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which appears merely an ordinary sketch to others, and He who knew what was in man could pierce to the hidden springs which were not to yield their rich secrets for many a long year.

Devotion would lead the Lord to entrust His mother to a 'son of Thunder.'

Youth is very critical of individuals, and apt to dwell upon the feelings of others, but when once its sympathies are enlisted it is capable of intense hero worship.

The beloved disciple being a young man would bear his Master's image on his heart, he would always be thinking of Him whenever Christ was present, his eyes would follow Him were they separated from each other, the disciple would half consciously to himself draw nearer and nearer to Him. It was the Lord's personality, not His ideas, that drew the beloved disciple to Him.

Love may quicken a person's power of perception, so that in connexion with any particular individual upon whom he may have fastened his affections, he will be quick to note what has happened to him, he will be very much alive to anything concerning him. This does not necessarily apply to quick discernment of his spirit and teaching. This, I venture to think, explains how the beloved disciple came to recognize that the Lord was risen. The Evangelist is most careful to point out that not only did Peter not know the Scriptures, but that this was the case also with the beloved disciple. This indicates that when the Resurrection had taken place the beloved disciple did not display such wonderful powers of insight as those with which he has been frequently accredited. Otherwise the repeated teaching of our Lord would have sunk deep in his heart and left a very definite impression upon his mind.

The other argument brought forward by Mr. Griffith, that Jn 1815 cannot apply to the Apostle John, is beyond the limits of this paper and has been partially met by Mr. Draper (The Expository Times, June 1921, p. 429). Whilst Archdeacon Charles believes in the early martyrdom of the Apostle, other competent authorities, e.g. Harnack and Stanton, neither of whom accept the Johannine authorship, take the contrary view. It is not fashionable to believe in the apostolic authorship of the Fourth Gospel, but more can be said in its favour than has hitherto been given.

At any rate, it would be strange to think that it

was reserved to this age to make the discovery that Lazarus was the author of the Fourth Gospel, a person to whom the early Church never dreamt of assigning 'the spiritual gospel.'

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Heß. ii. 16 in the Peshitta Spriac Version.

I SHOULD like to draw the attention of those who do not read Syriac, and of those who do but who may not have seen the edition of the *Peshitta N.T.* recently published by the British and Foreign Bible Society, to a remarkable reading of He 2¹⁶.

The difficulties connected with the interpretation of this verse are well known; speaking broadly, there are two main lines of explanation. One, which is the general opinion of the ancient expounders, is that the writer is affirming that our Lord did not assume angelic but human nature, typified for himself and his Hebrew readers by the seed of Abraham. The A.V. has made us familiar with this view: 'For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham'-a translation, however, which is so far wrong in that ἐπιλαμβάνεται is present, 'he takes,' not 'he took.' The second general opinion is that the writer is saying that our Lord does not help angels but mankind, typified by the seed of Abraham: and this appears to be the view of most modern interpreters.

The chief difficulty lies with ἐπιλαμβάνεται. This verb occurs nineteen times in the N.T., and over fifty times in the O.T. and Apocrypha, but in none of these places does the word mean 'assume' or 'take upon oneself,' nor does it appear to have any such meaning in classical literature. Its meaning is, 'to take hold of,' or 'to grasp,' or 'to seize.' The R.V., keeping strictly to the grammar, has: 'For verily not of angels doth he take hold, but he taketh hold of the seed of Abraham.'

Chrysostom, whose competency in the Greek language is beyond dispute, evidently felt that ἐπιλαμβάνεται with difficulty fitted the view that the meaning is that our Lord assumed human nature, for he says: τί ἐστιν ο φησιν; Οὐκ ἀγγέλου φύσιν ἀνεδέξατο, ἀλλὶ ἀνθρώπου. Τί δέ ἐστιν ἐπιλαμβάνεται; Οὐκ ἐκείνης, φησὶν, ἐδράξατο τῆς φύσεως τῶν ἀγγέλων, ἀλλὰ τῆς ἡμετέρας. Διὰ τί δὲ οὐκ

εἶπεν, ἀνέλαβεν ἀλλὰ ταύτη τῆ λέξει ἐχρήσατο τῆ, ἐπιλαμβάνεται; ᾿Απὸ μεταφορᾶς τῶν διωκόντων τοὺς ἀποστρεφομείνους αὐτοὺς, καὶ πάντα ποιούντων, ὧστε καταλαβεὶν φεύγοντας καὶ ἐπιλαβέσθαι ἀποπηδώντων. Φεύγουσαν γὰρ ἀπ᾽ αὐτοῦ τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην φύσιν, καὶ πόρρω φεύγουσαν (Ἦμεν γὰρ τοῦ Θεοῦ μακρᾶν, φησὶν, ἀπηλλοτριωμένοι, καὶ ἄθεοι ὅντες ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ), αὐτὸς καταδιώξας κατέλαβεν (Hom. v. in Ερ. ad Heb. cap. 2 No, the interpretation 'he assumes' is impossible.

The second general opinion is thus expressed by Alford: 'It is not angels that He helpeth, but it is the seed of Abraham that He helpeth.' Weymouth, New Testament in Modern Speech, has: 'For assuredly it is not to angels that He is continually reaching a helping hand, but it is to the descendants of Abraham.' Delitzsch explains thus: 'It denotes that gracious laying hold in order to redeem, which commenced in the incarnation, and is thence continued.' This interpretation is certainly more plausible than the first; yet one cannot but feel that it is forced upon the passage, and that $\frac{\partial u}{\partial t} = \frac{\partial u}{\partial t} =$

Of the nineteen places where the word occurs in the N.T., in three only, if we exclude our passage, is there any sort of connexion with the intent of 'helping,' Mt 1431, Mk 823, He 89 which is a quotation from Jer 3132. Yet the idea of 'helping' or even of 'rescuing' does not reside in ἐπιλαμβάνεται, which retains its normal meaning of 'take hold of' or, as in Mt 1481, 'grasp,' but in the clearly expressed purpose in the immediate context of the taking hold or grasping. Our Lord (Mt 1481) stretches out His hand and grasps Peter in order to save him. In Mk 828 He takes hold of the blind man to lead him out of the village. In He 89 (Jet 3132), God is figuratively represented as taking His people by the hand to lead them out of the house of bondage. An examination of the passages in the O.T. and Apocrypha where the word occurs, reveals the same usage. Any idea of help or rescue resides, not in ἐπιλαμβάνεται by itself, but in the clearly expressed immediate context which gives the reason or purpose of the taking hold or grasping. But in He 216 we have, if I may so say, a perfectly colourless statement: 'For indeed he does not take hold of angels, but Abraham's seed he takes hold of.' And further, the brief parenthetical tone of the passage with its sudden present tense, would

almost seem to put it out of immediate connexion with what goes before and after it.

Alford in his long note on the passage says, that while almost all the modern interpreters adopt the view that the meaning is that our Lord helpeth not angels but the seed of Abraham: 'Schultz has ventured to doubt the correctness of it, and to propose a new view—viz. that Death, or the Angel of Death, is the subject of the sentence; "for on angels truly he taketh not hold, but on the seed of Abraham he taketh hold."' Alford admits that this sense of the passage is allowable, though he does not agree with it. However, this view is not a new one, as we shall see.

In 1808 was published, under Unitarian auspices, The N.T. in an Improved Version upon the Basis of Archbishop Newcome's 'New Translation.' Newcome renders: 'For indeed Christ helpeth not angels, but he helpeth the seed of Abraham.' But a note to this, for which the Rev. T. Belsham was probably responsible, says: "For truly it," i.e. the fear of death, or death itself, "doth not lay hold of" or seize on "angels, but of the seed of Abraham it doth lay hold." Belsham, in his The Epistles of Paul the Apostle translated, etc. (1822), gives the same rendering, and further says that the Rev. John Palmer of Macclesfield had also suggested it.

This writer under the pseudonym of 'Symmachus' in an article in The Theological Repository (1766-88), vol. v. pp. 161-5, discusses our passage, and in the course of his remarks observes that ἐπιλαμβάνεται 'is an awkward word to express the act of helping, without some additional word to modify its meaning, or something very clear in the connexion to limit it to such an act. . . . In my opinion we have been mistaken about the nominative case to ἐπιλαμβάνεται, which is not Jesus in v.9, but the fear of death in v.15.'

However, this interpretation is far older than Palmer or Belsham—we find it in MSS. of the Peshitta Syriac, some as old as cent. V. or VI.!

The editio princeps (Widmanstad's) of the Peshitta N.T. and all other printed editions up till now, so far as I am aware, give:

. For he did not take of' (or 'from') 'angels, but he took of' (or 'from') 'the seed of Abraham.'

It is noticeable that عصد is pointed as preter-

points ταπλ, and in the margin it has ἐπιλαμβάνεται transliterated into Syriac accompanied by the word [...]. Further, I would note that here only in the Peshitta N.T. is ταπλαβέσθαι; in all the other places the more appropriate [...] is employed, which fact may possibly indicate that the translator was uncertain as to the exact signification here of ἐπιλαμβάνεται.

Such is this astonishing reading—astonishing, because so far as all our critical apparatus shows, no other version nor any Greek MS. has any hint of such a reading. What authority has it? Whence did it come?

The new edition of the Peshitta N.T., of which Dr. Kennedy wrote a short account in THE Ex-POSITORY TIMES, vol. xxxii. p. 137, gives us a reliable critical text, which I call G=Gwilliam. It did not, however, fall within the intent of the British and Foreign Bible Society to indicate the authorities on which the text is based. I cannot but feel that this is to be regretted—a brief list at anyrate of the MSS. relied upon would have been invaluable. Failing this, I have examined for He 216 20 Peshitta MSS. i.e. 16 in the British Museum, and 4 in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. Without going into all the details, the result is this: 14 MSS. give the reading of G, the two oldest, Add. 14476 and Add. 14480 being, according to Wright, of cent. V. or VI.; 6 MSS. give the reading of W (Widmanstad), the oldest of them, Add. 14448, being, according to Wright, almost certainly dated A.D. 669-700. In only two of the 14 MSS is there any variation in the G reading—Add. 14681 of cent. XII. or XIII. repeats 'death' at the end of the second clause; and in the Bodleian MS. Dawkins 23, of cent. XIV., the second clause ends with the word 'Abraham.' In the MS. Add. 17124, dated A.D. 1234, the G reading is surrounded by a red line, and a later hand than that of the original scribe has written the W reading in the margin. I should note, by the way, that while the new critical printed text vocalizes as aphel, the MSS. which I examined where vocalization is given, vocalize as pael.

Tempting as the theme is, I must not now enter upon a discussion of this reading: I content myself for the present with drawing attention to it. Yet a query or two may be put down.

Is our reading, then, an ancient gloss in a Greek MS. used by the Syriac translator which had become incorporated into the text? Or is it a Syriac gloss which has supplanted a bare translation of the Greek? And if this be so, then does the reading of W after all exhibit an older and truer Peshitta reading? Or are we in presence of a paraphrastic rendering of our passage in that Old Syriac of the N.T. canon other than the Gospels, which must have existed, but of which we know so little?

But, however these things may be, I feel confident that this ancient Syriac reading points to the right understanding of He 2¹⁶. The subject of the sentence is Death, and the verse should be put within brackets and be read as a parenthesis: 'For verily it doth not lay hold upon angels, but it layeth hold upon Abraham's seed,'

ALBERT BONUS.

Alphington.

Entre Mous.

The International Review of Missions.

The 'International' has finished its tenth volume. It is probably the best edited missionary magazine in the world. Miss G. A. Gollock is associated with Mr. J. H. Oldham in the editor-

ship, and together they have given us a marvellous number for January 1922. Its most prominent feature is a ten years' selected international missionary bibliography. It is based on the quarterly bibliographies which have been so useful and so well done, and occupies fifty pages of small type