(g) Shorter Palestinian writings. Palestine bilingual.

(h) The Apocalypse. True interpretation of its solecistic Greek. Bearing on authorship.

(i) Gospel of Mark. The Aramaic background, clearest from readings of D. Coincident corrections of language in First and Third Gospels. Criticism of Harnack's assumption that compound verbs are signs of Greek culture. Mark compared with Luke and with illiterate papyri.

III. The vocabulary of the N.T. as illustrated from our new sources. "Nothing new": instances to contrary: nature of results expected from new methods. Illustration from δοκίμιος, λογεία, διαθήκη, ήλικία, λίγιος.

IV. Grammar of N.T. Greek according to new lights. How classical presuppositions have perverted exegesis here, as in vocabulary.

V. Miscellaneous contributions of papyri and inscriptions. Contributions of the new Comparative Philology.

The Study of Hellenistic: plea for its recognition as a more important and easier introduction to N.T. than Classical Greek. The world-language of the Roman Empire and its suggestions to the Christian thinker.

## NEW TESTAMENT GREEK IN THE LIGHT OF MODERN DISCOVERY.

THE researches which supply material for the present Essay are described in the title as "modern." This term obviously needs definition at the outset. It will be used here of work that has been done almost entirely since the publication of the Revised Version, and mainly within the last fifteen years. A brief sketch of the new positions will fitly precede their defence in points where they have been considered vulnerable, and some exposition of important consequences for New Testament study.<sup>1</sup>

The beginning of the doctrines to be considered here is to be traced to Adolf Deissmann's *Bible Studies*, the first series of which appeared in 1895. Despite some voices of cavil from German scholars who underestimate the importance of the Berlin Professor's work, there can be no question that Deissmann has been the leader in a very real revolution. This revolution has however been prepared for by a host of workers, toiling almost unconsciously towards the same goal along a different road. The scientific study of the Greek language from the close of the classical period down to the present day has for a generation been attracting able and diligent students. They have shown that the aftermath of Greek literature is rich in interest and value of its own, and that if the comparative philologist and syntactician has fitly busied himself with the *origines* of Greek, he may with equal

<sup>1</sup> As far as possible I shall avoid repeating what has been already said in my *Grammar of*

*N. T. Greek* (vol. i. *Prolegomena*, 3rd edition, 1908).

profit study the continuous evolution which issues in the flexible and resourceful language of the common people in modern Hellas. This line of research is one among many products of the regeneration in comparative philology which dates from the pioneer work of Brugmann, Leskien, and others in Germany some thirty years ago. The old contempt of the classical scholar for the "debased Greek" of the centuries after Alexander was overcome by an enthusiasm which found Language worth studying for her own sake, in Old Irish glosses or Lithuanian folk-songs, in Byzantine historians or mediaeval hagiologies or ill-spelt letters from peasants of the Fayyûm. Hellenistic Greek accordingly found competent philologists ready to enter on a field which was already wide enough to promise rich reward for industry and skill. But with the new research there came in a vast mass of new material. Hellenistic inscriptions were collected by systematic exploration to an extent unparalleled hitherto. And from the tombs and rubbish-heaps of Egypt there began to rise again an undreamt-of literature, the unlettered, unconscious literature of daily life. The vernacular language of the early Roman Empire took form under our eyes, like a new planet swimming into our ken. It remained for some "watcher of the skies" to identify the newcomer with what had long been known. Casually glancing at a page of the Berlin Papyri, copied in a friend's hand, Deissmann saw at once the resemblance of this vernacular Greek to the Biblical Greek which had for ages been regarded as a dialect apart. Further study confirmed the first impression. *Bibelstudien* brought the theologian into line with the philologist, and a new method of Biblical study emerged which, even if its advocates be deemed to have sometimes exaggerated its claims, may at least plead justly that it is producing fresh material in great abundance for the interpretation of the Greek Bible.

At this point it will be advisable to sketch some of the most outstanding features of modern work upon the "Common " Greek, and name the workers who have specially advanced our knowledge. The first place must be taken by the department that gave a lead to all the others. The true

character of Κοινή Greek could only be recognized when it became possible to differentiate between the natural and the artificial, the unstudied vernacular of speech and the "correct" Atticism of literary composition. Materials for delineating the former variety were very scanty. The Paris papyri slumbered in the Louvre *Notices et Extraits*, and those of the British Museum, of Leyden and of Turin, provoked as little attention: classical scholars had something better to do than to follow the short and simple annals of the poor Egyptian farmer in a patois which would spoil anybody's Greek prose composition.<sup>1</sup> But when Drs Grenfell and Hunt were fairly started on their astonishing career of discovery, with fellow-explorers of other nations achieving only less abundant success,—when the volumes of the Egypt Exploration Fund stood by the side of goodly tomes from Professor Mahaffy and Dr F. G. Kenyon in this country, and many a collection from Berlin, Vienna, Paris and Chicago, the character of the language soon was realized. In the meantime the inscriptions of the Hellenistic period were being carefully studied according to their localities. The dialectic evidence of the vase inscriptions had yielded important results in the hands of Paul Kretschmer. K. Meisterhans taught us the true idiom of Athens from its stone records; and Eduard Schweizer (now Schwyzer) threw welcome light on the Κοινή of Asia Minor in his *Preisschrift* on the accidence of the inscriptions of Pergamon. The great epigraphist Wilhelm Dittenberger annotated with the utmost fulness of knowledge four massive volumes of Greek inscriptions from Greece and the East. More illiterate compositions were collected in Audollent's *Defixionum Tabellae*; while Sir W. M. Ramsay's researches in Asia Minor have given us a great mass of rude monuments of the popular local dialects, valuable to us in direct ratio to the "badness" of the Greek. Material of another kind has been gathered by specialists in sundry languages of antiquity, who have collected Greek loanwords,

<sup>1</sup> That Lightfoot would have reaped a harvest from these collections, had it occurred to him to examine them, is strongly suggested

by an extract from his lectures supplied to me by a pupil of his (*Proleg.* 2 or 3, p. 242).

and shewn from them what forms Greek was assuming in the localities involved at certain epochs known: we may instance Krauss on Greek words in Rabbinic Hebrew, and Hubschmann on similar elements in Armenian. At the head of the scholars who have assimilated this ever-growing material, and from it drawn a synthesis of vernacular Hellenistic under the early Empire, stands Professor Thumb of Marburg, a philologist of extraordinary versatility and learning, whose modest little treatise on "Greek in the Hellenistic Period" (1901) marks an epoch in our knowledge. The chapter on Biblical Greek in that invaluable book will engage our attention later on.

It is manifestly insufficient to examine Κοινή Greek only from the classical side, as our ancestors mostly did; nor can we be discharged from our duty when we have added the monuments of the Hellenistic age. A German savant coming to study Chaucer with a good equipment of Anglo-Saxon would confessedly produce one-sided results. To add a thorough knowledge of Gower and Langland would still leave him imperfectly fitted unless he could use the English of Shakespeare's age and our own as well. This truism has not been acted upon till very recently in the case of Greek. *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, founded and conducted through sixteen years by Karl Krumbacher, has been gathering together a goodly band of scholars to work on Greek in its mediaeval period. The language suffers sorely from artificialism in the remains which have reached us. But the New Testament student may get much illumination from genuine books of the people like the "Legends of Pelagia" (ed. H. Usener). The facts of the language throughout this period may be seen in Jannaris' *Historical Greek Grammar*, the theories of which however need to be taken cautiously.

Finally we have the modern vernacular, which is being well worked by Hellenistic students of the present day. As in private duty bound, the writer recalls that one of the earliest effective uses of it for the illustration of New Testament Greek was in W. F. Moulton's English *Winer*, nearly forty years ago. Great scholars of modern Hellas, notably Hatzidakis and Psichari, have given us a wealth of material.

But the foreigner who travels in Greece to-day is in some danger of bringing away with him a broken reed to lean on. Greek writing is infected with the virus of artificial archaism now as it was in the days of Josephus. The Greek of the newspapers is refreshingly easy for a classical tiro to read; and the schools do their best to initiate the *Graeculus* of modern Athens into its mysteries, alien though they are from the dialect of daily life. But it is a dead language, for all that, and—what is worse—a language that never was spoken in Hellas at one and the same time. We need not argue the burning question as to the propriety of the Καθαρεύουσα as a medium of literary prose composition in twentieth century Athens. That is a domestic problem for the Hellenes themselves, as to which the foreign visitor will be discreetly silent, whatever private opinion he may cherish. But for scientific study of N. T. Greek we can only use the modern book-Greek as we use that of Lucian and the other Atticists of ancient times. Both may employ genuine living idioms or forms, but they cannot be called as witnesses of the living language. It is the vernacular Greek of the uneducated to which we should rather go, as lying in the direct succession of the Κοινή. Thumb's handbook of the *Volkssprache*, with a scientific grammar and a chrestomathy of ballads and other popular literature, will be invaluable to Hellenistic scholars who know how to use it. A new line of research has recently been essayed by this acute observer, starting from his own investigations among the out-of-the-way dialects of the modern Greek world. There are points in which dialectic differences of the present day seem to attach themselves to differences dimly seen in the local variety of the Κοινή in ancient times. The extreme difficulty of detecting with any certainty points of difference between the Κοινή as spoken in widely separated localities within the Empire, makes this new criterion possibly helpful for our special purpose; for if we could establish some features of dialectic differentiation they might sometimes be of importance in criticism.

The last-mentioned point in this general sketch leads us on to the statement of a result which is of primary importance

for the thesis of the Essay. The popular spoken Greek of the Empire, as recovered in our own day from converging evidence of very different kinds, was homogeneous in nearly every feature that our methods can retrace. Pronunciation apart, it seems clear that a Hellenist like Paul would have provoked no comment whether he preached in Tarsus or in Alexandria, in Corinth or in Rome. It is on these lines, it would seem, that the answer lies to an objection recently raised by the lamented Dr H. A. Redpath and by Professor Swete<sup>1</sup> against the doctrine associated with the name of Deissmann, but maintained with equal emphasis by the great philologist Albert Thumb—the doctrine, that is, of the non-existence of "Biblical Greek" as a real separate category. The papyri have naturally figured very largely in arguments about "Semitism." They form by far the most considerable element in our materials for the colloquial Κοινή. It accordingly happens very often that an idiom which can be paralleled from a papyrus, or from several, is claimed as owing nothing to Hebrew or Aramaic thought lying behind the expression. But the Jewish population in Egypt was exceedingly numerous—what if these papyrus parallels are Semitisms as well as the Biblical phrase for which they are quoted? The general answer to this acute objection would be that the Greek of the non-literary papyri does not differ from that of vernacular inscriptions found in widely distant regions; and we cannot postulate in every quarter an influential Ghetto. But it is undeniably fair to say that an isolated papyrus parallel for some Semitic-seeming locution is not evidence enough for our plea, since it may itself have been tarred with the same brush in a different way. Such cases must be examined on their merits. The papyrus or papyri in question may be scrutinized for other signs of Semitic influence. (It can be said at once that these will be extremely hard to find.) And the word or usage may be examined in connexion with the general record of its class in Hellenistic vernacular. This will best

<sup>1</sup> Cf. also Mr G. C. Richards in *J. T. S.* x. 289 (Jan. 1909). This eminently helpful review (of my

second edition) unfortunately came too late to be used in the present paper.



be expounded by an example. The instrumental use of  $\epsilon\lambda\eta$  in Biblical Greek has naturally been taken as arising from the wider use of the Semitic preposition which answers to it generally. Unwilling to adopt this account for  $\epsilon\lambda\eta$  in 1 Cor. iv. 21, where the use of a foreign idiom seems antecedently most improbable, Deissmann was unable to quote any vernacular parallel in *Bible Studies* (p. 120)<sup>1</sup>. Then in 1902 appeared the first volume of papyri from Tebtunis, with half-a-dozen examples of  $\epsilon\lambda\eta$   $\mu\alpha\chi\alpha\acute{\iota}\rho\eta$  and the like, all due to different writers, the comparison of which produced an additional example by a certain restoration in one of the Paris Papyri<sup>2</sup>. Are we to explain the new "Semitisms" by postulating an influential Jewish colony at or near Tebtunis—the seat, by the way, of a "famous" ( $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\iota\mu\omicron\nu$ ) temple of the crocodile-god Sobk? If so, they succeeded wonderfully well in suppressing nearly all trace of their existence throughout two large volumes of papyri. On this point may be quoted the judgement of Dr A. S. Hunt<sup>3</sup>, whose impression on any question touching the papyri naturally goes very far. "Dr Swete's objection," he writes, "is of course hardly to be disproved, but I think the probabilities are very much on your side. I do not at all believe that there was any considerable Jewish element in the population of Tebtunis and the neighbourhood<sup>4</sup>; an element strong enough to influence the local speech and make itself felt in official correspondence would certainly be expected to be more distinctly in evidence in so large a number of documents. I should imagine that, as you say, the Jews were mostly to be found in the bigger towns (there was a  $\pi\rho\omicron\sigma\epsilon\upsilon\chi\acute{\eta}$   $\text{Ἰουδαίων}$  at Crocodilopolis, by the way: P. Teb. 86); but they

<sup>1</sup> An exact parallel was quotable nevertheless from Lucian — see Winer-Moulton, p. 485, n.3, and Dr Findlay's note *in loc.*: it will scarcely be urged that this was the "last infirmity" of the great Atticist's Syrian birth. The doubt felt about the  $\epsilon\lambda\eta$  there, recorded by Deissmann from Winer, means only

that an editor did not know how correct the phrase is.

<sup>2</sup> *P. Par.* 11, from the Arsinoite nome apparently.

<sup>3</sup> In a letter to the writer, dated Dec. 20, 1908.

<sup>4</sup> Dr Hunt notes that the papyri in *Tebt. Pap.* 1. are mainly from Kerkeosiris, not Tebtunis.

were also to be found, I think, in the country: cf. *e.g.* P. Magdola 3 (B. C. H. xxvi. p. 104), where Θεόδοτος, Γαδδαῖος and [ O? ]νίας (apparently Jews) appear as the μισθωταί of a κλῆρος; and the Arsinoite village Σανλάρεια must not be forgotten (cf. *Tebtunis Papyri*, H. p. 383, *s.v.* Κερκεσῆφης). But it is a long step from facts of this kind to the assumption of a Semitism in the Greek of a local official, whom there is no reason to suspect of Jewish connexion, and whom there is good reason to believe to have been comparatively free from Jewish intercourse. The occurrence of the same idiom elsewhere makes the step still more precarious." An appeal to our other material, in fact, soon shews us that loose uses of ἐν in Hellenistic vernacular need no foreign influences to account for them. The dative was getting feebler and feebler, and in many uses the addition of a preposition seemed to make no difference at all. "To grow weak with hunger" has in one Ptolemaic papyrus the simple dative, in another of the same date and in the same collection the dative with ἐν.<sup>1</sup> "Let them be tried before three judges " is expressed by ἐν in a dialectic inscription from Delphi of the third cent. B.C.<sup>2</sup>, just as in Acts xvii. 31 and 1 Cor. vi. 2. It seems a fair inference that the apparently narrow range of the illustration we are able to give for Paul's ἐν ῥάβδῳ does not compromise our right to use it as a proof that there is no Semitism here.

A further criterion of importance must not be overlooked. It is laid down with emphasis by great authorities like Thumb that the persistence of an alleged Semitism in Modern Greek may be generally taken as evidence that it arose in the ancient Κοινὴ without foreign suggestion. This doctrine rests upon the established fact that the modern language is the lineal descendant of the Κοινὴ vernacular. There is one very obvious objection, that the modern usage may be simply the Biblical word or phrase perpetuated in a country where the Greek Bible has been read in church for ages. Now this might count for something if it were merely the word or phrase itself that has survived—it would be a simple quotation, not affecting the language in its essence. If the Greeks

<sup>1</sup> Proleg. 62.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.<sup>3</sup> 107.

said συμπόσια συμπόσια to-day, we should take it as a Biblical phrase and reject it as contributory evidence against Semitism in Mark vi. 39. But when we find other nouns thus repeated in the popular speech to form a distributive, we claim it without hesitation, since our own language alone suffices to teach us that borrowed phrases are sterile and produce no imitations.

We must not spend too much space on the question of Semitism; but a short restatement seems desirable before we pass on, in view of criticisms which have been passed by important scholars. To put in brief form the contention of the new school, we might say that the Epistles of Paul are written in the ordinary Greek of his time in exactly the same sense as the Authorized Version is said to be written in the ordinary English of the seventeenth century. There are phrases in the latter which are mere "translation English," like "Noah the eighth person," but we do not make "Biblical English" a special category on their account. "Biblical English" will be simply archaic English, the well-remembered phrases of the Book colouring the style of preachers and others when speaking on religion. The Epistles are named here because they shew free composition by a man who used Greek as a mother-tongue<sup>1</sup>. Other parts of the New Testament, especially the Gospels, are on rather a different footing, for which the Revised Version will supply an apt parallel. Tied down by their instructions not to forsake the diction of their predecessors (except where it involved complete obscurity), and precluded from indulging in paraphrase, the Revisers often used the deliberate archaism proper to literature as distinguished from ordinary educated speech. This is very much what Luke does when he employs the literary dialect, to the very moderate extent he allows himself. His imitations of the Septuagint Greek will answer to the over-literal translations which are sometimes found in the Revised Version, as in its predecessors. This element is of course much more considerably found in the writings of Mark and in the

<sup>1</sup> Of course Paul, "a Hebrew, the son of Hebrews," and yet the native

of a Greek city, was really possessed of *two* "mother-tongues."

Apocalypse, where the author was at home in a Semitic speech and used Greek without freedom, like a Welshman stumbling in English, even though he has spoken it occasionally since school days.

At this point may be recalled the remarks on Semitisms contained in Dr Nestle's review of the writer's *Prolegomena*.<sup>1</sup> Nestle cites Jewish German, and sundry examples of blunders made by Germans newly arrived in England, translating German phrases all too literally. "If these things happen," he says, "I can only regard it as a great exaggeration if one insists on denying the existence of a Jewish and a Biblical Greek. Why do we need a 'Grammar of New Testament Greek' at all?" To the last question the answer seems obvious. A "Digest of Platonic Idioms" or a "Shaksperian Grammar" exists not because Plato's Greek or Shakspeare's English differs from that of his contemporaries, but merely because Plato and Shakspeare are writers of great importance and their meaning can be illustrated by a grammar restricted for convenience to forms and syntax found in their writings. A New Testament Grammar justifies itself more completely still, since there is no other literature, properly so called, written in its own idiom: it can be written wholly without prejudice to the more scientific "Grammar of the Vernacular Κοινή" of which it forms a part. The other element in Nestle's criticism brings him nearer to our modern school than he seems to realize. All his illustrations apparently assume for his concept of Jewish or Biblical Greek that it is the Greek of men who are too familiar with another language to be able to write Greek idiomatically. What then about the Gentile Luke, the Tarsian Paul, or the most cultured Greek of them all who wrote the *Epistle to the Hebrews*? If these are excluded from the definition of Biblical Greek, there is not much left to quarrel about. If they quote the Greek Bible, and even deliberately copy it to produce an appropriate effect of style, we cannot classify their Greek as a thing apart on this ground, unless we are prepared to take John Bunyan out of the list of English writers and make a new category for him as a writer of

<sup>1</sup> *Berliner Philologische Wochenschrift*, Dec. 8, 1906.

"Jewish English." We shall indeed have to enlarge our categories of English in various directions. The "Jewish English" infects Milton badly; and in his case we shall have to bring in Hellenized and Latinized English as well, to suit the numerous places where (*more Lucae*) he deliberately copies a foreign idiom to produce a particular effect, or simply because his mind was so steeped in the great literatures whose gems he set in his own crown. If "Biblical Greek" is used only in a sense analogous to "Miltonic" (or again "Puritan") English, we need raise no objection on the score of theory. As Professor Thumb puts it<sup>1</sup>, writing of "translation Greek":—"Speaking generally, everything which after full investigation has to be set down as not Greek, has been produced by slavish imitation of Semitic sources." Thumb goes on to urge the importance for the theologian of an adequate study of "profane" Greek (including of course the Κοινή), instancing some places in which Zahn has based critical conclusions upon "Hebraisms" that will not bear examination. There is in fact no small danger that scholars whose strength lies in Semitic or in classical and patristic Greek—and this description naturally covers most of our theologians—may exaggerate the extent of the Semitisms even in "translation Greek." Dr Nestle himself appears to err in this way in the valuable review just cited, when he selects ἕως πότε as "for me a Hebraism, even if it is still used by Pallis in his Modern Greek translation," and though it "may be quotable from early Greek, and have spread in later times." It is not quite clear why Dr Nestle does not feel satisfied that these admitted facts make the locution good Κοινή Greek. Will it turn the scale that Hadrian says ἐκ πότε<sup>2</sup>? (Hadrian is indeed not the only Emperor whom Dr Nestle's principles would bring under the damaging imputation of Semitism in language: according to Wilamowitz and the MS. witness, Marcus Aurelius at least once lapsed into what we must presumably call Yiddish Greek<sup>3</sup>, though the new Oxford Texts editor kindly corrects him.) If Nestle merely means

<sup>1</sup> *Hellenismus*, p. 132. The whole discussion there will repay careful study. See also pp. 174 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Proleg.*<sup>3</sup> 107.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.*<sup>3</sup> 76.

that ἕως πότε is a Semitism in Mark because it exactly answers to a Semitic original, we need only ask whether our own *till when* is a Semitism also.

The fact is often overlooked that the idioms of colloquial speech in widely distant languages differ much less than do those of the corresponding literary dialects. Colloquial idiom affects parataxis—to take one very large category for illustration—and it is simply the independent working of identical causes which makes colloquial English and the Egyptian non-literary papyri approximate in this respect to Hebrew, which still remains so largely in the simple paratactic stage. The more rudimentary the education, the closer the resemblance grows. It is futile therefore to cite the commonness of καί in the Fourth Gospel as an evidence of the author's Semitic birth, though when this has been established by other evidence we may readily admit a real connexion. Birth and residence in a country where Greek was only a subsidiary language, were for the Evangelist the sufficient causes of an elementary Greek culture. The same cause operated in the Egyptian farmer who writes his letter or petition in exactly the same style. The Coptic mother-tongue of the one, the Aramaic of the other, were equally innocent of their excessive use of *and*; for the uneducated native who tells of the marvellous cures achieved by the god in an Asclepieum, though he knows no language but Greek, falls naturally into the same kind of language. If we are seeking for evidences of Semitic birth in a writer whose Greek betrays deficient knowledge of the resources of the language, we must not look only for uses which strain or actually contravene the Greek idiom. We shall find a subtler test in the *over-use* of locutions which can be defended as good Κοινή Greek, but have their motive clearly in their coincidence with locutions of the writer's native tongue. This test of course applies only to Greek which is virtually or actually translated—to the Hebraism of the LXX and the Aramaism of New Testament books which are either translated from Aramaic sources or written by men who thought in Aramaic and moved with little freedom in Greek. The other kind of Semitism discoverable in the New Testament, the

direct imitation of the LXX, is a different matter altogether. When we make up on these lines our account of the genuinely non-Greek elements that can be recognized in the writings before us, we shall find their total astonishingly small. Even the new material of the past eight years has sensibly strengthened the evidence for the verdict Prof. Thumb pronounced in 1901. "Had the living language," he writes<sup>1</sup>, "been infected to any extent with Oriental idiom, we could not have expected such a negative result in Philo and Josephus"--whose freedom from Semitism he has just been describing--"and much less in the papyri."

Our subject calls us next to estimate the linguistic position of the several writers of the New Testament, according to our modern knowledge; after which it remains to indicate how recent research helps us in the general determination of the meaning of words, and in the application of the canons of grammar. Though we are strictly not concerned with the Greek Old Testament, it is scarcely possible to pass it by entirely, in view of its large influence upon the New. The parts of the Old Testament which provide an immense preponderance of quotations in the New, and may therefore be presumed to have exercised by far the greatest influence on its writers, are the Pentateuch, the Prophets (including Daniel) and the Psalms: the historical books and the rest of the Hagiographa fall very much into the background. If we count the separate verses cited in WH to make a rough test, we find that the Pentateuch accounts for a quarter of the New Testament quotations and allusions, the Prophets (and Daniel) for nearly a half, and the Psalms for a fifth, while all the rest only amount to 6 per cent. The prominence of the Law, brought out by this and other tests, makes it of importance to observe the quality of this oldest part of the LXX, regarded as a translation. If Schmiedel (*Gramm.* 29) can say of the LXX translators generally that as a rule they do not use constructions which are actually not Greek, this is preeminently true in the Pentateuch. The reverential literalness which produced such extraordinary results in later translations was not yet

<sup>1</sup> *Hellenismus*, p. 126.

known; and ignorance of the meaning of the original does not afflict these pioneer translators as it often afflicted their successors. The result is that we can recognize a version which if clone into English would differ very little from our own Bible. A careful study of such a typical narrative passage as the Saga of Joseph will soon reveal to the student of the papyri that its Greek is the pure vernacular of daily life, with a very small admixture of abnormal phrases due to literal translation. That it is not the Greek of the books may be seen most vividly by comparing it with the two dozen pages in which Josephus shewed how elegantly the story ran when rescued from its unadorned simplicity and clothed in the Attic which everybody wrote and nobody had spoken for generations. But it is good Greek for all that. It does not reach the aim of the modern translator, that of making the reader forget that he has a translation before him. Neither does our English Bible, except through the familiarity which makes us think its "translation English" to be genuine native idiom. It would be safe to assert that these chapters of the Greek Genesis sounded no more foreign to Alexandrian ears than the English version would to our own, were we reading it for the first time. Indeed there are not a few places where the Greek is distinctly more idiomatic than the English. Thus an unnecessary behold—the over-use of which is in the New Testament quite a hall-mark of the writer to whom Greek is not native—is dropped in Gen. xxxvii. 15 and 29. Egyptian inscriptions shew that ἰλεως υἱῶν (xliii. 23—cf. Matt. xvi. 22) was idiomatic, which "Peace be to you" certainly is not. "Eat bread" in xliii. 25 compares indifferently with ἀριστᾶν. Of course there are many points in which the advantage lies with our version. In xxxvii. 8 "Shalt thou indeed reign over us?" is more successful than Μὴ βασιλεύων βασιλεύσεις ἐφ' ἡμᾶς; and "for indeed I was stolen away" (xl. 15) than ὅτι κλοπῇ ἐκλάπην. Nevertheless, as has been shewn elsewhere<sup>1</sup>, the Alexandrian translators came much nearer to their own idiom here than did ours when they perpetrated "By hearing ye shall hear, . . . and seeing ye shall see." What translators

<sup>1</sup> *Proleg.* 75 f.



with a stricter standard of literalness could do with this Hebrew infinitive is seen in Jos. xvii. 13 (B), ἐξολεθρεῦσαι λὺκ ἐξωλέθρευσαν, a phrase which might almost as well have been left in its original Hebrew<sup>1</sup>. One other example we may name, the use of προσθέσθαι *pergere* with the infinitive, to express "do again" or "do more." The fact that this usage survives in Josephus (in a less aggravated form), the only Semitism which the microscope of research has found sulling the virgin purity of his Atticism, is enough to shew that literary ears would not have been grossly offended by it. There are several other instructive points on which we might tarry in these chapters, but for our present purpose these will suffice. They shew that the New Testament writers, setting forth to write a religious literature in the language of daily life as spoken throughout the Empire, had for their model the Books which on other grounds took the first place in their veneration.

Before we take up the New Testament writers and try to estimate their linguistic position, some general comment is needed on a question that will be constantly before us, the relation between literary and colloquial Greek. In Greek Testament studies we are not concerned with the phenomenon of Atticism, which dominated all prose composition more or less throughout the Imperial age, and in a slightly varied form lominates written prose in Hellas to-day. Within the covers of the Cambridge Septuagint we meet with it in 4 Maccabees, and (as we have seen) Josephus has it strongly developed. But there is hardly anything even remotely like it in the New Testament<sup>2</sup>. The very fact that the Greek there found was so long regarded as wholly *sui generis* attests the difference there is between the sacred writers and the least artificial of prose authors outside, including even the Greek Fathers, who at an early date reverted mostly to the standard dialect of literature. We have nothing in English exactly answering to Atticism.

<sup>1</sup> "They did not destroy them so as to destroy" would represent it in English. (In *Proleg.* 76, n. <sup>1</sup>, I note that "A emends ο]λερευ<sei." I now

find that Mr A. E. Brooke regards the reading of B as an error.)

<sup>2</sup> 2 *Peter* is the nearest—on this see below.

In its milder forms it is not unlike Dr Johnson's written style, especially when contrasted (as Macaulay points out) with his terse and vigorous colloquial language. In its extreme developments the effect is not unlike that of the Babu English which sometimes comes for our amusement from India. The principle of it has some general resemblance to a rule that bound our Revisers. To use no words that were not current in Elizabethan English was a restriction on which the shades of Phrynichus and Moeris might have smiled approval. So far as the parallel goes, it makes us wish the more heartily that Convocation had left the Revisers free. But of course it does not carry us far, for our educated colloquial has changed from Elizabethan English much less than Hellenistic from the Attic of the fourth century B.C. As has been implied, Atticism was very much a matter of degree. There are many conspicuous writers in the Hellenistic age who can hardly be said to Atticize at all. That is to say, they never use a really dead language, in which they may blunder egregiously, like Lucian when he employs the optative regardless of sequence. Their language is not colloquial in any sense, but it is not artificial. Our own language gives us adequate analogies here. Our great stylist Macaulay has left us his English in two or three forms. His biographer gives us some of his diary notes, jotted down after visiting scenes he was about to paint in his History, that we may compare the passages in which he works up the notes into their final literary form<sup>1</sup>. Macaulay's diary is as little conscious literature as the notes he scribbled to his sister between two courses at dinner. But the difference between diary or letters and the History is not the difference between natural and artificial, between present-day English and archaism. It is all living English, but of two different kinds. Putting aside authors with marked mannerisms, we may say that written and spoken English alike vary only with the culture of the writers. And this is essentially true of the wholly natural and living Greek which we find in the New Testament.

<sup>1</sup> We recall Luke's "Travel Diary," which was *not* thus worked

up, or at least not to anything like the same degree.

Among the New Testament writers we will take first those who most certainly wrote in Greek as a native tongue. After Harnack's decisive endorsement of Hobart's work, it will no longer be regarded as the mark of an uncritical person with an apologetic bias if we assume the Gentile physician Luke to be the author of the two books *ad Theophilum*. Their unity of phraseology and style has been sufficiently proved; but grammar has still something to say, and a whole series of syntactical tests establish an agreement between the author of the "We-document" and those of the Gospel and the rest of *Acts* which is hard to explain on any theory but the old-fashioned one. There are obvious points in which Luke's diction differs from that of other New Testament writers<sup>1</sup>, some of them such as we should expect from a writer of Greek birth who knew no Semitic language till middle life (and probably not then), and others which seem strange in a writer of these antecedents. The Lucan use of the potential optative—in indirect questions and conditional with ἄν—is one of those which we have called literary but not artificial. Luke's vocabulary includes a good many words which belonged to the speech of more cultured circles, as well as words current in his profession, and other words (medical or ordinary) found in the Greek medical works on which he had been trained. But there is also in him the instinct of style which a Greek could hardly shake off, even when writing on themes that made artificiality of any kind a thing impossible. He consciously imitates the Greek Bible, and in the parts of his narrative which have their scene in Palestine he feels it congruous to retain the rough diction of his sources, the Greek of men and women who would talk Greek to a foreigner, just as a Welshman talks English to a tourist, with a style betraying preference for his native tongue. In a Greek this conscious or half-conscious adaptation of style to the surroundings of his narrative is wholly natural, and does not suggest the slightest labouring of effect. The reading of the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Thumb, *Hellenismus*, p. 184. He cites Norden's thorough-going comparison of Luke with the other

synoptists to shew how far Luke goes in the literary direction.

classics soon shews us how the several literary forms attached themselves to dialects associated with their earliest exemplars. Epic poetry, even down to Nonnus, must endeavour to follow the nondescript dialect into which Ionic rhapsodists had transformed the Achaian of Homer. Choral odes in tragedy and comedy must preserve the broad *ā* which witnesses to the origin of drama in some region outside the area of the Ionic-Attic *h*. We can therefore understand the instinct that would lead the educated Greek Evangelist to suit his style under certain conditions to the book which held the same relation to his Gospel as the *Iliad* held to subsequent experiments in epic verse. Whether Mary (or Elizabeth?) and Zacharias and Simeon or Luke himself (as Harnack would teach us) composed the canticles of chaps. i. and ii., we can see that they are steeped in the language of the Greek Bible. One might compare Theocritus, deserting his usual Doric to write the "Distaff" in the Aeolic of Sappho. Or, to seek a closer parallel, we might suppose one of ourselves charged with the difficult task of composing special prayers to be used in conjunction with some from the Book of Common Prayer: it would obviously be essential that every turn of expression should exhale as far as possible the English of its intended surroundings. Something of this kind Luke has manifestly aimed at, though he only maintains the effort in very limited parts of his work, and drops it mostly when he has his two authoritative Gospel sources to incorporate. In dealing with them he feels free in narrative to improve upon their uncultivated style, though in the Sayings of Jesus drawn from "Q" we may venture to believe that his stylistic alterations were decidedly less extensive than Harnack asserts<sup>1</sup>. In his second volume we may see the local colouring appropriately reflected in the retention of the style of his Palestinian witnesses, whose story would have seemed almost artificial if clothed in the cultured Greek into which the historian naturally falls when he is out in the Gentile atmosphere of the missionary journeys.

<sup>1</sup> I may refer to my paper in the *Expositor* (May, 1909) for a justifi-

cation of this belief: see also below.

So we pass on to Luke's great teacher, the next largest contributor to the sacred volume. It is not very easy to say how much is involved in the Apostle's claim to be Ἑβραῖος ἐξ Ἑβραίων—a Hebrew, not merely a Jew, and the descendant of Hebrews. There were clearly senses in which it was possible to be both Hebrew and Hellenist—Hebrew in that the tie to the mother country was never broken, and Aramaic was retained as the language of the family circle<sup>1</sup>, Hellenist in that foreign residence demanded perpetual use of Greek from childhood. Canon Hicks and Sir W. M. Ramsay have made us realize that Paul's Hellenism was deeply ingrained. How much he knew of Greek literature is an old question which can never perhaps be decisively answered. But if we may assume that the intensely Pauline address (or rather exordium of an address) at Athens really represents what Paul afterwards sketched to the disciple who was writing the story of the Gospel's victories, Dr Rendel Harris's recent discovery adds a most interesting novelty to the tale of Paul's quotations. From the Syriac lines he has found we easily reconstruct such a verse as

ἐν σοὶ γὰρ ζῶμεν καὶ κινούμεθ' ἡδὲ καὶ ἐσμέν--

and the quatrain, of which this forms the last and Tit. i. 12 the second line, becomes a Greek philosopher's scornful protest against unworthy views of God, such as would be wholly after Paul's heart. There is not however evidence to suggest that Paul's studies in Greek literature went very far. Certainly they did little to colour his style. The careful examination of his vocabulary by Nageli chews strikingly that his words do not come from literary sources but from the common stock of ordinary spoken Greek. One possibly typical exception however might be cited. The vernacular record of αὐτάρκης and αὐτάρκεια is fairly ample, and the meaning is always very simple: thus τὰ αὐτάρκη καύματα in a first century papyrus is only "*sufficient* fuel." Paul's use of the word in the philosophic sense of "self-sufficient, contented"

<sup>1</sup> But cf. H. A. A. Kennedy's note: "Eusebius. . . applies the designation to Philo, and. . . to Aristobulus,

both of them Greek-speaking Jews with little if any knowledge of Hebrew."

shews that, for all his essentially popular vocabulary, he could employ the technical words of thinkers in their own way<sup>1</sup>. That of course entirely agrees with his subtle allusions to Stoic and Epicurean tenets in Acts xvii.; and it is exactly what we should expect from a missionary so full of sympathy for every effort of men groping after God. For the rest, we need say no more as to the character of Pauline Greek. We have seen that it is the Greek of one who had always been at home in the language, however familiar the Aramaic with which at a crisis of his life he could hush the Jerusalem mob to hear his story. In such a Greek we have about the same expectation of Semitisms as of Cymricisms in the English speeches of Mr Lloyd-George. And the well-known conditions of his letter-writing preclude to a peculiar extent the invasion of literary phrase or conscious art. The letters are in colloquial Greek for the best of reasons—they were spoken and not written, and they reflect in every line the impetuous utterance of one who never dreamed that his unstudied words would survive all the literature of his time. Whether if Paul had ever sat down to write a treatise we should see Nageli's results materially affected we have no means of knowing.

A composition more literary than anything by Paul or Luke meets us in the noble work of an unknown man—or woman—of their circle. The Epistle to the Hebrews is easily recognized as coming nearer to the definite literary style than anything else in the New Testament. Blass pointed out that it manifests a general avoidance of the harsher kinds of hiatus between successive words. This would probably be almost instinctive in anyone who had received a good Greek education, to whom ἐλέγετο αὐτῷ<sup>2</sup> would have sounded harsh, much as a word like "idea" sounds harsh in English when followed by a vowel in rapid speech. Blass goes on to demonstrate the presence of an elaborate system of rhythm. In estimating this we must not forget that we have to do with the judgement of

<sup>1</sup> Repeated from the lexical note *sub voce* in *Expositor*, VII. vi. 375 f.

The general sense agrees very well with Sir W. M. Ramsay's account of Paul's language in *Expositor* for

Jan. 1909, p. 5, published since these pages were written.

<sup>2</sup> Blass's example (*Grammar*, p. 297).

a Hellenist who had no peer—except indeed our own Jebb, who was taken from our head not long before Germany lost Blass,—and one who did much of his finest work upon the Greek Orators. But we cannot repress the reflexion that Blass went on later to apply his canons of rhythm to Paul, a supremely improbable subject *a priori*. Few will listen to such a thesis, even when propounded by Blass, and its natural effect is to make us suspicious of the canons when applied to Hebrews. It is not quite easy moreover to understand why Blass, after sensibly discountenancing the futile occupation of verse-hunting in New Testament prose, seems to regard the presence of two consecutive iambics in xii. 14, 15 as worthy of mention, with a "faultless hexameter" in the previous verse that is ruined by the reading (ποιεῖτε) which Blass himself prefers. One would have thought that actual verses in literary prose were rather a blemish than a beauty. And—to select an example for the *reductio ad absurdum* which has not, we think, been noticed before—are not the consecutive iambics in *Hebrews* fairly matched by the consecutive anapaests in John v. 14—

ὕγις γέγωας· μηκέθ' ἁμάρτανε,  
ἵνα μὴ χεῖρόν σοί τι γένηται—

which have the advantage of forming a complete sentence! (The hypercritic will object to the hiatus between the verses, but we really cannot have everything.) Apart however from false scents like these, we have plenty of evidence wherewith to trace the higher literary quality of *Hebrews*. But even here we must keep within limits. There is no archaism visible, not even the potential optative which we noticed above in the Lucan writings. It is the higher conversational style after all, comparable best perhaps with what we can hear in the pulpit style of a cultured extempore preacher. We must not forget to notice in passing the suggestive paradox that a letter "to Hebrews" is written by someone who knew no Hebrew, and used the Greek Bible alone.

We must not discuss on this scale the Greek of all our writers; but it will be well to refer briefly to one more before passing on to those with whom Greek was a secondary language.

The *Second Epistle of Peter*, presumably the latest of the New Testament writings, presents us with the nearest analogue to the work of the Atticists which we can find within the Canon—though certainly the Atticists would have scorned to own a book so full of "solecism." It is hard to resist the impression that the author learnt his Greek mainly from books. Dr Abbott's comparison with Babu English does not discredit the Epistle as he thought it did, and we may probably take it as justifiable. Greek proverbs<sup>1</sup>, Greek inscriptions<sup>2</sup>, and Greek books which we can no longer handle seem to have contributed to the writer's vocabulary, and moulded the fine sense of rhythm to which Dr J. B. Mayor bears effective testimony. That the one definitely pseudepigraphic Book in the Canon should have these further traces of elaboration and artificiality, is quite in keeping with its character; nor would we admit that they impair its value, any more than the perfectly understood convention of writing under the shelter of a great name from the past. We do not scorn the majestic Book of *Wisdom* because it bears the name of Solomon, while we are assured that even Solomon's wisdom was not capable of producing an original work in Alexandrian Greek. That the writer of *2 Peter* was not a born Greek may perhaps be inferred from the blunders into which he seems not seldom to fall.

In our second class may be noted first those writers whose Greek betrays least of the stiffness due to imperfect Hellenism. The intrinsic importance of the First Gospel prompts special attention to its linguistic phenomena. Semitic birth is inferred for the author from his thought and general outlook, not at all from his language, which is a simple and rather colourless Hellenistic of the average type. He is capable of elaboration, but it is on the lines of a Hebrew author rather than those of a Greek. He has an instinct for the parallelism of Hebrew poetry, which produces the beautifully balanced periods of the "Two Builders" at the end of the Sermon—to mention only the most conspicuous among many examples,—where Luke's much less symmetrical form must surely (*pace*

<sup>1</sup> See Mayor on ii. 22.

<sup>2</sup> Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, 360 ff.



Harnack) be regarded as Q unadorned<sup>1</sup>. But "Matthew " is not by any means destitute of resource in the use of Greek. With so much fresh matter to add to his Marcan source, he is always seen pruning wherever space can be gained without sacrifice of what seems essential; and he would sometimes very effectively shorten sentences from the Matthaean "Sayings " without losing anything of the meaning. Thus "to stoop down and unloose the thong of his sandals" is reduced to τὰ ὑποδήματα βαστάσαι, "to remove his sandals" (iii. 11). In xi. 27 ἐπιγινώσκει, is exactly equivalent in sense to the Lucan γινώσκει τίς ἐστίν: this follows naturally from Dean Armitage Robinson's illuminating account of ἐπιγινώσκειν<sup>2</sup>, which could be supported now with new evidence<sup>3</sup>. There are also places to note where Matthew mends the Greek of Mark: e.g. ix. 6 κλίνην for the vulgar κράβαττον, xii. 14 συμβούλιον ἔλαβον for s. ἐδίδουν, or the many places where he drops the historic present<sup>4</sup>. No doubt he does not do this as often as Luke; but that he does it not infrequently should make us ready to expect similar treatment of Q. Careful investigation of each case on its merits would, one may venture to think, transfer not a few passages from one side of the account to the other, where Harnack has assumed stylistic alteration of Q in Luke on the strength of a tendency supposed to be proved. We do not deny the tendency, nor that it is stronger in Luke than in Matthew but it must not be pressed too far. Thus in Luke iii. 17 it seems probable that Q had διακαθαῖραι . . . καὶ συνάξαι, as Luke reads according to  $\aleph^a$ ; and that the vulgar first aorist (emended to συναγαγεῖν in  $\aleph^*$  B) was altered to συνάξαι by Matthew, with another future in the first clause—a much less cumbrous construction. (Compare ἐπισυνάξαι in Luke xiii. 34 (Q) with the " correct " ἐπισυναγαγεῖν in Matt. xxiii. 37.) In Matt. iii. 9 Harnack does not convince us that

1 The same tendency to heighten parallelism is seen in an exaggerated form in the Oxyrhynchus " Logia."

2 *Ephesians*, pp. 24S ff. ; cf. *Proleg.*<sup>3</sup> 113.

3 Harnack, *Sayings of Jesus*, p. 295, cites four Lucan τίς clauses

(one at least of them taken from Mark) to prove that the τίς ἐστίν is Luke's own; but he shews hesitation in *his excursus*.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Hawkins, *Horae Synopt.* pp. 113 ff.

do $\leq$ chte is the phrase of Q, which idiomatic Greek Luke deliberately marred by introducing "a favourite phrase of his," derived from literal translation of Aramaic sources. In Luke xii. 28 we find the Hellenistic ἀμφιάζει, undoubtedly due to Q: Matthew has substituted the literary ἀμφιέννυσιν. Matthew's shortening of the precept of Luke vi. 27, 28 may quite possibly have been conditioned partly by the avoidance of ἐπηρεάζειν, which emphatically *does* "belong to the vocabulary of common speech": Harnack (*Sayings*, p. 61) must have overlooked the papyri. Again we may notice how in xxiii. 35 Matthew has substituted the clearer Greek ναοῦ, "shrine," for the too literal οἴκου of Luke and Q: Harnack's opposite conclusion (p. 105) seems to rest on an assumption that ναός was the same as ἱερόν.

The foregoing remarks on the language of the First Gospel have been prolonged rather beyond due limits for a special purpose. Professor Harnack's book on the *Sayings of Jesus* is a brilliant reconstruction, as anything from his pen is bound to be. It seems almost presumptuous for a mere grammarian to criticize but when scholars so great as Harnack and Wellhausen call ἀφήκαμεν a perfect<sup>1</sup>, or form nominatives like "ἐαυτός" and "ἄλλήλοι<sup>2</sup>," the humble philologist is encouraged to think that there may be a corner in this field for him to glean. We shall return to a further point of this kind later on.

The Fourth Gospel and the Johannine Epistles must of course be considered together: the philologist's lancet is useless for dissecting out the distinct elements which cleverer surgeons have diagnosed to exist. We have anticipated the most important note that modern research prompts here—on the inferences to be drawn from the extreme simplicity of Johannine style. Those who would still find Semitism in these plain coordinated sentences, with their large use of καί, may be recommended to study the most instructive parallels which Deissmann has set out in his new *Licht vom Osten*, pp. 88 f.,—John ix. 7, 11 compared with a section from

<sup>1</sup> *Sayings*, p. 65.

<sup>2</sup> *Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien*, p. 30 ; cf. *Proleg.* 242.

an inscription (Rome, 138 A.D.) which tells of a blind man's cure in the temple of Asclepios.<sup>1</sup> Deissmann's delineation of the primitive popular Greek in which John writes is illustrated with other telling parallels from monuments coming from the same stratum of culture—if we make "culture" for this purpose synonymous with knowledge of literary Greek. Apart from this important consideration, modern linguistic research has but little to say which touches the burning questions that centre on the Fourth Gospel. There are however linguistic novelties which affect exegesis profoundly, and nowhere so much as here. Those of us who were brought up on Westcott's great Commentary became familiar early with the subtleties that had sometimes to be wrung out of ἵνα. A more moderate view was taken by W. F. Moulton in his English *Winer*. But our vernacular sources, with the significant fact that ἵνα (now *vá* in Modern Greek replaces the obsolete infinitive, shew us conclusively that all these subtleties must go. In a typical passage like John xvii. 3 it does not seem possible to distinguish effectively between the ἵνα γινώσκωσι which John prefers and the τὸ or τοῦ γινώσκειν which some other New Testament writers would have been tolerably sure to substitute. Ultimately the distinction became a geographical one, Asiatic Greek retaining the infinitive, European allowing it to fall into disuse, and employing the ἵνα construction as its surrogate. If we could establish an early date for the dialect-differentiation, we should have a most valuable tool for our lower and higher criticism alike.

Three professedly Palestinian writings come next, demanding only a few words before we go on to the Apocalypse and the Gospel of Mark, which stand in a special category. The letters ascribed to James, to his brother Jude, and to Peter--2 *Peter* has been dealt with—have in common the incongruity which in some critics' opinion prevents our assigning to inhabitants of Palestine documents written in such free and vigorous Greek. The incongruity disappears when we recognize the bilingual conditions of Palestine. Without repeating what has been said elsewhere on this

<sup>1</sup> Dittenberger, *Sylloge*<sup>2</sup>. no. 807.

subject<sup>1</sup>, we may remark that there is no adequate ground for supposing Palestine to have been isolated from the Empire by a wide-spread ignorance of the universal language. The papyri give us a living picture of bilingualism in Egypt, where peasants and slaves and schoolboys can express themselves in Greek with perfect freedom, and with correctness varying simply with their education. Demotic papyri in abundance survive to shew that they did not forget their native language. All over the East, as far as Alexander's arms penetrated, Greek inscriptions attest this same condition, nor is Palestine an exception there. Sundry small proofs converge—the Greek names that meet us everywhere, the hushing of the crowd at Jerusalem when Paul came forward to address them (as they presumed) in Greek, the dependence of the Shechemite Justin Martyr upon the LXX, and so on. In "Galilee of the Gentiles" it may be conjectured that Greek was needed even more regularly than in Judaea. That Joseph and Mary and their family talked Greek at home, or that our Lord's discourses to His disciples or the multitudes needed no translation to prepare them for reception into our Gospels, few would care to assert now. But that a perfect readiness in Greek expression should be reached by members of the Lord's own circle need cause no surprise whatever, and can certainly supply no argument against the traditional authorship of the three Epistles.

The two remaining Books stand on a lower level of Greek culture than anything else in the New Testament. *Greek* culture, we say, for if a Palestinian native, who presumably spent most of his time in Jerusalem till he reached middle life, failed to get a thorough hold of Greek idiom, it clearly grooves nothing as to his status as an educated man. We often welcome first-rank German savants whose efforts at English conversation are imperfectly successful; and we fully realize what some of our return visits might witness in the shape of German grammar. Now the author of *Revelation* has undeniably a copious Greek vocabulary, and he uses the language with perfect freedom. But there are principles of

<sup>1</sup> *Proleg.* 7 f.

Greek grammar which he seems to defy at will, though frequently evidencing his knowledge of them<sup>1</sup>. Conspicuous among these is the rule of concord. Our German analogy will help us here. We English stumble inevitably over gender, till a thorough proficiency in German has been reached; and our failure is due to the fact that we have no real gender in our own language. A Frenchman might fail because he has gender, but of a very different kind. The solecism of which ἀπὸ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ὁ μάρτυς ὁ πιστός is a type seems to be inexplicable except on these lines. Examples of exactly the same kind recur very commonly in the papyri: specimens are cited elsewhere<sup>2</sup>, shewing the same use of the nominative with a noun in apposition, where the governing word is felt to have exhausted its influence upon the word standing in immediate relation to it. It seems very artificial to explain these and other solecisms—see the convenient list marshalled on pp. cxxiii f. of Dr Swete's introduction—by such a theory as Archbishop Benson's (*ib.* p. cxxiv). The assumption of occasional or frequent lapse from correct grammar, in the writing of a foreigner who attained complete fluency in the secondary language but never grasped its grammar well enough to write correctly by instinct, is true to every-day experience, and paralleled all along the line by the phenomena of the papyri, due to the same cause. Dr Swete's unwillingness to compare a literary document with ephemeral writings like the papyri may be met by considerations advanced already in the course of this Essay. We have seen that the isolation of "Biblical Greek," finally ended by the study of the papyri and other records of spoken Hellenistic, was due entirely to the fact that "literature" was always written in a dialect of its own. From this convention, for reasons which we need not examine, the Greek translators of the Pentateuch boldly broke away; while their later successors, some from reverence for the sacred text, some from defective knowledge of its meaning, made no

<sup>1</sup> The whole of this section is in welcome agreement with the Dean of Westminster's pages in *J.T.S.* for October 1908, which had not been

seen when these words were written. He in turn coincides with the writer's views in *Proleg.* p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> *Proleg.* p. 60 n.

effort to exclude even solecisms from their version. With such a book as the LXX set high above all other books as their model, were New Testament writers likely to feel the importance of careful revision to excise mere slips of grammar? And can we be quite sure that John would have discovered his slips if he had made such a revision? They had better be left, we may venture to believe, with Paul's anacolutha, as the sign-manual of a writer far too much concerned with his message to be conscious of the fact that he is writing literature which after ages will read with a critical eye.

Modern linguistic investigations have something to contribute to the comparison of the Apocalypse and the Fourth Gospel which must ultimately determine the question of their common authorship. So far as these tests can go, they strengthen the criticism of Dionysius, who (we must remember) was a Greek weighing stylistic and grammatical differences found in books written in his own language. In the evidence so carefully and impartially set forth by Dr Swete, we find our lexical and grammatical facts tending to emphasize the differences between the Gospel and the Apocalypse, and to reduce the significance of the resemblances. Thus of four "unusual constructions" given on p. cxxviii as common to the two Books, the use of ἵνα and the combination σωῶζειν ἐκ will hardly retain their position in a list of varieties, nor does the strengthening of the partitive genitive with ἐκ impress us now as out of the way<sup>1</sup>. And the contrasts of grammar already mentioned shew up all the more markedly as we study them in the light of the vernacular Greek outside the Bible. Into the vocabulary we need not enter, except to say in passing that Professor Thumb has vindicated κατήγωρ from appropriation by Jewish Greek<sup>2</sup>. We interpret our facts either by yielding assent to Dionysius, or by taking (with Hort) the early date for the Apocalypse and postulating a subsequent improvement in John's Greek culture, or by pointing with Dr Swete to the probability that the author of the Gospel supplied its matter but left other pens to write it down. *Discernant grammatici*, the "critics," as we call them:

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Proleg.* p. 102.

<sup>2</sup> *Hellenismus*, p. 126.

this is beyond the province of "grammar" in our modern restricted sense.

The Greek of our Second Gospel would justify a much more detailed examination than we can give it here. That there was very marked deficiency in Greek culture here will hardly be denied. We assume the authorship of John Mark, if only for the absurdity of supposing early second century tradition to have selected by guesswork so unlikely an author. The position of Mark's family does not favour the idea that he was badly educated: he only shared the strong preference for Aramaic which was normal among Jerusalem residents, and never troubled to acquire polish for a Greek which came to him from conversation with other foreigners and with men of the people. What are we to make then of the statement that he "once acted as interpreter to Peter<sup>1</sup>"? Was Peter more ἀγράμματος still? If he was, our acceptance of his Epistle becomes very difficult. It is better to take ἐρμηνευτής less strictly—cf. for instance its verb in Luke xxiv. 27—and think with Dr Wright of a teacher or catechist who undertook the instruction of enquirers drawn into further truth-seeking by the stimulus of the preacher's appeal. There can be no question that the catechetical lessons, on which the written Gospel was ultimately based, were given first in Aramaic; and they may well have become so fixed in that form that when their author transferred them to Greek they retained ubiquitous marks of too literal translation. It is of great critical importance to observe how these Aramaisms of translation were progressively smoothed away. Wellhausen shews that D has most of them and B distinctly less. Unless this is due (as Bishop Chase argued) to a Syriac infection in D, we have here a most important source of evidence as to the origin of the Western Text, of which in this respect the "Neutral" becomes a revision. But this we

<sup>1</sup> The exact meaning of Papias's phrase may be found by comparison with the papyri: its critical importance justifies special care in rendering. We find that it clearly suggests that Mark's association with Peter

was past. It is like βουλευτής γενόμενος, which replaces such forms as βουλεύσας when no verb exists: it is the ordinary way of saying that a man had held a certain office—"ex-senator," etc.

must leave to the Semitists. As has been noted already, there is plenty of revision of Mark's Aramaism to be seen in Matthew and Luke. In a considerable number of little points these Evangelists coincide in their amendments, a fact well explained by Dr Sanday's suggestion that the text of Mark had been polished by a cultured scribe before it reached them: our Mark descends from the unrevised form. Of Mark's Semitisms as a whole it will not be necessary to repeat what has been said more generally before. They are hardly ever really barbarous Greek, though Mark's extremely vernacular language often makes us think so, until we read the less educated papyri. Generally we recognize them by their over-use of a possible though uncommon idiom, which happens to agree with Aramaic. There is one peculiarity of Mark which we must bring out, as having a lesson for other purposes. It is too readily assumed, as it is constantly by Harnack, that a free use of compound verbs is naturally a sign of culture. But it seems to have been overlooked that Mark has a very high proportion<sup>1</sup>. Sir John Hawkins's figures (*Hor. Syn.* 142), when revised and brought into relation with the length of the several Books, shew us that *Hebrews* has 8.0 per WH page, Acts 6.25, Luke and Mark 5.7, Paul 3.8, Matthew 3.55, while John (Gospel) has only 1.97<sup>2</sup>. Harnack does not draw the inference which naturally follows from his statement (*Sayings*, p. 150—see the German) that Luke and Mark have almost exactly the same ratio of simple verbs to compounds<sup>3</sup>. Since there may

<sup>1</sup> Sir John Hawkins writes (Jan. 30th, 1909) : "The point you have established as to Mark's habit is well illustrated by his using πορεύομαι only once (ix. 30) if at all, while it is so common in the other historical books. . . ; but on the other hand he has it compounded with εἰς (8), ἐκ (11), παρά, πρὸς, σύν, and perhaps διά. This used to seem very strange."

<sup>2</sup> *Proleg.* 237. The figures have been checked afresh, with the aid of the author's lists, kindly lent me. I have omitted the two long interpo-

lations in Mark and John, and have struck out a number of verbs which I do not regard as true compounds. The remaining statistics for the N.T., as given above, depend upon tables made for me by Mr H. Scott, after I had determined which verbs should count as true compounds. (Εἶναι has been omitted in the table of total occurrences.)

<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately I only detected the mistake in the English version here after writing my criticism in the *Expositor* for May, 1909.



well be difference of procedure among three computers—for instance as to the inclusion of a verb like ἀποδημεῖν, which is not strictly a compound—it has been necessary to complete the statistics independently. The ratio in Matthew works out as 100 simple verbs to 69 compounds, while in Mark it is 100 : 92. It will be noted that the very considerable difference between Mark and Matthew comes out alike when the total of compounds is reckoned in proportion to the length of the Books, and when the ratio of simple and compound verbs is examined. Since Mark is obviously not a cultured Greek writer, there must be something wrong about the theory that compounds and culture go together. This conviction is confirmed by the papyri. We can test this well in Witkowski's excellent little Teubner volume of private letters dated B.C., in which the editor has marked sixteen letters, amounting to more than a quarter of the book, as of men not even "modice pruditorum." In these letters the ratio of simple verbs to compounds is 100: 102, a sufficiently close parallel to the ratio for Mark. Since Harnack is inclined to regard double compounds as specially significant, it may be added that ἐγκαταλείπειν (Marcian) and συμπροσγίνεσθαι are in this list. If we take the whole book, which contains also 34 letters of men marked as "eruditorum" and 9 "modice eruditorum," the ratio becomes 100 : 128, a very moderate rise for the purposes of Harnack's theory. We may try another test, that of the number of actual occurrences: some supplement is needed for a method which would place verbs like εἶναι and μετεθρίζεσθαι on the same footing. Taking the totals for Mark, we find the ratio of occurrences is 100 : 49.5. Compare this with the figures for Acts, where we find it 100 : 66. In Luke, however, it is 100 : 46, actually lower than Mark. Matthew has 100 : 41. This test agrees very well with the comparison of Mark and Luke given above, based on the other method. Applying the total occurrences test to papyri, we have the ratio 100: 51 in the last half of Witkowski's collection, which includes 11 educated letters, 4 classed as moderate, and 16 as uneducated. On the other hand, the ratio is 100 : 27 in 18

miscellaneous letters from *Tebt. Pap.* H.—which shews that there are wide differences here as there are among the New Testament writers, and even in different works of the same writer. The fact that these letters are much later than Witkowski's, ranging up to cent. iii. A.D., does not account for the differences, for some of the most illiterate have the largest proportion of compounds. These facts will help us to estimate Harnack's statement that in his reconstructed Q there is a ratio of 100 *simplicia* to 50 compounds, or 475 : 168 (100 : 35) when reckoned by occurrences. This last is eight per cent. higher than in the Tebtunis letters above. But Harnack has constructed his text of Q on the axiom that if either Matthew or Luke has a simplex it is (normally) original. Now that we have seen that compounds are not at all necessarily a literary feature, the axiom falls to the ground and Matthew's preference for simple verbs may have altered the original Q quite as often as an opposite preference in Luke. The result is that "the near relation of this source to the Semitic " does not follow either way. Two of Harnack's examples should be noted. On p. 84 "οὐκ ἔστιν ἐπιλελησμένον is the language of literature." But in the uneducated letter, P. Oxy. 744 (B.c. 1—no. 58 in Witkowski)—shewing by the way 100 : 75 as its index of occurrences,—we read εἰρηκας Ἀφροδισιᾶτι ὅτι Μή με ἐπιλάθης· πῶς δύναμαί σε ἐπιλαθεῖν; ἐρωτῶ σε οὖν ἵνα μὴ ἀγωνιάσης. Another letter (ii.—iii. cent. A.D.), containing βλέπε μὴ ἐπιλάθῃ μηδὲν τοὺς στεφάνους κτλ, gives us the correct middle, as does P. Par. 32 (132 B.C.), which is one of Witkowski's illiterate documents (no. 28). On p. 86 Harnack says that Luke's παρεγενόμην "is a choicer word " than Matthew's ἦλθον, and therefore less original. Even this becomes less obvious when we note that παραγίνεσθαι occurs some thirty times in Witkowski's little volume, containing only 100 Teubner pages with a large proportion of fragmentary lines, and commentary on each page : four of these are in the illiterate section.

The subject just discussed may seem perhaps to have received rather disproportionate attention, nor is it very specially connected with the delineation of the Greek of our

oldest Gospel, which supplied the starting-point. But it is intended as an object-lesson, with much wider consequences than those concerning its own subject. That subject is indeed of greater importance than would be inferred from our existing grammars and dictionaries, as has been strikingly shewn in recent years by many investigators in the new field of comparative Indo-European syntax. It has been our purpose to shew that the work of even our greatest masters may need checking by methods which have naturally not yet entered the technology of criticism. A set of papyrus collections, with their word-indices well thumbed, will assuredly have to stand on the shelves of all future critics of the New Testament; and they will in not a few cases make some serious modifications of results supposed to be secure.

It remains to indicate in brief compass some further consequences of the discovery of so much new material for study, and of the new methods which research has developed within the last two decades. First comes naturally the light that has been thrown on the vocabulary of the New Testament. Deissmann's pioneer results were achieved here; and from the time of *Bibelstudien* to the present day the working of this mine has produced a steady output. New volumes of papyri continue to appear, our own great explorers and editors, Drs Grenfell and Hunt, still retaining a long lead in the quantity and quality of their discoveries, but with fellow-workers from many lands laying us under obligation only less considerable. The new material of course does not produce the same wealth of surprises: the reader of the latest volume from Tebtunis or Oxyrhynchus has not the recurrent temptation to catch the first post with some new and fascinating illustration of a Biblical word. But though the first isolated parallel may be of the utmost interest, clearly the second, third and fourth occurrences of the word in vernacular documents are of greater importance for establishing the right of the word to stand in the vocabulary of common life: the isolated occurrence might be a freak. And every fresh citation gives us a new context from which we may get light as to the connotation a word possessed on the lips of the people. We

are accordingly now entering on the less exciting stage of consolidating results and focussing our material upon the exegesis of the sacred writers<sup>1</sup>. The study of Deissmann's newest work, *Licht vom Osten* (1908), shews very well how we stand at the present time. The papyri continue to figure very largely—as they may well do, when we reflect that our shelves of papyrus collections contain some fifty volumes to-day, as against under ten in 1895. But the massive work now before us draws its material from inscriptions even more conspicuously; and it makes large use of the ostraca, the broken pottery on which the poor wrote from necessity, and other people jotted receipts and other short documents that were in no danger of being mistaken for literature.

It has sometimes been observed, by scholars properly anxious that we should not too hastily depreciate older methods, that we have not secured anything definitely new by the ransacking of papyri. The criticism is not true in fact, though we are not careful to answer in this matter. We may give one instructive example. The adjective δοκίμιος, in James i. 3 and 1 Pet. i. 7, was discovered by Deissmann in the papyri, where it is a standing epithet of gold, etc., with the meaning genuine: many additional citations are now available. But in literary Greek the word had absolutely vanished (like the noun λογεία collection, which T. C. Edwards supposed Paul to have coined!); and translators inevitably went off on a track which in the passage from 1 Peter landed them in absolute nonsense. In a book of *Cambridge Essays* it is a peculiar pleasure to recall confirmations of our greatest master's divination: we look at Hort's precious fragment on 1 *Peter* and find that "what is genuine in your faith" appealed to his instinct as the needed meaning, though he had to alter the text to get it. But it is no part of our claim that the vernacular sources commonly reveal meanings which have disappeared with the papyri beneath the sands of Egypt, and

<sup>1</sup> It may be mentioned that Dr George Milligan and the writer hope before long to complete a first essay in systematic lexical illustration

from our new material. A selection of this material has appeared in the *Lexical Notes* already referred to (*Expositor*, 1908-9).

risen again only with their return to the light. The New Testament writings were read from the first by men who talked the very language of the apostles and evangelists, even if in their own written composition they conformed to the book-language of Hellenism. It would be little short of a miracle if not one in the whole succession of diligent Greek commentators had known and mentioned a meaning which in ordinary conversation he would instinctively give to a word in the sacred text. He would of course be in constant danger of reading the literary meaning into the vernacular words he found. Just as the "Syrian" revisers pruned away vulgar forms and solecistic phrases from a Book whose sanctity precluded its deviating from "correctness," so the literary Greek Fathers would tend to minimize colloquialism wherever an alternative interpretation could be given. It is accordingly in the choice between rival explanations that our new methods and materials mainly find their exercise. Let us take two examples, both of them words that have provoked much controversy, and both in very common use in Hellenistic vernacular. Διαθήκη in the Revised Version is always covenant, except in Hebr. ix. 16 f. Ought the exception to be allowed? Westcott and W. F. Moulton strenuously said no, and the present writer has a natural predisposition towards this view, despite all the difficulties of exegesis involved. But then comes in the fact that in the papyri, from the end of cent. iv. B.C. down to the Byzantine period, the word denotes *testament* and that alone, in many scores of documents. We possess a veritable Somerset House on a small scale in our papyrus collections, and there is no other word than διαθήκη used. Even the Rabbis borrowed this Greek word to express a meaning for which they had no Hebrew<sup>1</sup>. We seem compelled to ask therefore whether a writer who shews strong points of contact with Alexandria, and is more vitally linked with the Greek world than any writer in the Canon, could have used this word for long without betraying the slightest sense that it commonly bore a totally different

<sup>1</sup> See Krauss, ap. Thumb, *Hellenismus*, p. 185.

meaning<sup>1</sup>. Our other example shall be ἡλικία, as used in the Sermon on the Mount. It is needless to repeat the argument for the R.V. *margin* which may be drawn from Wetstein's excellent comment and literary citations: had some of the moderns read and weighed that note, we might have seen remarkable conversions! But the reader of the papyri and inscriptions recalls with surprise that he cannot cite a single passage in favour of *height* as a meaning of ἡλικία, while there are scores for the alternative. (A glance at Liddell and Scott will shew how comparatively rare the meaning *height* is even in the literary Greek.) The inference would seem to be that there is a strong presumption in favour of *age, term of life*, unless (as in Luke xix. 3) the context provides decisive arguments against it, which the ἐλάχιστον in Luke xii. 26 somewhat emphatically fails to do.

What has been advanced more than once in this Essay prepares the way for a generalization taking us to the very foundation of New Testament exegetical research. Do not the facts now known force us to recognize that we have hitherto allowed preponderant weight in all our discussions to a mass of sources which should take the second place and not the first? To vary a comparison used before, we are seeking to interpret a popular writer of the twentieth century by means of parallels laboriously culled from Chaucer and Shakspeare, and sometimes even from Caedmon, where it might be more profitable to listen to a schoolboy's slang. Let us illustrate with a word on which we have nothing to quote from our new sources, and it is a question simply of interpreting the evidence we had already. Λόγιος in Acts xviii. 24 is eloquent in the A. V. (following the Vulgate), learned in R. V., according to the prevailing sense in classical writers. But there is a page of Lobeck's *Phrynichus* (p. 198), which would have probably given pause to the majority that carried the change, had they lived under the new dispensation. Phrynichus says "The ancients do not use λόγιος as the multitude do, of the man who is skilful and lofty in speech,

<sup>1</sup> Some further suggestions as to the usage of both noun and verb

will be found in *Lexical Notes*, s. vv. (*Expositor*, Dec. 1908).

but of one who can expound as an expert the native customs in each several nation." Lobeck's note contains a number of passages from Hellenistic writers in which *eloquence* is clearly intended. (Add to them Strabo, p. 712.) Lobeck adds the remark that Thomas and Moeris argued for πολυίστωρ as the Attic connotation, while the mass of writers used it as λεκτικός. Field (*Notes*, p. 129), after quoting two of Lobeck's passages, says "The other sense, ὁ τῆς ἱστορίας ἔμπειρος, is chiefly found in Herodotus and the cultivators of the Attic dialect." Now it is true, as Liddell and Scott will shew, that Hellenistic writers sometimes remembered to use the word "correctly." But—and here is the main reason for choosing this particular example—the testimony of the Atticist grammarians is always of special value for us. They may be right or wrong in their statements of Attic usage centuries before their own time. But the words and uses which they banned were unmistakeably in use around them; and their unwilling testimony constantly helps us to discover the "bad Greek" which interests us more than the Atticists' "good Greek." It is a fair working rule that a meaning condemned by these *modistes* of literature, Phrynichus and his company, may be accepted as probably intended by the New Testament writer. So though we desert the R. V. with great reluctance, we feel bound to conclude that Lobeck's authors (including the Jew Philo) were lapsing into the colloquial from which Luke was not tempted to stray, and that Jerome (and consequently the A. V.) gave the more probable meaning.

The orientation of our present attitude towards Grammar must not detain us, in view of prolonged discussions elsewhere. A few very general observations will suffice. Firstly let us note, in continuation of what has just been said, that in grammar even more than in vocabulary the difference between classical and Hellenistic needs perpetual watching. The statement is of course the veriest truism, and like many other truisms it needs repeating only too obviously. Would Westcott, one wonders, have been so insistent on pursuing the ghost of a purposive force in ἵνα throughout the Fourth Gospel, had he not been a Senior Classic and spent years in teaching Greek

composition? Had his presuppositions been drawn from Epictetus instead of Plato, from the papyri instead of the dramatists, the motive for such scrupulousness would have vanished. Taking this point as typical, it may be noted that the blunting of the old use of ἵνα does not reduce the resources of the language as an instrument for expressing thought with exactness. Our own infinitive covers the whole range of meaning which ἵνα clauses had acquired in the Κοινή—noun sentence, final, consecutive, jussive; but how often are we conscious of ambiguity? It is safe to say that we never have any difficulty in the use of ἵνα except when we are trying to force it into one of the old categories which are too familiar to us from our classical grammar. Let the classics go, and come to the difficulty with Hellenistic alone in the mind, and the passage becomes clear at once. The same may be said of other points in which Hellenistic has decidedly moved away from the standards of the Attic golden age. The delicate precision of the use of the optative commands our admiration as we see it in the great writers of Athens. And yet we may remember that, except to express a wish, the optative has really no function which other moods cannot express equally well, so that by practically dropping the rest of its uses Hellenistic has lost no real necessity of language. Indeed the fact that all the Indo-European dialects have either fused these two moods into one (as Latin) or let one of them go (as post-Vedic Sanskrit) is evidence enough that classical Greek was preserving a mere superfluity, developing the same after its manner into a thing of beauty which added to the resources of the most delicate and graceful idiom the world has ever seen. But we are not belittling the masterpieces of Hellas when we say that their language was far less fitted than Hellenistic for the work that awaited the missionaries of the new world-faith. The delicacies of Attic would have been thrown away on the barbarians whom Paul did not disdain to seek for the Kingdom of Christ. If much of the old grace was gone, the strength and suppleness, the lucidity and expressiveness of that matchless tongue were there in undimmed perfection. They are recognized still when travellers



master the unschooled "jargon" of the peasants in modern Hellas, the direct descendant of the Greek of Mark and Paul. As one of the most accomplished of them, Dr W. H. D. Rouse, well says, "The most abstruse and abstract ideas are capable of clear expression in the popular speech. The book-learned will often hesitate for an expression, the peasant never. He spends all his days in talking, and has plenty of practice; and his vernacular is not only vivid and racy, it is capable of expressing any thought. . . . His language has the further advantage of being able to form new words by composition." Assuredly a language which had all these characteristics three thousand years ago, and has them to-day, is scarcely likely to have lost them awhile during the great period when Greek was spoken and understood by a far larger proportion of civilized mankind than it had ever been in the period of its greatest glory, or has ever been again since East and West parted asunder and let the dark ages in.

We have wandered far from our Optative text, but that or any other characteristic of New Testament Greek will illustrate well enough the thesis that the grammatical losses of Κοινή vernacular are abundantly compensated by qualities which make this dialect an absolutely ideal one for proclaiming great spiritual truths to all sorts and conditions of men all over the Roman Empire. There are other things that would be worth saying as to the gains we have won from the study of non-literary papyri and cognate material. As might be expected, contemporary documents like these have plenty to teach us as to the *Realien* of our subject. The Census of Luke ii.—"They disfigure their faces"—an invitation to feast in an idol temple—the Number of the Beast—the Emperor as "Son of God"—"In the Name"—Emancipation by enslavement to a god—Purity, ritual and moral—the uses of chaff—here are a few miscellaneous headings on which something new and interesting might be said, and they are only the first topics which happen to strike us without refreshing the memory out of a book. For most of them we may refer to the fascinating pages of *Licht vom Osten*: in this Essay they must obviously remain samples of headings and nothing more.

There is one more topic under the head of Grammar which calls for a few words. To judge from a sentence in Dr Nestle's review, referred to above, it would seem that even scholars of the first rank in a different line are not yet alive to the practical importance of modern research in comparative syntax. Yet it is certainly a most fruitful innovation in Greek scholarship that the language is no longer isolated, but receives light on the meaning of its categories from developments in kindred tongues. Linguistic science occupies a curious position in the open between the rival camps of literary and scientific studies. On the one side it is constantly liable to abuse from every amateur: no untrained man would venture an opinion on the technical ground of botany or physics, but everyone who can spell, and some who cannot, will pronounce *ex cathedra* on an etymology. And on the other side we notice a strange antipathy towards its claim to rule in its own house, born apparently of the fact that it is a science, and that men of the literary temperament revolt against it as such. But its results are there, for all that; and never have they been worked out with such scientific accuracy as during the past thirty years. "The terminology of our modern philology" in the important subject of the action denoted by verbal tenses and conjugations, to which Dr Nestle objects, is simply the systematization of knowledge now gathered from languages ancient and modern in the Indo-European family, enabling us to understand, as we never could from Greek study alone, the precise meaning of the most complex elements in Greek. To realize what the comparative method has done for us, we should try to make a beginner comprehend the functions of the Aorist, or what is the unifying principle which can bind together the different uses of the Genitive. No teacher who has tried it, with the modern equipment, will fail to grasp the value of the work that has opened up the structure and history of the sister languages, and so made clear the central principles of each of them.

With this we must close. If the thesis of this Essay has been made only plausible, it would seem to follow that a neglected element ought to be brought into the training of

those who are to study and expound the New Testament, even if it means displacing something that is already there. Most of our Greek Testament scholars, in the highest and in the lowest ranks, have come to the Book through the door of classical Greek. When we think what it means to have Greek enough to read Plato's *Apology*, we are not likely to make light of such a preparation. But it is surely not enough. Should not the Greek, literary and vernacular, of the period contemporary with the rise of Christianity be reckoned among the subjects necessary for a Theological Tripos candidate to study? The elevation of Hellenistic Greek to the dignity of a Tripos subject would not be a step without precedent. A beginning has been made in a small way in the University of Manchester, where the subject stands among the options for the final B.A. examination. Students who are going on to Theology are encouraged to take it, and have thus an excellent linguistic preparation for the studies that are to follow. Biblical texts stand side by side with works of Plutarch, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, and so on, chosen from year to year, and there is always a selection of papyrus texts and other vernacular material. Composition and historical grammar complete the scheme. The new syllabus is only in its second year, but there is every reason for hoping that it will have good results.

It is not only Tripos candidates however who are in our minds when we speak of New Testament students. Classical studies in general are, as we all know, seriously threatened in our day by the reaction from conditions under which they held an absurd and harmful monopoly in education. It is likely enough that candidates for the ministry, who have had a good education but were not conscious of their call till after leaving school, will come forward more often than not with Greek yet to learn. And there is another recruiting-ground for the ministry, from which the Church of England is expecting to secure able and devoted men, as we of other communions have long rejoiced to do. Men who have had no educational advantages, called to the work after many years away from school—how shall we best train them for service

in which experience shews they may be surpassingly useful? The urgency of the question is recognized in a recent Report which has deeply interested us all. Perhaps the writer may contribute his own experience of some years, concerned as it is vitally with the subject of this Essay. Hellenistic proves a far shorter road than the classical grammar which the writer used in schoolmaster days. A short and simple grammar and reader in New Testament Greek, written for the purpose, supplies the forms and syntax needed for intelligent reading of the sacred text; and with this basis it is found that students with an aptitude for languages can go on to classical Greek when they have become proficient in the far easier Hellenistic. It may fairly be claimed that there is much to be said for a method which, for men who have little time to spare and a great object to attain, reduces to a minimum the initial drudgery of language-learning, and in a few months enables them to read with profit greater books than ever Plato penned. And Hellenistic is worth learning. The mere student of human history may find his blood stirred by the spectacle of its achievement. In days when all that was great in Hellenism seemed to be dead, when brute force from outside and dissension within had reduced to subjection the proud people who had once hurled back the East that thundered at its doors, we see the old greatness rise again in new forms. Literature that could inspire Shakspeare's creations, philosophy instinct with fervour and life, science and history that in faithful search for truth rivalled the masterpieces of antiquity, humour and satire that Aristophanes might be proud to own—all these we see in the books of the Hellenistic age. And then we find that this wonderful language, which we knew once as the refined dialect of a brilliant people inhabiting a mere corner of a small country, had become the world-speech of civilization. For one (and this one) period in history only, the curse of Babel seemed undone. Exhausted by generations of bloodshed, the world rested in peace under one firm government, and spoke one tongue, current even in Imperial Rome. And the Christian thinker looks on all this, and sees the finger of God. It was no blind chance that

ordained the time of the Birth at Bethlehem. The ages had long been preparing for that royal visitation. The world was ready to understand those who came to speak in its own tongue the mighty works of God. So with the time came the message, and God's heralds went forth to their work, "having an eternal gospel proclaim unto them that dwell on the earth, and unto every nation and tribe and tongue and people."

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