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The Translations made from
the Original Aramaic Gospels

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THE TRANSLATIONS MADE FROM THE ORIGINAL ARAMAIC GOSPELS

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THE question of the original language (or languages) of the Synoptic Gospels, or rather, of the documentary sources which underlie them, is just now being earnestly discussed. This is the question which perhaps occupies the central point of interest in the present study of the New Testament text. Recent investigations, or essays bearing on the subject, fall naturally into two main groups: those which approach the matter from the Semitic side, and those which come to it from the side of a fresh study of Hellenistic Greek.

On the one hand, the progress of Semitic studies has at last made it seem possible to attack these most difficult problems with good hope of partial success. Owing to the accumulation of important new material, and to the help given by more thorough linguistic investigation, we have been gaining in recent years a greater familiarity with the Aramaic idioms of Palestine, as well as with classical Hebrew. Much that was uncertain only a short time ago is now firm standing ground. The important equipment of the present-day investigator from this side, however, does not so much consist in the more exact knowledge of the Semitic languages, and especially of Aramaic, as it does in a clearer understanding of the literary problems involved, and of the whole historical situation in which the first Christian writings appear. It is not because of advance along any one line, but along many lines of investigation, that important scraps of evidence, often too minute to seem worthy of serious notice, are now readily recognized and used, which a generation ago could hardly have been either observed or interpreted correctly. It is, therefore, a fact of considerable significance that an increasing number of Semitic scholars

are holding more or less positively the theory of written Semitic sources underlying at least a considerable part of the Synoptic Gospels.

On the other hand, we have recently gained a very much increased knowledge of the Hellenistic Greek which was spoken and written at about the beginning of the Christian era. Thanks especially to the great finds of papyri which have been made in Egypt, a flood of light has been thrown upon the *κοινή*, both in its various dialects and in the characteristics which it exhibits in all parts of the modern Greek-speaking world. The result, for the study of the New Testament in particular, has been a most important one. Much of what had long been characterized as 'New Testament Greek' or 'Biblical Greek' is now found to have been in common use elsewhere. Many peculiarities of vocabulary and syntax which had been supposed to be due to the influence of the Greek Old Testament or to that of Hebrew or Aramaic dialects spoken in Palestine, are now shown to have existed in regions and under circumstances where no such influence could have been at work, and we are led to conclude that these idioms belong to the inner development of the vulgar Greek itself.

So far as the question of the original language of the Synoptic Gospels is concerned, however, the situation has not suffered any such change as some appear to believe. The most of those students of the New Testament who have discussed the phenomena brought to light by the widening of the horizon of late Greek have failed to make any careful distinction between the Greek of Paul and that of Matthew, or between that in which the Epistle to the Hebrews is written and that of the Apocalypse. Many who had been favorably disposed towards the theory of Semitic sources in the Synoptic Gospels have abandoned that view, and express their belief that "New Testament Greek" possesses *no* peculiarities not shared by the profane Greek in ordinary use at that time. There are thus, at present, two rival camps, the one insisting on the evidences of translation which appear in the first three Gospels, or elsewhere in the New Testament, and the other denying the existence of such evidence. The great majority of New Testament

scholars, it may be added, seem to belong to neither one of these two parties, but content themselves with saying that while it is quite possible that Aramaic or Hebrew documents may have formed the basis of our Gospels, or of a portion of the Acts, or of the Apocalypse, the fact cannot be demonstrated at any point with absolute certainty. The question of translation, they say, though interesting, is purely academic, and so far as assured practical results are concerned it is of little or no use to try to go behind our Greek sources in the oldest form of them which we can reconstruct from evidence of manuscripts and versions.

Some very industrious students of the whole problem have concluded, in view of the new evidence, that the hypothesis of Aramaic documents rendered into Greek is not only unnecessary but untenable. Deissmann's *Bibelstudien* was influential in this direction, though it was not directly concerned with the main question, but merely contributed material. Wernle, in his *Synoptische Frage* (1899), puts it down as a "still unshaken fact" (*eine immer noch unerschütterte Thatsache*) that our Gospels *and their written sources* were originally Greek. There has been, however, no thoroughgoing discussion of the matter from either side; indeed, it may fairly be said that thorough treatment of the material in hand can hardly be expected at present. There has been but one noteworthy presentation of the case from the Semitic side, namely that of Wellhausen, in his *Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien* (first ed., 1905), supplemented by the notes accompanying his translation of the Synoptic Gospels. Wellhausen's investigation, it is needless to say, is masterly so far as it goes; it might, however, have been carried much further and made more convincing. I shall often have occasion to refer to it in the sequel.

One thing that has made, and is still making, a good deal of confusion in the discussion of these questions is a careless use of terms. The comprehensive phrase 'New Testament Greek' is still used very much too loosely, as though all of the documents which make up this collection of writings were written in one and the same approximately homogeneous idiom.

To take one or two examples: Professor J. H. Moulton in *The*

Expositor, 1904, p. 68, after speaking of the exploded theory that "the New Testament writers" wrote in a Greek which derived its peculiarities chiefly from the Greek Old Testament and from the influence of the vernacular Aramaic, goes on to say: "And now all this has vanished, for Biblical Greek is isolated no more. Great collections of Egyptian papyri published with amazing rapidity by the busy explorers who have restored to us so many lost literary treasures during the last decade have shown us that the farmer of the Fayum spoke a Greek essentially identical with that of the Evangelists. The most convincing 'Hebraisms' appear in the private letters of men who could never have been in contact with Semitic influences." And on p. 67: "The disappearance of that word 'Hebraic' from our definitions marks a revolution in the conception of the language in which the New Testament is written." And, again, on p. 74: "But the papyri have finally disposed of the assumption that the New Testament was written in any other Greek than the language of the common people throughout the Greek-speaking lands."¹

But what is "Biblical Greek"? And what is the "language in which the New Testament is written"? If the question of possible Semitic sources for parts of the New Testament is to be discussed seriously, this is a very bad way to begin. So far as Semitic coloring is concerned, there are great differences which need to be taken into account at the outset. The Synoptic Gospels stand at a considerable distance from the Gospel of John in this regard, in spite of their close literary relationship, while between the Synoptic Gospels and the writings of Paul, for example, there is a great gulf fixed. A layman after reading such statements as those which I have just quoted would be likely to suppose that the evidence of the papyri has already settled, or nearly settled, the question of 'translation-Greek' in the New Testament; that it has shown, at all events, that the hypothesis of such translation is not anywhere absolutely necessary. But as a matter of fact, the evidence furnished by the papyri and by inscriptions has hardly touched the

¹ Repeated in his *Grammar of New Testament Greek* (1906), p. 18 f.

real question at all. In the case of most of the documents of the New Testament, the question of translation from a supposed Semitic original could never arise, among properly equipped scholars. It is only in the case of a few of the writings that the probability has been shown, and the line needs now to be drawn more sharply than ever between these writings and their fellows.

As Professor Moulton says (in this same series of articles, *passim*), it has been shown that a good many words and idioms which had been regarded as glaring Hebraisms, such as ἰδοὺ (used like Heb. הִנֵּה, etc.), ἀνὰ μέσον, and ἐνώπιον (like Heb. לִפְנֵי, etc.) are occasionally met with in documents which are certainly not translations from Semitic originals. This is not surprising, and in all probability still other idioms which have been quite generally regarded as peculiar to the "translation" language will be found in original Greek compositions of this late period.

But these facts have very little bearing, after all, on the question of the original language of the Gospel of Matthew, or of Mark or Luke. It is a matter of very little consequence, for the settling of this important question, whether εἰς as an ordinal number, or ἐν with the instrumental meaning, can be found in the Ptolemaic documents, or whether ἐγένετο is used with an infinitive in profane Greek. Even if every so-called 'Semitic idiom' in the Synoptic Gospels were found, occurring sporadically, in the κοινή (a quite impossible supposition, by the way), the real argument for translation would not be weakened. The demonstration of such *occasional* occurrences does not touch the real difference between vulgar Greek and translation-Greek; for the latter, it must be insisted, does have its definite and recognizable peculiarities. To illustrate, from the idioms which were just mentioned: if any extensive papyrus fragment should come to light in which even these few idioms were all used, not sporadically but constantly, and imbedded in a dialect whose general characteristics were at least as obviously Semitic as Greek, then the presumption would of necessity be this, that the document had originally been composed in a Semitic tongue. Only strong and unequivocal evidence to the contrary could render any other hypothesis tenable.

To return to one or two of Moulton's statements. "The farmer of the Fayum spoke a Greek essentially identical with that of the Evangelists." This gives an altogether erroneous impression. It may well be true that the Greek spoken by Egyptian peasants very closely resembled that spoken by the compilers of Matthew, Mark, and Luke; but that it even remotely resembled the language *in which they wrote their Gospels* is not true at all. No evidence which has thus far come to light tends to show that such Greek as that of the Gospels was ever spoken in any part of the world. The idiom of the Synoptic Gospels, like that of the Apocalypse, is half Semitic throughout. One characteristic Semitic construction follows another, in verse after verse and on page after page. The student of Aramaic and Hebrew is reminded of these languages, not occasionally, but all the time, and this is the important fact. Moulton says (*ibidem*), in speaking of the *κοινή*, as exhibited in the papyri: "The most convincing Hebraisms appear in the private letters of men who could never have been in contact with Semitic influences." But what is a "convincing Hebraism"? There is really no such thing, so long as the discussion is concerned with isolated phenomena. It is only when the idiom is one link in a long chain that it becomes convincing; then, indeed, it may have an absolutely compelling force. The argument is cumulative; we are concerned with the continuous impression made by a great mass of material, rather than with a number of striking instances — though these are to be had in abundance when they are sought for. The fact is, we have in this well-marked group of New Testament writings a series of compositions which are Semitic in structure, although clothed in a Greek dress, and the just effect of recent discoveries is to make this peculiarity seem all the more striking. In all the mass of papyri and inscriptions nothing similar has come to light, and we are therefore more than ever in need of an adequate explanation. Can, then, this Semitic-Greek represent a spoken dialect?

It is true that uneducated people of the lower class, when they are forced by circumstances to speak a foreign tongue, sometimes create an uncouth *patois*, consisting of a more or less ludicrous mixture of the two dialects, which they then

use in their more careless intercourse with one another. It is possible (though we have no evidence of it) that some such Greek-Aramaic jargon, to which we might compare our 'Pennsylvania Dutch,' was used for a time in some part of Palestine. But such jargons as these have obviously nothing to do with the language of the New Testament writings under discussion. No one of these writings is the work of an unlettered man, no one of them is the work of an unskilled author. In each case, we know ourselves to be dealing with a man of culture, and of literary resources; one who was possessed of an extensive vocabulary, and knew how to render shades of thought. When such men use a mongrel dialect, they do so from deliberate choice. Here, the reason for the choice is obvious, it is the translator's conception of his task. No other explanation thus far proposed accounts for all the facts. This will perhaps become more evident in the course of the discussion which here follows. If the documents which underlie the Synoptic Gospels were composed in vulgar Greek, why should this Greek be anything else than the *κοινή*? It is true that we are not very well acquainted with the popular speech, yet our knowledge of it has been much increased, until we are at least able to assert with all emphasis that it is by no means the language of the Gospels. The real effect of the recent discoveries in the field of late Greek is, then, to isolate the 'translation' idiom of the Gospels from the most of the remainder of the New Testament even more completely than it had been isolated before. The contrast in which it stands to the popular language which was ordinarily written and spoken at that day is becoming more and more evident. Its true affinities, on the other hand, are to be found in the books of the Greek Old Testament. It will be in place, then, to take some general notice of the language of the old Greek renderings from the Semitic.

The translation-Greek of our Biblical books is a literary product whose peculiarities deserve more attention than they have hitherto received. The subject is not one that can be treated satisfactorily in small compass, yet it is pos-

sible to set forth briefly some general truths with sufficient clearness to aid in the present investigation.

It is true, on the one hand, that there are varieties of translation-Greek. The ancient translators did conceive their tasks in ways differing somewhat according to the character of the work which they were rendering, and also according to the period and the circumstances in which they lived. In the Old Testament, where we have the necessary materials for criticising the Greek versions, we can observe this fact to good advantage. We have in our Greek Bible a number of different kinds of faithful translation. Leaving out of account such minor literary habits as could be taken for granted, it can be shown in the case of not a few of the Biblical books that the individual interpreter had his own peculiar principles of procedure in rendering the Semitic text which he had before him. Anything like a free paraphrase, to be sure, we shall rarely find, and that only in occasional passages; but the ideas of what constitutes a true reproduction are seen to vary considerably. Nevertheless, many Old Testament scholars have failed to recognize the fact that these renderings are not all alike; and most of them still continue to operate with 'the LXX' (meaning the text printed by Swete or Tischendorf) as though it were homogeneous, and to use it in Kings, or Ezekiel, or Koheleth, in exactly the same way in which they had used it in the Pentateuch.

On the other hand, there are important particulars in which the translations in our Bible, including both the Old Testament and the New Testament, are essentially alike. It is with these points of essential resemblance that I have especially to do. As has already been said in the case of the Old Testament, the Biblical translations are without exception close renderings, so far as we are now able to judge. Speaking broadly, we can safely depend on every one of them to follow its original faithfully, through thick and thin. The occasional local exceptions, in more freely rendered clauses or passages, do not affect the general rule. The resulting idiom, viewed in passages sufficiently extended to have a recognizable character, is never Greek, but always a mixture; at its best inelegant, and at its worst monstrous.

The reasons for this are worth seeking. Why should the Alexandrine translators and their fellows have produced this jargon, instead of an idiom more closely resembling their own spoken or written Greek? The question is most commonly answered by saying that they were attempting to render sacred writings, every word of which had its super-human value; hence the anxious adhesion to the original. This fact did always exercise a very considerable influence, and was doubtless a chief cause of many painfully literal renderings, especially in passages containing something oracular or otherwise portentous. Generally speaking, the later Biblical translations were more closely word-for-word than the earlier, because of the increasing reverence for the inspired writings; this rule had its exceptions, however. A very frequent cause of the conflation of Biblical texts was the wish to include, side by side with the old rendering, a new and more exact one. But the sanctity of the originals is by no means the only reason, nor even the principal reason, for the extreme literalness of these early versions. Contemporary translations of writings which were not regarded as sacred show in general the very same characteristics as do the renderings of the canonical books. When the grandson of Bar Sira, for example, undertook to turn his grandfather's Hebrew proverbs into Greek, in order to give them the currency which they deserved, he produced the same barbarous mixture — incredibly awkward now and then — which we find in the other Greek versions from the Hebrew.

Another explanation of these extremely close renderings in the Greek Old Testament emphasizes the fact that Hebrew was at that time going out of use as a spoken language. The uncouth idiom of the 'Septuagint' was the result of "the effort of Greek-speaking men to translate the already obsolete and imperfectly understood Hebrew" (Moulton, *Grammar*, p. 13). This is true to some extent, namely in single words and occasional passages, which had passed beyond the interpreter's ken, just as certain words and phrases in Chaucer, Shakespeare, and even more recent writers have ceased to be understood. Words have their day, and drop out of sight; local allusions, or the current phrases of a certain period, soon lose their meaning, often

beyond recovery. Doubtless not a few things in our Hebrew Bible which would have been perfectly transparent to any Israelite in the time of Jeroboam II, or of Hezekiah, could have been understood by no one in the time of Haggai and Zechariah. Some authors, moreover, express themselves so obscurely that their writings are full of riddles, difficult enough for contemporaries, and often quite insoluble for subsequent generations. The extent to which these old Hebrew texts have been changed from their original form, in the course of time, must also be borne in mind. If the prophet Hosea could have been confronted with his own book in the shape in which it lay before its Greek translators, the attempt to read and understand it offhand would certainly have staggered him. It is quite true, then, that many queer specimens of the translator's jargon show that the original was not understood; this is very far, however, from explaining translation-Greek as a whole. *The Hebrew language* was not by any means unfamiliar, or imperfectly understood, at the time when these first versions were made. The author of First Maccabees wrote classical Hebrew as easily and naturally as educated Swiss write High German, and so doubtless did a multitude of his contemporaries, both in Palestine and in the Dispersion. The Alexandrine translators knew Hebrew hardly less intimately than they knew their own mother-tongue; we are far more likely to underestimate than to overestimate their equipment in this regard. Furthermore, the versions made from the Aramaic, while it was a living language and perfectly well understood, have precisely the same quality and the same peculiarities as those made from the Hebrew.

The true source of 'translation-Greek' lies deeper than either of these two reasons for occasional close rendering. It lies in the translator's conception of his task. In what way should he mirror in one language what had been written in another? In all times and places it has been the *first* aim of the ordinary translator to render words rather than ideas. Even where the version is comparatively 'free,' the idiom of the original is retained. Obviously, this saves time and trouble, and avoids a responsibility which would generally be unwelcome. It would be a mistake to suppose,

however, that indolence was to any considerable extent responsible for this method of translating. These Jews of the Dispersion were willing to give any amount of time and labor to their task, and wished to do it as well as it could be done. But they could not have felt it to be incumbent on them, or even desirable, to render into idiomatic Greek. The original was not conceived in Greek, but in Hebrew or Aramaic, and what they were required to do was to present the same document *in a Greek dress*; this was the only way in which they could make it accessible to Greek readers, and at the same time let it speak for itself. This was the typical attitude of the ancient translator, irrespective of the nature of the text to be rendered.² In modern times and among men of letters the custom of literal rendering no longer prevails; but even modern translators who are imperfectly trained resort to the old method. The 'schoolboy translation' is often referred to, in speaking of Old Testament Greek, and the comparison is an apt one. Especially in the more obscure parts of the Old Testament, the translator must very often have felt that his task was too hard for him. What he then did was to render the difficult, and often manifestly corrupt, text with desperate faithfulness. In dealing with such passages the maxim was, and in the nature of the case had to be, that of the schoolboy: Try to put down something which shall correspond closely to each word of the original — and never mind the sense.

² The two letters prefixed to Second Maccabees afford an interesting illustration here, if my opinion regarding them is correct. They were certainly composed in a Semitic tongue, probably Aramaic, and (if I am not mistaken) were translated by the author of the book. He was one who wrote Greek with unusual fluency and elegance, and was conscious of his ability; but the language of the two letters is, as usual, the jargon of the translator, as far removed as possible from the untrammelled idiom of the rest of the book. (See my article, "Second Maccabees," in the *Encyclopaedia Biblica*.) This case can hardly fail to remind us of the beginning of the Gospel of Luke, which (on any theory of the documents contained in it) presents a striking parallel. The prologue is written in elegant Greek; then, without warning, verse 8 begins with the uncouth mixture, a Semitic narrative merely transferred (and that not always successfully) into Greek words. Whether the author of the Third Gospel translated this himself, or found it already translated, makes little difference with the instructive fact, that a translation was not to be treated as literature, but stood in a class by itself. That the author of the Gospel did *not* compose this narrative in chaps. 1 and 2 himself, as many have supposed, I shall show presently.

It is always to be borne in mind, to be sure, that in the ordinary course of translation, where there is no uncertainty in the text, but only a smoothly running narrative or discourse, the translator allowed himself all sorts of small liberties. Greek constructions and the Greek order of words are freely substituted for the original Semitic — though almost never consistently. Sometimes, indeed, the extent to which this occasional freedom of rendering is carried seems to us both unnecessary and mistaken. It must be acknowledged that the translator's own literary taste often seems to compel him to write idiomatic Greek in sentence after sentence, in spite of the respect for the original evidenced by his habit in the main. The most of the renderings which constitute the Greek Bible, both Old Testament and New, are admirable performances from their own point of view, and in no inconsiderable part they are admirable from any and every point of view, even that of modern literary art.

It is with the defects of these versions, however, and especially with their slavishly literal character on the whole, that I am just now concerned. Reduce the ancient interpreter really to straits, and his performance — adding word to word in a meaningless succession — is frequently nothing short of ludicrous.

By way of illustration, I subjoin a few modern specimens of translation. The first two are attempts at 'sight-rendering' recently made by schoolboys who presumably had studied for several years the languages which they were here required to turn into English. Each one is a serious effort, made in the endeavor to pass an examination; and in each case I have printed the paper exactly as it was submitted, without making any alteration whatever.

The first 'translation' (from Ovid) is evidently the work of one who had gained some familiarity with the Latin vocabulary, but did not regard it as any part of his duty to write what should make good sense.

*Postquam, Saturno tenebrosa in Tartara misso,
Sub Iove mundus erat: subiit argentea proles,
Auro deterior, fulvo pretiosior aere.
Iupiter antiqui contraxit tempora veris:*

*Perque hiemes, aestusque, et inaequales autumnos,
Et breve ver, spatiis exegit quatuor annum.
Tum primum siccis aër fervoribus ustus
Canduit: et ventis glacies adstricta pependit.*

The translation :

"Afterwards, when Saturn was sent into darkest Tartar, he lay buried under Jove. His offspring emerged at an early age, weakened by the gold, and made prettier by the yellow bronze. Jupiter dragged the season of former spring; and he lived for a period of four years, through the winters, the summers, the extra long autumns, and the short spring. Then, accustomed to the cold of some centuries he lived on, and hung exposed to the icy winds."

The second example illustrates especially that variety of rendering in which the translator (still feeling under no obligation to make good sense) is repeatedly misled by the appearance of a word, mistaking it for another which more or less closely resembles it.

*Je tombai hier par hasard sur un mauvais livre d'un nommé Dennis;
car il y a aussi de méchants écrivains parmi les Anglais. Cet auteur,
dans une petite relation d'un séjour de quinze jours qu'il a fait en France,
s'avise de vouloir faire le caractère de la nation qu'il a eu si bien le temps
de connaître.*

The translation :

"I fell heir, through chance, under an evil life of one named Dennis, for there were besides some empty cryings by the English. This author, in a little adventure of a sojourn of fifteen days which he had made in France, advised himself that he wished to make the character of the nation which he had seen so well the time of his birth."

These two specimens are extreme cases, and it is for that very reason that I have chosen them. They serve all the better to illustrate the attitude of the primitive translator; it is not his business to think, but only to reproduce. I have no intention of implying that the truly scholarly versions made by the Alexandrine interpreters are to be classed, even for a moment, with such ignorant and awkward performances as these; still, the two examples will not seem irrelevant to any one who has carefully studied the Greek Old Testament in the light of a thorough knowledge of Hebrew.

There is no sort of blunder in these two passages which cannot be paralleled over and over again in those numerous parts of the Greek Bible which were hastily or unskilfully rendered. Even the instances in which the translator is misled by the resemblance, in appearance or sound, of an English word to the French or Latin with which he is struggling (*pretiosior* = 'prettier'; *ustus* = 'used'; *hier* = 'heir'; *livre* = 'life,' etc.) will remind the experienced student of the Old Testament of similar cases — in spite of the wide gulf between Greek and Hebrew.

More instructive than the passages in which the translator does not pretend to write anything comprehensible are those in which he merely follows his original so closely as to produce a hideous variety of Greek, sufficiently intelligible, perhaps, to those who were likely to read it. Striking examples of this sort are to be seen on almost every page of our 'Septuagint' texts. To give a few illustrations: Num. ix. 10, "ἄνθρωπος ἄνθρωπος ὃς ἐὰν γένηται ἀκάθαρτος ἐπὶ ψυχῇ ἀνθρώπου, ἢ ἐν ὁδῷ μακρὰν ὑμῖν ἢ ἐν ταῖς γενεαῖς ὑμῶν, καὶ ποιήσῃ τὸ πάσχα κυρίου.⁸ Every reader of the Hebrew Bible, even in the latest Hellenistic period, knew perfectly well that the וְכִי וְכִי of the Pentateuchal laws meant 'whoever'; yet the interpreter chose to imitate the phrase in this surprisingly awkward manner, and so on throughout the verse. Or take 1 Chron. xv. 21 as rendered in the Syrian (L) recension: καὶ Ματταθίας . . . καὶ Ὀζίας ἐν κινύραις περὶ τῆς ὁγδόης τοῦ ἐνισχυσαί. Or Is. xlv. 10, 11a: οἱ πλάσσοντες θεὸν καὶ γλύφοντες, πάντες ἀνωφελῆ, καὶ πάντες ὁθεν ἐγένοντο ἐξηράνθησαν καὶ κωφοὶ ἀπὸ ἀνθρώπων· συναχθῆ- τωσαν πάντες κ.τ.λ. The grandson of Bar Sira understood his grandfather's proverbs, and turned them into Greek with "much watchfulness and skill," as he informs us; he certainly had no need to cling anxiously to the letter of the original; yet his work of rendering is exactly like that of all the others, and abounds in such performances as those just cited.

When we come to the criteria by which translation-Greek is to be recognized, we are on somewhat difficult ground.

⁸ This example of translator's Greek is given by Conybeare and Stock in their *Selections from the Septuagint*, p. 23.

Long Semitic documents, dealing with familiar themes, written in simple prose and containing no very difficult passages, may be reproduced faithfully, clause by clause, in a Greek which — though plainly not classical — sounds quite like an original composition. How shall the fact of translation be demonstrated? The most obvious kind of evidence, and the only kind of which use is made by the great majority of investigators, is that which is found in occasional phrases and constructions which “sound Semitic rather than Greek.” Evidence of this sort is vastly important, yet its precariousness can hardly be asserted too strongly. So far as it is a matter of a few isolated cases, it gives very uncertain footing, and is not infrequently deceptive where the examples seem most striking. We are not very well acquainted with the *κοινή*, after all, and are constantly liable to surprise when idioms supposed to be only Semitic suddenly turn up in the vulgar speech of the Hellenistic period. It now and then happens, too, that some factor quite overlooked by us has influenced the form of words.⁴

Another criterion to which appeal must occasionally be made is that of mistranslation. Some word, phrase, or sentence sounds very improbable in the context where it stands; we reduce the Greek to its equivalent in Aramaic or Hebrew, and seem to discover that the translator had misunderstood his original. Arguing from the double meaning of certain words, the ambiguity of clause-division, the probability of slight corruption in the text, and the like, we restore what seems to us to be the sense intended by the original author. Evidence of this variety is immensely valuable in the rare cases where it is convincing; there is no other internal proof of translation, indeed, which is so immediately cogent. But the need of caution is greater here than anywhere else. The more experience one has in this field, the more plainly he sees the constant danger of blundering. Our

⁴ Every list of examples of this nature is sure to contain its slips. Thus Wellhausen, *Einleitung*, ed. 1, p. 19, in the course of his endeavor to find traces of Aramaic circumstantial clauses in the Greek of the Gospels, says: “Ein weiteres zweifelhaftes Beispiel ist Lc. 19. 44 *καὶ τὰ τέκνα σου ἐν σοί*, welche Worte jedenfalls nicht Object zu *ἐδαφιοῦσιν* sein können.” Nevertheless, the words *are* the object of the verb, as appears from comparison of Nah. iii. 10; Hos. x. 15, xiv. 1.

ignorance of grammar, vocabulary, literary usage, customs, and history is necessarily colossal, especially in the case of the Semitic peoples; and even the most careful modern exegete is likely to mistake the meaning of the ancient author with whom he is dealing. Hence it happens in nine cases out of ten that renewed study of the 'mistranslations' which we have discovered shows us either that there was no translation at all, or else that it was quite correct.

By far the most important criterion for determining the fact of translation is *the continual presence, in texts of considerable extent, of a Semitic idiom underlying the Greek*. The demonstration of this nature is the most satisfactory of all, generally speaking, but it should be added that no other kind of evidence requires for its use more painstaking or a longer preparation. Even a novice in the linguistic field may recognize Semitic idioms here and there; mistakes in translation may be pointed out by insufficiently equipped men; but only veterans, long trained in both Greek and Semitic, and especially in the latter, can say with justified confidence, after studying a composite work: These chapters were composed in Semitic, those in Greek; this was originally Hebrew, that was Aramaic. Indeed, where the character of the composition favors the use of short and simple sentences, making it possible for Greek and Semite to express themselves in much the same way, in page after page, it may be well-nigh impossible to tell what was the tongue in which the work was originally written. In any case, the argument is cumulative, indications that would be quite insignificant if taken by themselves becoming highly important as links in a long chain.

I illustrate again by a modern instance, taking at random a passage from a printed translation of a too familiar type.

Then, far from the waves, is seen Trinacrian Ætna; and from a distance we hear a loud growling of the ocean, the beaten rocks, and the murmurs of breakers on the coast: the deep leaps up, and sands are mingled with the tide. And, says father Anchises, doubtless this is the famed Charybdis; these shelves, these hideous rocks Helenus foretold. Rescue us, my friends, and with equal ardour rise on your oars. They do no otherwise than bidden; and first Palinurus whirled about the creaking prow to the left waters. The whole crew, with oars and sails, bore to the left. We mount up to heaven on the arched gulf, and down

again we settle to the shades below, the wave having retired. Thrice the rocks bellowed amid their hollow caverns; thrice we saw the foam dashed up, and the stars drenched with its dewy moisture. . . . The port itself is ample, and undisturbed by the access of the winds; but, near it, Ætna thunders with horrible ruins, and sometimes sends forth to the skies a black cloud, ascending in a pitchy whirlwind of smoke and glowing embers; throws up balls of flame, and kisses the stars: sometimes, belching, hurls forth rocks and the shattered bowels of the mountain, and with a rumbling noise wreaths aloft the molten rocks, and boils up from its lowest bottom. . . . Lying that night under covert of the woods, we suffer from those hideous prodigies; nor see what cause produced the sound. For neither was there the light of the stars, nor was the sky enlightened by the starry firmament; but gloom was over the dusky sky, and a night of extreme darkness muffled up the moon in clouds.

Any classical scholar who knows something of the history of 'translation-English' in our academic life would recognize this at once, whether he had ever read Vergil or not. No amount of reasoning, or demonstration of the occurrence of these same idioms, one by one, in free compositions in the English language, could lead him to doubt his first conclusion. This is not an English that was ever spoken, or freely composed, by any man or class of men. It is Latin in more or less awkward English garb, and a product of a very common type of translation. The evidence is persistent, cropping out again and again until its aggregate amount is quite decisive. It would, of course, be possible for one who was completely master of both Latin and English to imitate this translator's jargon by a *tour de force*, whether as a joke or as an academic exercise. But it is needless to say that such an imitation could never rise above the level of an ugly curiosum.

It is the constant reiteration of indications perhaps unimportant when taken separately, but compelling in the aggregate, that confronts us in such passages as Luke i. 8 ff.: 'Ἐγένετο ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις Ἡρώδου βασιλέως τῆς Ἰουδαίας ἱερεὺς τις ὀνόματι Ζαχαρίας ἐξ ἐφημερίας Ἀβιά, καὶ γυνὴ αὐτῷ ἐκ τῶν θυγατέρων Ἀαρών, καὶ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτῆς Ἐλεισάβετ. ἦσαν δὲ δίκαιοι ἀμφοτέροι ἐναντίον τοῦ θεοῦ, πορευόμενοι ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ἐντολαῖς καὶ δικαιοῦμασιν τοῦ κυρίου ἀμεμπτοι. καὶ οὐκ ἦν αὐτοῖς τέκνον, καθότι ἦν Ἐλεισάβετ στείρα, καὶ ἀμφοτέροι προβεβηκότες ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις αὐτῶν ἦσαν. Ἐγένετο δὲ ἐν τῷ ἱερατεῦειν αὐτὸν ἐν τῇ

τάξει τῆς ἐφημερίας αὐτοῦ ἔναντι τοῦ θεοῦ κατὰ τὸ ἔθος τῆς ἱερατείας ἔλαχε τοῦ θυμῶσαι κ.τ.έ. The Semitic idioms continue to appear throughout the whole course of this introductory narrative contained in the first two chapters of the Gospel. Also in the poetical passages which lie imbedded in the narrative and are quite inseparable from it occur such idioms as ἐποίησε κράτος ἐν βραχίονι αὐτοῦ (i. 51), ὑπερηφάνους διανοίᾳ καρδίας αὐτῶν (*ibid.*), τοῦ δοῦναι ἡμῖν ἀφόβως ἐκ χειρὸς ἐχθρῶν ῥυσθέντας λατρεύειν αὐτῷ (i. 74 f.), διὰ σπλάγχνα ἐλέους θεοῦ ἡμῶν (i. 78), ὅπως ἂν ἀποκαλυφθῶσιν ἐκ πολλῶν καρδιῶν διαλογισμοί (ii. 35). This is not the *κοινή* of Palestine. It is not "the dialect of the market place of Alexandria." It is not even "the colloquial Greek of men whose original language and ways of thinking were Semitic, and whose expression was influenced at every turn by the phraseology of the Old Testament."⁵ It is *translation-Greek*, and nothing else. I do not believe that any ancient writer, Jewish or Christian, ever produced Greek of *this* variety by any natural literary process. It could not have been produced unconsciously, that is certain. Could anyone write unconsciously even the smoothest of the translation-English which I have just quoted?

It has been a favorite theory in recent years that the compiler of the Third Gospel deliberately imitated the language of the Greek Old Testament, in order to give his narrative the flavor of the sacred books. But the motive for such a grotesque performance on his part is by no means apparent. The jargon of the Alexandrine translators had no exclusive sanctity of its own. Some revered writings, such as the Wisdom of Solomon, were composed in excellent Greek. Josephus, who knew the Greek Bible as well as any man, composed his history in a language free from Hebraisms. There could be no purpose of archaizing, for the Greek of the 'Seventy' was not archaic, it was merely the deformed Greek of the translator. Luke, and his friend Theophilus, and every educated man of the time, knew the difference perfectly well.

But even Wellhausen thinks of the imitation of the translation lingo, by an evangelist *who was composing freely in*

⁵ Conybeare and Stock, *Selections from the Septuagint*, p. 21.

Greek, as a plausible thing. He says in the first edition of his *Einleitung*, p. 34: "Es giebt ein Judengriechisch, welches unter dem Einfluss der Septuaginta steht und sich kennzeichnet durch Aufnahme von allerhand Biblicismen. Markus ist ziemlich frei davon, nicht aber Matthäus und Lukas. Sie betreffen vorzugsweise das Lexicon oder die Phraseologie, doch auch den Stil. Die Hymnen im ersten Kapitel des Lukas sind beinah ganz aus Reminiscenzen zusammengesetzt und können sehr wol griechisch concipirt sein, wenn gleich das nicht notwendig ist." In the second edition (1911) he omits the first sentence of this quotation, and also the last clause of its closing sentence, the remainder of which he transposes to a place (page 8, top) where it directly follows some examples of this supposed imitation on Luke's part. That is, Wellhausen believes the first two chapters of Luke to have been composed in Greek.

But I do not think that these views can be maintained. The possibility of a "Judengriechisch" modelled upon the Old Testament versions may perhaps be admitted; though I feel sure of this, at least, that no specimen of the kind has thus far come to light. Whenever Luke gives us a succession of Hebraisms, he is either himself translating or else incorporating the translation of another. As for the hymns in the first chapters of Luke, not even a very ingenious deceiver could have concocted them, unless in this one way: by writing them — or at least conceiving them — in a Semitic tongue and then rendering them into Greek. When Luke writes *ἐποίησε κῆδος ἐν βραχίονι αὐτοῦ* (a phrase not found in the Greek Old Testament), he or some one else is rendering עשה חיל בְּרִידוֹ or (less probably) its Aramaic equivalent. It is a translation of the painfully literal kind, rendering word by word without regard to the meaning. The same thing is true all through the two chapters; I shall return to them presently, bringing decisive proof of the underlying Semitic original.

The general conclusion as to the documents of the New Testament whose Greek has a distinct and continuous Semitic tinge is this, that they were translated; no other conclusion is justified by the evidence which is at present available. The hypothesis of a writer using the *κοινή* and

writing under the strong influence of the Greek Old Testament falls far short of accounting for the facts. No theory of imitation is tenable; unconscious imitation could not possibly produce anything like what we have, and the deliberate effort could serve no end worthy of an author who was writing seriously and with high purpose. It has been customary to appeal to certain books of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, and to the Apocalypse of the New Testament, as examples of writings composed in Semitic-sounding Greek; but the fact is that all of the books thus cited as witnesses were originally written in Hebrew or Aramaic, and our Greek versions are merely translations more or less literal.⁶

The problem of translation in the Third Gospel is perhaps more interesting, and certainly more complicated, than anywhere else in the New Testament. We know that the Gospel was originally compiled in Greek; but the most of its sources were at least ultimately Semitic, and there is good reason to believe that a very considerable and important part of the material actually lay before the compiler (Luke) in the form of Aramaic and Hebrew documents. Did Luke use the 'Teachings of Jesus' (the source called Q) in Aramaic? Was the Greek version of this document which is incorporated in his Gospel made by himself, or by some one else? Did he consult the Aramaic Gospel of Mark? How are the translations in the Third Gospel related — if they are related at all — to the renderings of the corresponding documents in the Gospel of Matthew? What is the evidence of Semitic sources used by Luke alone? These are the principal questions of this nature which need to be answered.

The author of the Gospel says, in his brief but very important prologue, that 'many' before his time had undertaken to write narratives dealing with the life and work of Jesus. He also distinctly implies, in his claim of thoroughness and accuracy in his own work, that he had examined this older

⁶ Professor Moulton says, to be sure, in the *Expositor*, 1904, p. 71: "Even the Greek of the Apocalypse itself does not seem to owe any of its blunders to Hebraism." I admit that the Semitic original of the Apocalypse has not yet been satisfactorily demonstrated, though it is certainly capable of demonstration.

material and used such of it as he found valuable: 'Επειδή-
περ πολλοὶ ἐπεχείρησαν ἀνατάξασθαι διήγησιν . . ., ἔδοξε κάμοι
παρηκολουθηκότι ἄνωθεν πᾶσιν ἀκριβῶς καθεξῆς σοι γράψαι, . . .
ἵνα ἐπιγνῶς περὶ ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων τὴν ἀσφάλειαν. Examination of the Gospel shows that its author did indeed search widely and successfully. In working through the two standard collections, that is, substantially, the 'Vita' written by Mark and the 'Teachings' now designated by the letter Q, there is plenty of evidence to show that he sifted his material and went back to the oldest sources available. In not a few instances it can be shown that his divergence from the form of words given by Matthew is the result of another rendering of an Aramaic original. He also found and incorporated new material, not used by Mark or Matthew, and here again the question of translation comes forward prominently. In Palestine, the one and only land of native tradition as to the life of Jesus, it was most natural that at least a considerable portion of the earliest documents dealing with his life and work should be composed and circulated in the Aramaic language, which was the vernacular in all parts of the country, and had long been used for literary purposes. An Aramaic literature of considerable extent did grow up about Jesus and the apostles, as we know with certainty. The original Mark was composed in Aramaic, and that was also the language in which the 'Teachings' (Q) were written. The Semitic source underlying the first half of Acts was probably Aramaic. But among the 'many gospels' and briefer compositions which formed the earliest group of writings dealing with the Prophet of Nazareth and his teachings it is altogether likely that some few would have been written in Hebrew. Especially after the doctrine of Jesus *the Messiah* had been well developed, and the conviction that the lives of Jesus and John the Baptist were the true and necessary completion of the Old Testament history had taken its mighty hold on the Jewish Christians, the sacred tongue, Hebrew, could hardly fail to be used in some literary work designed to bridge the apparent gap between the two great periods. It is probable *a priori* that to any collector of traditions, discourses, and other historic material these Semitic documents would appeal as especially 'au-

thentic.' No other man of whom we have knowledge would have been so likely as the author of the Third Gospel to search out the remains of this literature and make use of what he could find. Inasmuch as the greater part of it (at least) must have been published only a few decades before the time when he wrote, it would be strange indeed if the most of the documents were not still to be had, in one form or another; the only question could be whether he was able to get at them. Luke's attitude in this matter, the measure of his success in finding 'authentic' material, the form in which the documents came into his hands, and his mode of procedure in dealing with them, are all questions of far-reaching importance for the study of the Synoptic Gospels.

The best starting point is afforded by the 'Gospel of the Infancy,' comprising the first two chapters of Luke. Here is a narrative which was certainly not invented by Luke himself. It is not based on oral tradition, in fact it has none of the characteristics of such tradition, but is from beginning to end the conception of a *littérateur* of skill and taste, who wrote in the spirit of the Old Testament narratives. The style, which is homogeneous throughout, is as far removed from that of the preceding prologue as the east is from the west. The Greek is distinctly of the 'translation' variety, altogether like that of the Greek books of Samuel, or 1 Maccabees, or Judith. It is not a matter of occasional or frequent Hebraisms, the style is one continuous Hebraism. I have already touched upon the language of these two chapters, in the preceding general discussion, reserving for this place the proof that the narrative was composed in a Semitic tongue.

Luke i. 39 reads as follows: ἀναστᾶσα δὲ Μαριάμ ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ταύταις ἐπορεύθη εἰς τὴν ὄρεινὴν μετὰ σπουδῆς εἰς πόλιν Ἰούδα, ⁴⁰ καὶ εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὸν οἶκον Ζαχαρίου, κ.τ.έ. "And Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to . . ., and entered into the house of Zachariah," etc. The phrase εἰς πόλιν Ἰούδα has been an unsolved riddle. It cannot mean 'to a city of Judah (or Judea),' which would be εἰς πόλιν τῆς Ἰουδαίας, as in verse 26 of this chapter. The only permissible rendering is 'to the city (named) Judah,' but there was no city of that name. No commentator has

been able to suggest any plausible explanation of the phrase. The Greek text shows no variation, and there is no reason to doubt its correctness. But as soon as we go back of the Greek to the underlying Semitic, the original meaning of the troublesome phrase is evident. What the author of the narrative wrote was *אֶל מְרִינַת יְהוּדָה*, and the translation should have been *eis tēn chōran tēs Ioudalas*, 'to the province of Judea.' It is the phrase which occurs, for example, in Ezra v. 8, *לִידְיוֹד מְרִינָא*, where the Greek has *eis tēn chōran tēs Ioudalas*, and in 2 Macc. i. 1, *ἐν τῇ χώρᾳ τῆς Ioudalas*; cf. also Neh. i. 3, xi. 3. That this was the intent of the author is made still more evident by the comparison of verse 65, *καὶ ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ ὀρεινῇ τῆς Ioudalas διελαλεῖτο . . . τὰ ῥήματα*, and ii. 4, *ἀνέβη δὲ καὶ Ἰωσήφ . . . ἐκ πόλεως Ναζαρέθ εἰς τὴν Ioudalaν*. In mentioning the journey from Nazareth to the neighborhood of Jerusalem, it was most natural to speak of passing *through the hill country into Judea*; thus in the book of Judith, where the narrator is dealing with this same route, he represents the high priest in Jerusalem as calling upon the people of Shechem and Samaria "to hold the passes into the hill country, because through them was the entrance into Judea," *διακατασχέιν τὰς ἀναβάσεις τῆς ὀρεινῆς, ὅτι δι' αὐτῶν ἦν ἡ εἰσόδος εἰς τὴν Ioudalaν*. The reason why the Greek of Luke i. 39 mistranslates is perfectly obvious, and a very good one: because in the first century A.D. the use of *מְרִינָה* in the signification 'province' was practically obsolete, having been supplanted by the meaning 'city.' As I have pointed out elsewhere,⁷ the uniform meaning of the word (whether Hebrew or Aramaic) in the Old Testament was 'province'; yet its use to mean 'city' was also common as early as the second century B.C., as seems to be shown by the old Greek translation (*πόλις*) in Dan. xi. 24. By the second century A.D. the meaning 'city' was the only usual one. Thus we have *מְרִינַת בְּלָקִים*, 'the city of Chalcis,' in the *Megillath Taanith*; and the translator Symmachus even 'corrects' the *χώρα* of the older Greek versions of the Old Testament to *πόλις* in 1 Kings xx. 14, Dan. viii. 2; and (presumably also his correction) in the

⁷ "Notes on the Aramaic Part of Daniel," in the Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, 15. 259 f. (1909).

conflate Hexaplar text of Neh. i. 3, *ἐν τῇ χώρᾳ ἐν τῇ πόλει*. The mistranslation in Dan. viii. 2 is a perfect parallel to the one in Luke, for the Hebrew reads בעילם המדינה, which Symmachus renders 'in the city (!) Elam.' The word continued to keep its old meaning in the phrase 'the province of Judea,' in Jewish circles, long after the beginning of the Christian era; as appears, for example, from the occurrence of the phrase in the *Midrash Echa* (see Dalman's *Dialektproben*, p. 15, line 5 from the bottom).

Taken in connection with all the other indications of translation — the glaring Hebraisms, the constant presence of a Semitic idiom underlying the Greek — this evidence of mistranslation is absolutely decisive. I believe that the original document was Hebrew, not Aramaic: for the Aramaic מדינתא יהודה would hardly have been rendered by *ἐν πόλιν Ἰουδα*. The word יהודה could not well have been misunderstood; moreover, it does not look like the name of a town, nor would it have been transliterated by *Ιουδα*. It is also true in general that the idioms underlying the Greek of the two chapters suggest classical Hebrew rather than Aramaic. The beginning of the narrative, for example, ran about as follows: היה בימי הירודס מלך יהודה כהן אחר זכריה שמו ממשמרת אביה ולו אשה מכנות אהרן ושמה אלישבע. ושניהם צדיקים לפני האלהים הלכים בכל מצות יהוה ומשפטיו תמים. ואין להם ילד כי אלישבע עקרה ושניהם באים כימים. ויהי בבהנו בסדר משמרתו לפני האלהים במשפט הכהונה וקה להקמיר. והוא בא אל היכל יהוה וכל קהל העם מתפללים בחוץ בעת הקמרת. וירא אליו מלאך יהוה וגו'. The Hebrew idioms fit the Greek exactly. Aramaic would not always be so natural; for example, in the phrase *προβεβηκότες ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις αὐτῶν*, in verse 7. If the original had תמים at the end of verse 6, as seems very plausible, then it may well be that the idiom intended was the one which is found in Ps. xv. 2, lxxxiv. 12; Pr. xxviii. 18, etc., i.e. (ירד) . . . הלכים, the adjective being really singular instead of plural.

⁸ This is pretty certainly the verb rendered by *ἔλαχε*. See Mishna, *Tamid* 5, 4, where the technical phrase occurs: מי שזכה בקמרת, "Whoever obtained by lot the duty of offering incense," and compare the common use of the word to mean 'obtain (by lot), attain,' etc. I am indebted for this suggestion to Prof. G. F. Moore, who remarks that the tract *Tamid* is one of the oldest in the Mishna, and the terminology doubtless much older still.

There are other evident mistranslations in the Greek of this document, aside from the one in i. 39. In i. 59-64 are recounted the marvels which attended the circumcision of the child John. The narrator then adds that fear fell upon all the neighbors, and that these things were talked about in all that region, men saying: "What is to become of this boy, *for the hand* (*i.e.* the miraculous power) *of the Lord is with him!*" But our Greek translation has made the astonished exclamation consist only of the question, "What is to become of this boy?" while the added reason, that the power of Yahwe was shown in these miracles which were "talked about," is now changed into a general remark made by the narrator himself. The original had simply *כי יד יהוה עמו*, and the rendering should have been: "for the hand of the Lord *is* with him," *ἐστί* instead of *ἦν*.

The zeugma in verse 64, *ἀνεψύχθη δὲ τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ καὶ ἡ γλῶσσα αὐτοῦ*, 'his mouth *and* his tongue were opened,' does not point to any similar awkwardness in the original, for the very same verb, *נפתח*, would regularly be used either of 'opening' the mouth or of 'setting free' the tongue.

In ii. 1 we read: *ἐξῆλθεν δόγμα . . . ἀπογράφεσθαι πᾶσαν τὴν οἰκουμένην*. The original was of course *כל הארץ*, and it probably meant 'all the land' (of Palestine), not 'all the world.'

ii. 11 contains an obvious error of translation, in the words *ὃς ἐστὶν χριστὸς κύριος*. The Hebrew had *משיח יהוה*, 'Yahwe's Anointed,' and the rendering in Greek should have been *χριστὸς κυρίου* or *ὁ χριστὸς τοῦ κυρίου* (cf. vs. 26).

The hymns which lie imbedded in the narrative — and never existed apart from it — sound distinctly more like Hebrew than like Aramaic. The poems most nearly akin to them, in the Hebrew literature with which we happen to be acquainted, are the so-called Psalms of Solomon, which were written near the middle of the last century B.C. Like the best of those, the hymns in Luke are fresh and vigorous compositions,⁹ which in their original form must have been

⁹ The fact that the language "consists largely of reminiscences" is not a blemish. The devotional poetry of any religion of long standing must use familiar phrases; it could not otherwise have its intended effect. Moreover, in this case the aim of emphasizing the messianic idea necessitated an especially full and suggestive use of the messianic phrases of the Old Testament.

fine specimens of Hebrew poetry. The metrical structure — lines of three rhythmic beats — can generally be recognized; indeed, wherever the style is lofty and the language poetic the same regular rhythm returns, as in any late Hebrew composition. Thus, for example, i. 13-17, 30-33, ii. 34 f. In ii. 14 we seem to have a fine example of a rhymed tristich:

כבוד ליהוה במקדש
ועל הארץ שלום
באנשים רצון¹⁰

Some of the idioms which appear most barbarous in the Greek belong properly to the high style of Hebrew psalmody. A case of this sort is the line *עשה חיל בורעו* in i. 51 (already mentioned). Another is in i. 78, *διὰ σπλάγχνα ἐλέους θεοῦ ἡμῶν*, *ברחמי קסד אלהינו*, 'through the gracious compassion of our God.' In all these poetical passages the translation follows the original word by word, and clause by clause, as is the case also in the Greek Old Testament. It is therefore all but impossible to suppose that *ἀφόβως* in i. 74 was connected with *λατρεύειν* (vs. 75) in the *original* poem. The Hebrew had something like this:

לתת לנו לא תרדה | מיר איכים מצלים
לעבד אותו בתמים | וצדק לפניו כל ימינו

'To give us *release from fear*, rescued from the power of our foes, that we might serve him in holiness, and in righteousness before him, all our days.' The poetic compound *לא-חרדה*, 'fearlessness,' naturally gave trouble to the translator.

A very important fact to be noticed, in connection with the Greek of this 'Gospel of the Infancy,' is the extent to which it exhibits the language of Luke¹¹ himself. His vocabulary and style have been studied very carefully by many scholars, and the main results are familiar. Whoever

¹⁰ Granting the fact of translation (and it must be granted), the evidence here in favor of *εὐδοκία*, as against *εὐδοκίας*, will probably be convincing to scholars in proportion as they have studied the details of Hebrew prosody.

¹¹ I use the name merely for convenience, without intending to express an opinion as to the authorship of the Third Gospel.

examines such classified lists as those in Plummer's commentary, pp. li-lxiii, for example, will see that the evidence of Luke's authorship of the Greek of chapters i and ii is quite decisive. Both number and nature of the characteristic words and usages are such as to leave no room for doubt. As Plummer says (p. lxix): "The peculiarities and characteristics of Luke's style and diction . . . run through our Gospel from end to end. . . . *In the first two chapters they are perhaps somewhat more frequent than elsewhere.*"¹² Observe also the two passages from these chapters which he has printed on page lxx, with indication of the words and phrases which are more or less characteristic of the author of the Gospel. Yet this narrative has not been worked over or rewritten by Luke; on the contrary, it bears with especial plainness the marks of a very close rendering; as Plummer observes (pp. xlix f.), no part of the Gospel is more uncompromisingly Hebraistic than the narrative of these two opening chapters. The only natural conclusion that can be drawn, and the one to which every indication seems to point, while there is really nothing of importance that can be said against it, is this, that *the author of the Third Gospel himself translated the Narrative of the Infancy from Hebrew into Greek.* The manner of the beginning of this Gospel, then, affords an interesting parallel to that of the beginning of 2 Maccabees, already referred to, inasmuch as the author of the latter book begins with a fairly close translation, made by himself,¹³ of certain Aramaic documents, at the conclusion of which he proceeds at once with his own fluent and elegant Greek, the contrast being quite as striking as that in Luke's Gospel.

Having thus established the fact that Luke was really successful in his search for original Semitic material, and

¹² The italics are mine.

¹³ See my demonstration of this fact in the article "Die Briefe 2 Makk. 1:1-2:18" in the *Zeitschr. für die altt. Wissensch.*, vol. 20 (1900), pp. 239 f., supplemented by my Notes on the Aramaic Part of Daniel, p. 254. In my article in the ZATW, I argued from the phrase *ἐν κοιλῳματι φρέατος τάξιν ἔχοντος ἀνδρὸν*, in 1:19. I could have made out a still stronger case if I had known then, what I have observed since, that the very same circumlocution occurs in 9:18, where "he wrote a supplicating letter," is expressed by *ἔγραψεν ἐπιστολὴν ἔχουσαν ἱκετηρίας τάξιν*.

that he himself translated at least a part of it into Greek, we have gained important standing ground. First of all, the question of the source used by him in the earlier part of the book of Acts takes on a new interest. The evidence of his handiwork is practically the same as in the first two chapters of the Gospel; the Greek is distinctly translation-Greek, and it contains a convincing proportion of Lukan words and turns of speech. Here, again, the appearance is *not* that of a Greek text 'worked over' by the evangelist; there is only one plausible explanation, namely, that he himself was the author of the translation. The document which he translated appears to have belonged to that earliest stratum of Palestinian Christian literature which was written and circulated in the Aramaic tongue, and had for its subject the life and teachings of Jesus and the beginnings of the Christian church. It is just such a document as we should have expected Luke to find and use.

The problems of translation connected with Luke's use of his two main sources, Q and Mark, are much more complex; this is not the place to attempt to examine them closely. The two minor sources just considered, namely, the Gospel of the Infancy and the story of the first work of the Apostles, presumably lay before Luke each in a single recension; at all events, we have no evidence that either of them was current in more than one form. But the case of the two major sources was altogether different. Wherever there was a Christian community, they were read, and recited from memory, and copied for further distribution. In the Oriental church, both Semitic and Greek recensions were in circulation. It was in the nature of the case that the latter should be more numerous than the former, even in Palestine. The true centre of gravity of the Christian church was at first in the towns and villages of Judea and Galilee, but it remained there only a very short time. The great cities of the neighboring lands took over the tradition, and Greek became the language of the Eastern church not only where it was the vernacular, but also all through Syria and Palestine, from Antioch to Egypt. Jew and Christian went each his own way, and their separateness from each other was emphasized. The Christian Aramaic literature which grew

up in the first century soon dwindled. It is a question of very great interest, in what form or forms Luke found Q and Mark. After these two all-important documents had been translated, and were widely current in various Greek recensions, as well as in more than one variety of combination, it was a matter of course that copies in Aramaic, as the original language, should have been especially treasured, in the places where they were still in existence. It can hardly be doubted that both the Aramaic Mark¹⁴ and the Aramaic Q were still to be had in the first decades of the second century, though it may well be doubted whether they were to be found in many places. An evangelist who really took his task seriously, who knew that there were many accounts of Jesus and wished to compile the best possible one, who thought it worth his while to look for the most authentic material, could not fail at least to become aware of the existence of these original documents. Luke was such an evangelist, and was also one who (as we now know) did actually collect and translate Semitic sources. We should certainly suppose, *a priori*, that he would obtain and make use of both Mark and Q in Aramaic.

Another complicating factor in the problem is the Gospel of Matthew. The Teachings of Jesus (Q) had already been combined, by Matthew, with the story of his career given by Mark. The combination was a most important one, and could not fail to be extremely popular; the evangelist who could hope to surpass it would need to be able to convict its author of misuse of his material, or to bring forward new and important matter of his own collecting. Luke appears to have felt able to do both of these things.

The Third Gospel was composed in Greek. In incorporating the material contained in Mark, Luke of course used the current Greek version, though giving it some editorial revision, as was natural. As a basis for such revision he had first of all (we may presume) a copy of the Gospel in Aramaic, and in addition to this, material derived from some of the

¹⁴ Not the Aramaic sources of Mark; we have no evidence of any such sources. The entire Gospel was originally composed and published in Aramaic. It was very soon rendered into Greek, and our text is a somewhat "augmented and improved" revision of the translation.

"many" gospels whose existence he mentions in his preface.¹⁵ In making use of the Gospel of Matthew, it is not to be doubted that he had before him a Greek text very similar to our own; on the other hand, it is a debatable question whether he may not also have had access to this Gospel in a Semitic form. It is all but universally agreed, at the present day, that the old tradition asserting that the First Gospel was composed in 'Hebrew' (presumably meaning Aramaic) was mistaken. I confess that the evidence seems to me to support the tradition rather than to disparage it, and I cannot see the force of the arguments to the contrary which are commonly advanced. From the first words of the opening chapter, Βίβλος γενέσεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, on to the end of the book it is all translation-Greek. Plummer's Commentary on Matthew (1910), p. viii, has the following: "The First Gospel is evidently not a translation. . . . Whoever wrote it took not only the substance of the Second Gospel, but the Greek phraseology of it, showing clearly that he worked in Greek. It is incredible that he translated the Greek of Mark into Hebrew, and that then some one translated Matthew's Hebrew back into Greek that is almost the same as Mark's." This is further 'illustrated' by the case of certain passages which were rendered from English into French, and then (by another translator) back into very different English. But such argument as this hardly needs answer. The fact that Mark's phraseology is adopted means, of course, that the author (whether translator or not) of the Greek Matthew either knew the Greek Mark by heart or else had it open before him when he wrote. The ancient translators always worked in that way, using older versions whenever they could. We have abundant illustration, both in the versions of the Old Testament and elsewhere. In modern times, moreover, the same thing is likely to be true. In 1894, for example, Mrs. A. S. Lewis published A Translation of the Four Gospels from the Syriac of the Sinaitic Palimpsest. The first glance sufficed to show to the reader that this translation used everywhere the words of the English version of 1611, and

¹⁵ We have no reason to suppose, however, that these minor sources contributed anything of importance to his criticism of Mark.

closer examination showed that the language of this 'Authorized Version' was retained even in a multitude of cases where it did not quite agree with the Syriac which it professed to render.¹⁶ The translator was attached to the wording of the standard version, and so also were the most of those who were likely to use her translation. It is for a precisely similar reason that the citations from the Old Testament in our Synoptic Gospels are given quite frequently in the wording of the Septuagint, a fact which has been generally regarded as evidence that Greek was the original language of the Gospels. The translator of the Gospel wished to confirm its readers in the faith, not to stagger them. Their Bible was the Greek Old Testament, not the Hebrew, and for them all and for all purposes the Greek form of words was the right one. All these passages had been translated, centuries before, by inspired men, who had faithfully followed the original. In Semitic gospels, written for those who used the Hebrew Old Testament, the words of the citations ought to correspond to the current Hebrew text; but not so in gospels intended for the great Hellenistic world. Schmiedel, in his article "Gospels" in the *Encyclopædia Biblica*, § 130, argues against a Semitic original for Matthew on the ground of certain passages "which would not have been available had the Hebrew original been followed." Only the mistranslation 'virgin,' he asserts, made it possible to adduce Is. vii. 14 in Matt. i. 22 f. But this is an amazing assertion. Taking the passage in Isaiah just as it is rendered in any modern critical commentary, it would still be precisely the sort of passage that Matthew desired, much more striking and more convincing than the most of the other quotations which he uses for the same purpose. What is more, the birth of Jesus as narrated in the Gospel of Matthew in its original form was not a *virgin* birth at all (on this point see further below). Schmiedel then argues from the quotation of Is. xl. 3 in Matt. iii. 3, saying that it could have been made only by one who connected the words 'in the wilderness' with the preceding rather than with the following words, whereas "in Isaiah the crier is of course not in the

¹⁶ As is well known, Mrs. Lewis's translation has since then been very carefully revised by her.

wilderness." But this argument shatters on the fact that Matthew and his contemporaries could not foresee the discoveries of our modern commentators; the Jewish tradition has always connected במדבר only with the preceding words, and for all the native interpreters the voice was one *crying in the wilderness*.¹⁷ The two remaining passages mentioned by Schmiedel, Matt. xxi. 9 and xxi. 16, make no difficulty whatever. In Ps. viii. 3, *alvos* was a very natural Jewish interpretation of צו; cf. the Targum, Greek, and Syriac renderings of the same word in Ps. lxxviii. 35. On the 'Hosanna' passage see Wellhausen's *Marcus*, p. 93. Neither the dative τῷ υἱῷ Δαυὶδ nor the ἐν τοῖς ὑψίστοις is difficult of explanation. Schmiedel himself remarks (*ibid.*) that the Gospel of Matthew is the one in which the citations from the Old Testament most often follow the Hebrew rather than the Greek, and that its author "could not have given such quotations as, for example, ii. 15, 23, viii. 17, xxvii. 9 f. after the LXX at all." Highly significant admissions! More than all this, the framework, connecting fabric, and merely embellishing matter of the book as we have it (and not merely the underlying sources) give plain evidence of translation. A typical case of the sort is found in xxviii. 1, parallel to Mark xvi. 1 f. and Luke xxiv. 1. Several scholars have pointed out the fact that the monstrous 'Greek' in Matthew, ὑπὲρ δὲ σαββάτων, τῇ ἐπιφωσκούσῃ εἰς μὴν σαββάτων, is merely one of the painfully close translations with which we are familiar. The original was באפוקי שבתא נגד' חר בשבא, that is, 'after the Sabbath, in the night introducing the first day of the week.'¹⁸ The evidence of translation is perfect, for the Aramaic phrases are the ones regularly used, the Greek rendering fits them exactly, and no Greek author could ever have devised such a form of words. Now these phrases in the Aramaic of the First Gospel are a part of the evangelist's own expansion of the

¹⁷ In my own opinion, this traditional reading is the correct one.

¹⁸ The evidence has been set forth most fully and convincingly by Professor Moore, in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 26. 323-329 (1905). Moore also refers to Geiger, and points out the fact that Jerome was the first to suspect imperfect translation in this passage. See also the reference to Professor Kennett in Wright's *Synopsis of the Gospels in Greek*, 3d ed., p. 171.

Mark narrative — as he constantly expands it and embroiders upon it. This would be by far the most plausible theory on general grounds; compare also the *λευκὸν ὥς χιῶν* of xxviii. 3 with *λευκά ὥς τὸ φῶς* and *ὥς ὁ ἥλιος* in xvii. 2 (also embellishments by Matthew). It is very probable that another mistranslation is to be found in close proximity to the one just considered. In xxvii. 62 the narrator tells how on the day — or, perhaps better, on *the evening* — preceding the resurrection, the priests and Pharisees came to Pilate to urge him to secure the tomb and set a watch. The Greek has: *τῇ δὲ ἐπαύριον, ἥτις ἐστὶν μετὰ τὴν παρασκευήν*, and commentators exclaim over this “singular expression.” Some have queried whether it may not have been a circumlocution adopted in order to avoid using the word ‘Sabbath’; but as Plummer (Comm., p. 408) observes, *τῇ δὲ ἐπαύριον*, ‘on the morrow,’ would be quite sufficient in itself. It may be conjectured that the original had: *וליומא דמחר בתר ערובתא*, which should have been rendered: ‘Now on the morrow, *after sunset*, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered together,’ etc. The narrator represented this as occurring *not* on the Sabbath day, but just after its close. The rendering in our Greek Matthew is the only natural one, however, for (judging from what little we know of the history of the word) the use of *ערובתא* in its original signification, ‘sunset,’ must have been very nearly obsolete at this time. This passage, also, belongs to one of Matthew’s own additions. A very frequently occurring indication of translation, found in all parts of the Gospel, is the word *τότε* used to continue a narrative. It could only be the rendering of the similarly used Aramaic *אז*. Because of the evidence of this nature, the amount of which could be multiplied, it seems to me that the old tradition, that the whole Gospel of Matthew was originally composed in Aramaic, still easily holds the field.

Nevertheless, I do not believe that we need to take into account the possibility that Luke made use of the Aramaic Matthew. It seems plain that the *Greek* Matthew influenced him; but it is hardly less evident that he regarded that Gospel as of secondary importance, not by any means to be used as a source in making his own compilation. I think we may see plainly some reasons why Luke would

have felt justified in leaving Matthew at one side — as he certainly seems to have done.

First of all, he had in his own hands Matthew's two main sources, Mark and Q, and could see that his predecessor had dealt with both of them arbitrarily and not always wisely. Matthew's aim had been only that of an evangelist; Luke's was also that of a historian, as he says in his prologue. Mark's *Life of Jesus* had provided the chronological order of all the main events; Matthew had greatly changed this order, while using Mark's own material and simply transposing it — an unwarranted proceeding, from Luke's point of view. In his use of the Teachings, also, Matthew had dismembered and redistributed according to his own preference. In assigning the discourses to certain definite occasions he had not always achieved good results, and his new combinations of Sayings were sometimes not convincing. Moreover, in using both Mark and Q, Matthew had expanded and embellished very extensively, not merely changing the wording of the narrative, but also adding details and incidents in abundance. On the other hand, many incidents and details, and even whole scenes, recorded by Mark, were entirely omitted by Matthew. This embellishment was a purely literary proceeding, which was not only allowable according to the ideas of the time, but could have been taken for granted. Luke himself of course felt free to deal with his sources in this way;¹⁹ but here, obviously, was another reason why he could give little weight to Matthew's Gospel *as a source for his own*.

¹⁹ The fact that Luke conceived his task as that of a 'historian' does not at all imply that his aims and methods were like those of a modern writer of history. For a brief discussion of this subject with some illustration from Jewish literature I may refer to my *Ezra Studies*, pp. 145-150. So far as we are able to judge, the most serious biographers and chroniclers generally felt free to select what material they preferred, omitting whatever they did not care to use, and saw no objection to increasing the interest, or the parenetic value, of the work by adding any amount of lively or instructive detail. Their aim was like that of the modern painter: to give a true picture in its impression as a whole, faithfulness in minutiae being a matter of comparatively small importance. All this is true of every one of our four Gospels. Wellhausen, *Einleitung*, 2d ed., p. 77, writes: "Markus wollte ohne Zweifel die ganze Tradition aufzeichnen, mit den Erzählungen über Jesus zugleich auch seine Worte. Dass er was ihm davon zugänglich war nicht vollständig aufnahm, dass er was schon früher gebucht war ausliess, kann unmöglich angenommen werden." I confess that I am unable to feel so sure of this.

Again, the fact is patent that the author of the Third Gospel, so far as the material — or the fashion of it — is his own, occupies a theological point of view which is more advanced than that of the author of the First Gospel. There had been development in both doctrine and usage of the church; new conceptions made their way to the front, and what had been tentative hypothesis now became recognized dogma.²⁰ This fact is illustrated in numerous places where Luke has revised the material already used by Mark or Matthew, as many commentators have remarked. One very important illustration, however, has not received the attention which it deserves; namely, the doctrine of the virgin birth. According to the original text of Matthew, both in Aramaic and in Greek, the birth of Jesus was not birth from a virgin. The Lewis (also called the Sinaitic) Syriac version has preserved the original readings in Matt. i. 16-25, as any careful study of the evidence shows with certainty.²¹ ("Jacob begat Joseph; *Joseph . . . begat Jesus,*" vs. 16. "She shall bear *to thee* a son, and *thou shalt call* his name Jesus," vs. 21. Joseph, awaking from the vision (on the night of his marriage), "*took his wife,* and she bore *to him* a son, and *he called* his name Jesus," vs. 24, 25.) The conception of the child is clearly and consistently represented as supernatural, the Holy Spirit having anticipated Joseph, yet the latter is quite as truly the father, the two elements coöperating. The child had thus three parents. At the time when Matthew wrote, the doctrine of the supernatural birth of Jesus had already taken a firm hold among his followers. The theory of the mystery embodied in the First Gospel (in its original form) is a very natural one, not a whit more difficult to faith than the later theory of the virgin birth, and *incomparably better suited to the Jewish doctrine of the Messiah*. The genealogical table given in Matt. i. 2-16 really had great significance, before the text of the chapter had been tampered with. But at the time when the Third

²⁰ This does not by any means imply a considerable lapse of time. Development of doctrine must have been extremely rapid in just that period. A score of years would more than suffice for all the difference in this regard between Matthew and Luke.

²¹ And this version is a faithful translation of a Greek text.

Gospel was written, the doctrine of the virgin birth was taking possession of the church, and had already been given literary embodiment in the magnificent composition which Luke adopted and translated. It was irreconcilable with the account given by Matthew, and this fact of itself would be a sufficient reason why Luke would wish to leave the First Gospel at one side, not making his own to rest upon it.²² This intention also appears in the remarkable genealogical table of Joseph which he himself gives (certainly his own composition) in iii. 23-38. I do not believe that this table would ever have been made, but for the corresponding one in Matthew. All those who had used Matthew's Gospel must have been impressed with the table, for it was a conspicuous thing. Luke makes it more complete, carrying it all the way from Joseph to Adam, and at the same time makes it completely harmless, removing it to some distance from the story of the Nativity and introducing it with the significant *ὡς ἐνομιζέτο*. We may regard it as quite probable, then, that Luke did not make use of the Aramaic Matthew. His use of the Gospel even in its Greek form appears to have been hardly more than occasional and incidental. He had Matthew's sources, which suited his purpose much better.

In a considerable number of passages found in the sections derived by Luke from Mark or Q, there is evidence of variant translation from the Aramaic original. This generally does not mean *mistranslation*, but it frequently means a rendering so awkward as to arouse a suspicion which can be confirmed by comparing the parallel passage or passages and reconstructing the wording of the original text. It would be a rare thing for one of these translators to misunderstand the Aramaic which lay before him; but on the other hand, his 'school-boy rendering' might easily be such as to twist the Greek tongue out of all shape, or even to obscure the sense effectually. It might in very rare cases be possible even to find satisfactory evidence of variation in the Aramaic

²² For a like reason, those who handed down the Greek text of the Gospels found themselves compelled to make harmonistic changes in Matt. i. 16-25. The history of these changes can be traced with perfect clearness in the Old Latin version, certain Greek cursives of the Ferrar group, the Curetonian Syriac, the Peshitto, and our 'standard' Greek text.

texts which were rendered by successive translators, but the evidence justifying such a conclusion would have to be very strong and unequivocal indeed. In the New Testament as in the Old, the Greek phrase which seems clearly to be derived from a new Semitic original is in nine cases out of ten really a rendering of the text already known.

The principal fact which must all the time be kept in sight, in attempting to go behind the traditional reading to its Semitic source, is the varied process of change to which these Greek texts have been subject, ever since they were first written down. The translator himself generally²³ stuck very close to his original. Yet the same man *incorporating* a similar translation might feel free to alter it arbitrarily to some extent. Luke rendered the Hebrew Gospel of the Nativity with the most minute faithfulness, as a close study of it shows,²⁴ and he doubtless would always have translated faithfully; but Luke the compiler, taking over such a translation from another, would have been quite likely to give it some editorial revision, especially if there were other translations or parallel texts which he could compare. In general, translation-Greek loses some of its roughness and barbarity in passing through editorial hands, and some illustration of this fact can be seen in our Gospel texts. Wellhausen's *Einleitung*, 2d ed., p. 49, says in regard to the sections taken over from Mark by Matthew and Luke: "Namentlich bei Matthäus unterscheiden sich diese durch ihre glattere Sprache einigermaßen von den nicht aus Markus stammenden Lehrstücken." That is, the translator of Matthew's Gospel not only employed the Greek translation of Mark, in all the sections derived from that Gospel, but also slightly improved the diction and style of the Greek. It was altogether natural that he should do both of these

²³ But not always. You must know your translator before you can draw any safe conclusion where the variation from the original is not very great. And it often happens, in the Old Testament versions, that the interpreter who has been reproducing his original word by word in the most slavish fashion, suddenly, and for no apparent reason, gives us a paraphrase, or inserts interpretative words, or condenses slightly.

²⁴ Of course the reason for the appearance of an especially close translation in the first two chapters of Luke, and for the unusually uncouth Greek, is to be found in the large amount of poetry which the document contains.

things. In pp. 49-57 Wellhausen describes the material changes made by Matthew and Luke in the tradition derived from Mark. His characterization will be recognized as a true one, although in single instances the observed change may be due to other editorial hands or to the influence of other documents, Semitic or Greek, of which we now have no knowledge. In Luke's Gospel, it is certainly the case that at least considerable portions of the new material are translations from Semitic originals. Through how many hands they may have passed, we do not know. Where the form of words is plainly Luke's own, it may be the case either that he himself is translating, or that he is revising a rendering made by some one else. If in any instance it happens that the marks of his own hand are abundant while at the same time the rendering is so close as to be noticeably awkward, the presumption strongly favors the conclusion that he himself was the translator. Where the material is not peculiar to Luke among the synoptists, a good many different possibilities have to be taken into account. Such a document as Q, containing mainly the Sayings of Jesus, must have been a great favorite, and we should take for granted a number of recensions, both in Aramaic and in Greek. From the popular character of the compilation, and the freedom with which it would therefore be handled in transmission, we could be certain that the texts in circulation would differ from one another very considerably. How would such a writer as Luke proceed, in making his selection and compilation? Of course judgments as to authenticity and relative attestation were ordinarily far beyond his power. He and his contemporaries had no longer the means of deciding such questions. The Greek Mark, both separate and as incorporated by the Greek translator of Matthew, had already the authority of a standard document among those for whom Luke wrote, so his extensive use of it was a matter of course. In the case of the source Q, on the other hand, it is plain that there was no standard recension. In editing the greater part of the material for his Gospel, then, Luke was left to his own criteria, the nature of which we can imagine in part. Semitic documents would be valued higher than Greek. In the case of various Greek

recensions, translation-Greek would be given the preference, other things being equal. Such forms of the narrative or discourse as agreed best with the picture of Jesus and his disciples which the evangelist had formed would of course be chosen. The story of the nativity and childhood of Jesus given by Matthew, for example, could not be given any consideration in the face of the Hebrew narrative of the virgin birth, which must have seemed to Luke to be the only true account. We should suppose, also, that the wish to preserve *noteworthy* variations in the tradition would have had its influence with the evangelist. On such and such an occasion Jesus had used a certain form of words which as handed down in the Semitic original might be understood, and in fact had been understood, in more than one way. Matthew or Mark, or both, had already incorporated one interpretation; would it not be well to preserve the other, if only for the sake of caution? It is possible that this consideration was the source of some readings — or translations — in the Third Gospel. It seems plain that Luke took it for granted that Mark and Matthew would continue in circulation side by side with his own Gospel. If he had not believed this, he would certainly not have omitted so much of Mark's material. He criticised what lay before him, to the best of his ability, aiming to cancel variant accounts of the same occurrence, to omit disturbing elements, to improve the arrangement of the matter, and to revise and expand where such revision seemed to be needed. Then, with the addition of all the new material which he had collected, he built up a Gospel which must have seemed to him far superior to the others. But it is beyond all question that he would have proceeded very differently if he had wished or expected to *supplant* Mark and Matthew.²⁵

²⁵ Luke probably had reason to believe, for instance, that the parables in Matt. xxiv. 43-xxv. 46 were secondary, namely a purely literary expansion, not a genuine record of Jesus' own words. He had no need to be anxious about the matter, however, since the discourses in question had already been given a permanent place in the Gospel of his predecessor. But we may be pretty sure that if he had found similar matter of equally doubtful authenticity, clothed in a Semitic dress and otherwise harmonious with his own idea of the character of the Messiah, which had *not* been given a place in one of the standard collections, he would have felt it to be his duty to incorporate it in his own work.

In the sections where Mark is used, or where portions of Q already adopted by Matthew are incorporated, and it is therefore possible to mark off clearly the portions of the text which belong only to the Third Gospel, it is not always easy to decide what part, if any, of the new matter is the property of the evangelist himself. The question of translation must also frequently be taken into account, for not a few of the passages which have only the significance of introductory formulæ or slight expansions, and might therefore most naturally be regarded as additions freely made by Luke himself, are such glaring specimens of translation-Greek as to give us pause. To take at random the first instance which presents itself: In Luke v. 17 ff. the story of the paralytic is introduced in these words: *καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν μιᾷ τῶν ἡμερῶν καὶ αὐτὸς ἦν διδάσκων, καὶ ἦσαν καθήμενοι Φαρισαῖοι καὶ νομοδιδάσκαλοι οἱ ἦσαν ἐληλυθότες ἐκ πάσης κώμης τῆς Γαλιλαίας καὶ Ἰουδαίας καὶ Ἱερουσαλήμ· καὶ δύναμις Κυρίου ἦν εἰς τὸ ἰᾶσθαι αὐτόν. καὶ ἰδοὺ ἄνδρες φέροντες ἐπὶ κλίνης ἄνθρωπον ὃς ἦν παραλελυμένος, καὶ ἐζήτουν αὐτὸν εἰσενεγκεῖν καὶ θεῖναι αὐτὸν ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ. καὶ μὴ εὗρόντες ποίας εἰσενέγκωσιν αὐτόν, κ.τ.λ.* Nearly every word of this is peculiar to the Third Gospel; moreover, there are here a few phrases and constructions which at once remind us of Luke. The Semitic idioms are evident enough, still, it is conceivable that idioms of this nature, such as *καὶ ἰδοὺ* and *ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ*, should have been adopted by a Greek author in his own editorial additions to narrative already rendered into the translator's jargon. But to this must be added at once that the Semitisms are too numerous, and in many passages too awkward, to make the explanation a plausible one. They are merely obtrusive, not at all necessary. Employed as they are, there is no point of view from which they can be called a credit to the author of the Third Gospel, if he originated them, and they might easily arouse the suspicion that he wished to make his own additions appear to come from Semitic documents. It is not simply in the padding and patching of the Gospel that they appear in Luke's handwriting, as it were; they are equally noticeable in the large blocks of narrative which he has taken over from sources unknown to us. Thus at the beginning of chapter 19: *Καὶ εἰσελθὼν*

διήρχετο τὴν Ἱερειχώ. καὶ ἰδοὺ ἀνὴρ ὀνόματι καλούμενος Ζακχαῖος, καὶ αὐτὸς ἦν ἀρχιτελώνης καὶ αὐτὸς πλούσιος. καὶ ἐξήτει ἰδεῖν τὸν Ἰησοῦν τίς ἐστίν, καὶ οὐκ ἠδύνατο ἀπὸ τοῦ ὄχλου διὰ τὴν ἡλικίαν μικρὸς ἦν. καὶ προδραμὼν εἰς τὸ ἔμπροσθεν ἀνέβη ἐπὶ συκομορέαν ἵνα ἴδῃ αὐτόν, ὅτι ἐκείνης ἡμέλλεν διέρχεσθαι. Here is the same writer again; compare, *e.g.*, the ἐκείνης (ὁδοῦ) with the ποίας of v. 19. There is also the same heaping of Semitic idioms, and this time, at least, it ought to be evident that Luke is not responsible for them. Such gratuitous monstrosities as the repetition of καὶ αὐτός and the use of ἀπὸ before τοῦ ὄχλου, for instance, would be either intolerable mockery or something worse, coming from a writer of known skill and taste. Luke is translating; there is no other theory equally plausible. He has done throughout his whole Gospel what we found him doing in the first two chapters. It was his purpose to base all his work on "authentic" original documents. He searched out the native (*i.e.* Semitic) material,²⁶ and translated the greater part of it himself. In his renderings of the new material he seems usually to have followed the original quite closely, though he may have used to some extent translations made by others who are unknown to us.

His mode of procedure in dealing with the material already incorporated by Matthew is well illustrated in the Lord's Prayer, xi. 2-4 (Matt. vi. 9-13). Matthew had given this in what was plainly an expanded form. Luke's Aramaic text had the older form, something like the following:

אָבא יתְקַדֵּשׁ שְׁמְךָ
תַּאֲתָא מַלְכוּתְךָ
לְחַמְנָא תְּדִירָא הֵב לָנָא
וְשַׁבְק לָנָא חוֹבֵינוּ
כִּי אֲנַחְנָא שֶׁבְקִין לְחַיֵּינוּ
וְלֹא תַעֲלֵנָא לְנִסְיוֹנָא

In rendering this, Luke retained almost everywhere the words of the Greek Matthew:

²⁶ Especially after the work of Mark and Matthew, *only* Semitic documents could claim to embody the old tradition. Of course all the educated knew perfectly well that the Greek of those two Gospels was translation-Greek.

Aramaic adjective had been ܐܡܝܢ, as in the Old Syriac, the translator would have rendered by some other and more familiar Greek word, for he would have been allowed a rather wide choice; the word ܐܡܝܢ kept him within narrow limits. The meaning is, then, 'Give us the bread for our constantly (*i.e.* daily) recurring need.' The translation in Matthew, 'Give us our *ever-returning* bread,' is a very close one; Luke's 'Give us our *daily* bread' is a little more free, but a better rendering nevertheless. His text originally had simply this: τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν δίδου ἡμῖν τὸ καθ' ἡμέραν, but no harmonizer of the Greek Gospels could permit the unusual and interesting τὸν ἐπιούσιον to be left out in this way! If the word ܡܕܪ stood here in the Gospel of the Hebrews, we then have excellent evidence that that Gospel was translated from the Greek. ܡܕܪ could not possibly have stood in the original, but would have been a most natural translation of ἐπιούσιος, making immediate connection with the phrase ἡ ἐπιούσα (ἡμέρα). As for Matthew's σήμερον, it was doubtless present in the Aramaic text of the First Gospel, but was a part of the expansion which the whole prayer has received there.

Added to all the uncertainty of translation, redaction, occasional correction and conflation, and the like, is that which is due to careless transmission of the text by copyists. Our tradition has not been infallible, and even readings which are fully attested may be wrong. I have no more doubt, for instance, that in Mark xii. 4 ἐκεφαλῶσαν should be ἐκολαφισαν²⁷ than I have that in 1 Macc. v. 25 ἀπήντησαν should be ἡσπάσαντο (cf. vii. 29, 33; Exod. xviii. 7; Judg. xviii. 15), or that in 1 Macc. xi. 23 ἐκέλευσεν should be κατέλυσεν, or that καθαρῶν in Judith x. 5 should be κριθίνων (cf. Judg. vii. 13; 2 Kings iv. 42, etc.), though in all of these cases the manuscript attestation is complete, and we no longer have the original to compare. In John viii. 25, instead of the impossible τὴν ἀρχὴν ὅτι καὶ λαλῶ ὑμῖν; the original reading must have been τὴν ἀρχὴν ἔτι καὶ λαλῶ ὑμῖν, "I am still only in the very beginning of what I have to

²⁷ The first step in the corruption was probably the careless writing ἐκοφαλῖσαν, whence the rest followed naturally.

say to you," a reading which both suits the sense of the whole passage and also resembles the language used in other parts of the Fourth Gospel. In Hebrews xi. 37 we have a conflate text — though here, again, the manuscript support is unimpeachable. The word *ἐπειράσθησαν*, which is quite out of place here (miserably weak, coming between "sawn asunder" and "slain with the sword"!), is merely an old variant reading of *ἐπρίσθησαν* (written *ἐπρεισθησαν*). It is not likely, indeed, that there are many instances of this sort in our Gospels; still, whoever wishes to argue from variant Greek readings to diverse translations must always bear in mind the possibility of a faulty traditional text.²⁸ Generally speaking, there is no kind of textual criticism so precarious as argument from translation, even where the text cannot be doubted. The varying forms of the same tradition are usually due to free reproduction in which the important thing was felt to be the substance of the narrative or discourse, not the form of words. The character of these variants has been admirably summarized by Wellhausen in his *Einleitung*, 2d ed., p. 3.

I give in the following a few more specimens of passages, taken chiefly from the Third Gospel, in which the hypothesis of awkward or faulty translation seems to be the best way of explaining our Greek text.

Luke xi. 39-41 (Matt. xxiii. 25 f.). — The passage in which the Pharisees are said to "cleanse the outside of the cup and platter." As is well known, Wellhausen has proposed to explain the difference here between Matthew and Luke by supposing that the former rendered 'רַץ, 'cleanse,' while the latter rendered 'תָּן, 'give alms' (*Das Evangelium Lucae*, p. 61). Aside from the improbability of such a use of 'תָּן in the time of the evangelists, it seems to me that there is an easier way of accounting for the variation. As for the Aramaic usage supposed by Wellhausen: In Jewish literature the noun כְּוִתָּא, כְּוִתָּא means 'righteousness, purity,' and the like; no example of its use to mean 'almsgiving'

²⁸ Resch, in his *Logia Jesu*, 21, 26, made Mark's *ἐκεφαλῶσαν* a variant rendering of כְּרִינוּ.

or 'alms' has ever been found, so far as I am aware. The verb כִּי means 'make pure, regard as righteous,' and the like; never 'give alms.' The word for 'righteousness' which also means 'alms' is צִדְקָא ; the only evidence that כִּי was ever used in a similar way is the fact that in the Koran and subsequent Mohammedan literature and usage the word *zakāt* (pretty certainly borrowed from the Jews) is the technical term for the alms prescribed by law, whence it is reasonable to conclude that there was some such Jewish usage in Arabia in the time of Mohammed. As Siegmund Fraenkel expresses it, in his *De Vocabulis in antiquis Arabum Carminibus et in Corano peregrinis*, p. 23: " כִּי quidem in scriptis Iudaicis 'meriti' tantum sensu invenitur, . . . sed fortasse Iudæi Arabici כִּי sensu eleemosynarum adhibuerunt." A student of Mohammedan literature would at once think of 'almsgiving' when he saw the verb כִּי , but it is unlikely, to say the least, that it could have suggested such an idea to Luke.

The verbal form of the tradition in the one Gospel differs so much from its form in the other that it is better not to try to make them fit each other closely. It is not necessary to suppose that the verb in the first clause of Luke xi. 41 meant 'cleansing.' On the contrary, verse 41 is the counterpart of verse 39; there, the first clause referred to cleansing and the second to unrighteousness; here, the two ideas are repeated in reverse order. There, he had said: "Your inner part is full of unrighteousness"; here, "That which is within *make righteous*," $\text{דִּיא רְלֵנִי עֲבֵדִי צִדְקָא}$. Nothing could be more natural than to render this by $\tau\alpha\ \acute{\epsilon}\nu\omicron\upsilon\tau\alpha\ \delta\acute{o}\tau\epsilon\ \acute{\epsilon}\lambda\epsilon\eta\mu\omicron\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu\eta\eta$, since עֲבֵדִי צִדְקָא is the regular idiom for "give alms," the very one which is used in Matt. vi. 1-4 ($\delta\iota\kappa\alpha\iota\omicron\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu\eta\eta\ \pi\omicron\iota\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu$), for instance, and of which a host of examples could be given.²⁹

xi. 47 ff. (Matt. xxiii. 29-33). — The Greek text has: ⁴⁷ οὐαὶ ὑμῖν, ὅτι οἰκοδομεῖτε τὰ μνημεῖα τῶν προφητῶν, οἱ δὲ πατέρες ὑμῶν ἀπέκτειναν αὐτούς. ⁴⁸ ἄρα μάρτυρές ἐστε καὶ συνευδοκεῖτε τοῖς ἔργοις τῶν πατέρων ὑμῶν· ὅτι αὐτοὶ μὲν ἀπέκτειναν αὐτοὺς, ὑμεῖς δὲ

²⁹ I may add, as an example of coincident conjecture, that I came upon this explanation of the passage quite independently of Wellhausen.

οικοδομείτε. This last clause contains the *proof* of the fact that these Jews were not guiltless of the blood of the prophets: "Because they slew them, and *ye build*." But this is no "proof" at all; so far as it could have any significance in this connection, it might rather be an indication of a repentant generation. In Matthew, it is all clear: "Ye say: If we had been in the days of our fathers, we should not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore ye witness in regard to yourselves that *ye are the sons* of them that slew the prophets; and ye will fill up the measure of your fathers. Serpents, *offspring of serpents*," etc. The verses immediately following, in Luke as well as in Matthew, proceed in the same strain, saying that the children had been like the fathers all the way from Cain down to the present generation. The original in Luke at the end of verse 48 was certainly *וְאַתֶּם בְּנֵי לֵהוֹן*, 'and ye are children of theirs.' The translator (Luke himself?) of course thought of *בְּנֵי* the participle, since he had just had the very same form in the preceding verse, and 48b seemed to be repeating the two clauses of 47 in reverse order. The *לֵהוֹן*, which thus became the direct object, was of course omitted in translating, as it was not needed and could not have been rendered without awkwardness.

xii. 46 (Matt. xxiv. 51). — "But if that servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and the maidservants, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken; the lord of that servant will come in a day when he expecteth not, and in an hour when he knoweth not, and will cut him in two, and appoint his portion with the unfaithful (*καὶ διχοτομήσει αὐτὸν καὶ τὸ μέρος αὐτοῦ μετὰ τῶν ἀπίστων θήσεται*).'" Two things strike the reader at once: First, this is a singularly disproportionate punishment for a kind of mismanagement to which servants left to themselves have always and everywhere been especially prone, and for which dismissal in disgrace is generally regarded as an adequate penalty; second, after the man had been "split in two" it could make no difference to him with whom his portion was appointed. I believe that we may see here a very ancient error in the underlying Aramaic text, which is rendered in the same way by both Luke

and Matthew. Διχοτομήσει of course translates the verb פלג. The original text was: ויפלגנה מנתה עם שקריא, 'and will divide him his portion with the unfaithful.'³⁰ By a very natural bit of carelessness (supposing the first suffix to be direct object rather than indirect) the conjunction ו was put before מנתה. This once done could never be undone, and the addition of the verb ישם at the end of the clause was immediately necessary: ויפלגנה ומנתה עם שקריא³¹ ישם, 'and will divide him, and his portion with the unfaithful (will appoint).'

xii. 49 f. — Πῦρ ἤλθον βαλεῖν εἰς τὴν γῆν, καὶ τί θέλω εἰ ἤδη ἀνήφθη; βάπτισμα δὲ ἔχω βαπτισθῆναι, καὶ πῶς συνέχομαι ἕως οὗ τοῦ τελεσθῆ. 'I came to cast fire upon the earth, and *what will I if it is already kindled?* I have a baptism to be baptised with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!' I have given the second clause of verse 49 in the words of the English Revised Version. The rendering is nonsense, to be sure, but it at least has the merit of following the text. Many interpreters, including some of the foremost of the Germans, have rendered according to the sense: 'How I wish that it were already kindled!' but this, as Plummer fairly objects, "does rather serious violence to the Greek." Turning the Greek back, word by word, into Aramaic, we have: ומה צבא אנא אדני מן כדו דלקת. But whoever has before him this Aramaic, not feeling obliged to render word for word, but rather to give the sense, can only translate it: 'And how I wish that it were already kindled!' The idiom is the regular one in Aramaic. We are given in Luke a too literal rendering — though any ancient translator would have been likely to render in just this way.

xxiii. 54. — Καὶ ἡμέρα ἦν παρασκευῆς, καὶ σάββατον ἐπέφωσκεν. 'Now it was the Day of Preparation, and the next day was the Sabbath.' The same idiom which has already been mentioned, above, in interpreting Matt. xxviii. 1. Moore, in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 26. 328 f.,

³⁰ The idiom is perfectly regular; cf., for example, the Syr. renderings in Is. liii. 12; Jer. xxxvii. 12, etc.

³¹ This word is regularly used to mean both 'faithless' (Luke, ἀπιστων) and 'hypocrite' (Matt., ὑποκριτῶν).

showed that the original of Luke's phrase was something like: **והיה יומא דערובתא ננהי שבתא**. I have noticed the very same phrase in the Syriac Chronicle of Joshua the Stylite, p. 22, line 9: **איתודי יומא דערובתא מנהי שבתא**, where Wright translates: 'It was the night between Friday and Saturday.' In the evangelist's narrative, the hour is not stated; we only know that it was the time when the sixth day was *passing over into* the Sabbath. Any Aramaic text would have used here the word **ננה**, "dawn," but no Greek writer would ever in this place have written *ἐπέφωσκεν* unless he were translating the Semitic word which actually lay before him in a document. Luke is using either the Aramaic Mark or a narrative based upon it; the *ὁ ἐστὶν προσάββατον* of Mark xv. 42 is another very natural, but less accurate, rendering of **ננהי שבתא**.

xxiv. 32. — *Οὐχὶ ἡ καρδία ἡμῶν καιομένη ἦν*; "Did not our heart *burn*?" The hypothesis of an original Aramaic **יקר**, instead of **יקר**, has long seemed to me the most satisfactory interpretation: "Was not our mind [**לב** is the understanding] *slow to comprehend*?" Wellhausen's **נכמרו רחמינו**, *Das Evangelium Lucae*, 139, seems to me much too remote to be compared here. Neither the Hebrew verb nor any likely Aramaic equivalent of it could possibly have been rendered by *καίωμαι*, and **רחמין** (the same word in Aramaic as in Hebrew) would probably have been translated by *σπλάγγνα*, certainly not by *καρδία*. I do not think, however, that we have a particle of *external* evidence of the original Aramaic reading **יקר**. Every one of the readings of our versions is probably derived, directly or indirectly, from *καιομένη*, the variations being due partly to corruption of the Greek and partly to guessing what ought to have been the reading. The corruption and the guesswork are important, as showing that the idiom was as unsatisfactory in Greek as it was in Semitic (witness the Syriac, where not only the Lewis text, but also the Curetonian and Peshitto, both of which have been extensively conformed to the standard Greek, have the reading 'heavy'). It is obvious enough, in any case, that this whole chapter is translated.

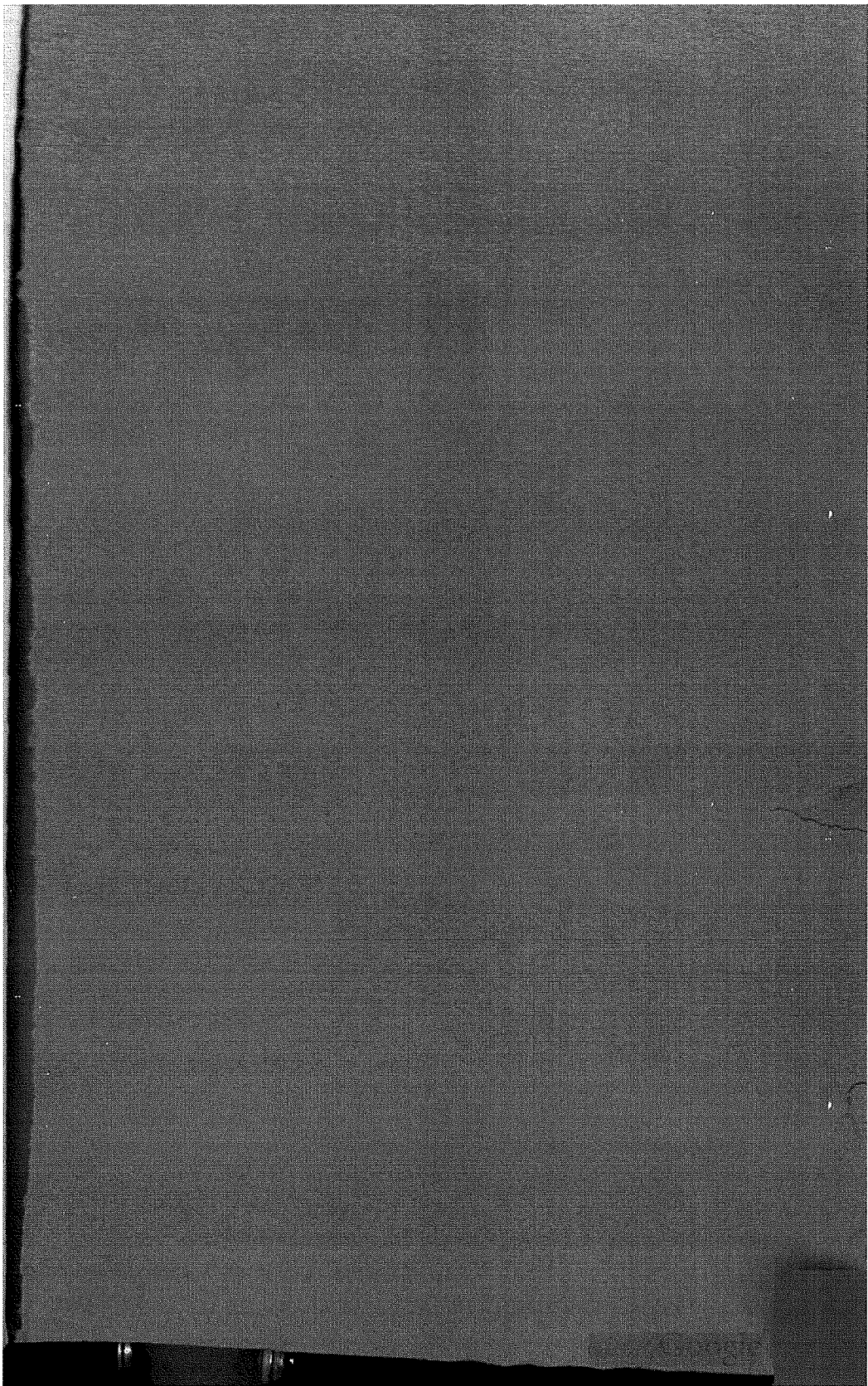
Numerous other indications of translation in the Third Gospel which I had noted in my own reading, and which

were included in this essay as originally presented,³² have now been pointed out by Wellhausen in his Introduction and Commentaries, so that I need not include them. One of these to which attention may especially be called is the ἀπὸ μᾶς, 'at once,' of xiv. 18. It is a too literal rendering of מִן הָרָא, and occurs in a section of the parable (verses 18-24) which is found only in Luke, and can hardly have been known to Matthew. In general, the evidence is striking that where Luke goes his own way he is usually closely following written documents, mostly Aramaic.

In Mark xiv. 3, Matt. xxvi. 6, may it not be that 'Simon the leper' (גִּיְרְבָא) ³³ was originally intended to be 'Simon the jar-maker' (גִּיְרְבָא)? I do not know that the latter word has been found anywhere; still, no object was more familiar in Palestine than the water jar, or wine jar, גִּיְרְבָא, and the term used to designate the man who made or sold such jars can only have been גִּיְרְבָא.

³² It was read before the Semitic Club of Yale University, January 13, 1904; and before the Society of Biblical Literature, in New York City, in December, 1906. As originally written and presented, it contained all the essential features of its present form, including all of the suggested emendations excepting the one concerning 'Simon the leper.'

³³ The word used, for example, in the Palestinian Syriac version in these passages.



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