

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Expositor* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expositor-series-1.php

remote from man and his uses; and, lastly, man himself when all was ready. When the farm was stocked, the farmer came.

Thus I think you cannot "harmonize," except in the widest and most general sense, the Scripture account with that of science; but I also think that the former is so vague, so obviously popular in form, so concerned only about the central truth, that to talk of contradiction is useless. A child or uneducated person might give us an account of some complicated process, which was true in the main, yet full of small inaccuracies and mistakes in sequence and in theory.

Of course I am aware of the correspondences between the early Chaldæan cosmogony and that in Genesis, but to dwell on this subject is beside my purpose. I will merely add that the former, as it has been well said, is saturated with polytheism, and that the expurgation of such an element, at this epoch of the world's history, is to me a mark of inspiration.

T. G. BONNEY.

THE ARAMAIC GOSPEL.

THE NEW CRITERION.

THERE are two facts which, as we have seen from our preliminary paper of last month, are almost universally conceded: (1) that our Lord ordinarily spoke Aramaic; and (2) that Matthew wrote the *Logia τῆ Ἑβραϊδὶ διαλέκτῳ*. But when we step beyond this, we come into the arena of debate. If we ask, In what language did Matthew write? or, *What* did he write? we receive very discordant replies. It might be supposed that all who admitted that Christ *spoke* Aramaic would also admit that, if His words were originally written in any Semitic tongue, they would be written precisely as spoken. But this is not the case.

Even so high an authority as the late Dr. Franz Delitzsch believed that the Saviour *spoke* in the vernacular, yet maintained that the *literature* of the period existed only in New-Hebrew; and in commenting on the words of Papias, though he admits that the word *Ἑβραϊστί* was sometimes used for *Χαλδαϊστί*, he yet holds that "it is very improbable that Matthew wrote *Aramaic*." Having been for some years a devoted student of Delitzsch's Hebrew New Testament, it was a wrench to me to doubt his accuracy. There was however this grave difficulty. If Delitzsch be correct, the words of Jesus, as we know them in the Greek Testament, have undergone a twofold translation: first from Aramaic into New-Hebrew; then from this into Greek. That is not a view one would *prefer* to adopt, if one might choose. It is therefore a point worth considering, whether the Aramaic fragments embedded in our present Greek Gospels may not be words transliterated from a primitive document—words which were felt too precious to translate. May not these words be samples of the dialect in which the whole of the *Logia* was written? If so, since these specimens are uniformly Targumic Aramaic, Matthew wrote in the same language as Onkelos. Should the theory advocated in these papers prove to be of permanent value in the solution of the problems of the Gospels, we have "the moment of its genesis" in the surmise, which gradually deepened into a fixed conviction, that the *Urevangelium* was written in the language of the Jewish Targums—not however without sundry dialectal peculiarities found in the Samaritan Targum. Delitzsch tells us that one of his friends suggested that he should translate the New Testament, not into Hebrew, but into Aramaic, since that was the language spoken in Palestine in the days of Christ; but he adds, "dieser Wunsch beruht auf einer Illusion."¹ Perhaps not. At all events we are willing to hinge the

¹ Quoted in Kautzsch's *Grammatik des Biblisch-Aramäischen*, p. 5.

matter here : That language which best explains the verbal divergences in our present Gospels must be voted to be the one in which the *Logia* was written.

Even more discordant are the views as to *what* Matthew originally wrote, what would be included in the *Logia*. Was it the entire Gospel known to us ; or simply the discourses of our Lord ; or the discourses *plus* some narratives which gave occasion to the discourses ? Several *methods* have been devised by which to arrive at the contents of the *Logia*. We can but enumerate them here, but will give them a fuller investigation by-and-by.

1. There is what we may call the *harmonistic* method. Those *pericopæ* which three—or in some cases two—of the synoptists possess in common were, in the judgment of Eichhorn, to be assigned to the Syro-Chaldaic *Urevangelium* ; except those passages which, though found even in all three Gospels, are scattered in different connexions (*Einleitung*, vol. i., § 56).

2. We have the *mathematical* method. Thus we may designate the method of Weisse, who arrived at the contents of the *Logia* by subtracting the canonical Mark from Matthew iii.-xxviii. ; or, by subtracting from Luke, (1) what he possesses in common with Mark, and (2) what is found in Luke only. The residue is almost the same in both cases ; and as Matthew and Luke were independent of each other, they must, in these passages, have been indebted to a common "source" ; and since this residue consists almost exclusively of *discourses*, it was proclaimed to be the long-lost *Logia*. The canonical Mark and the *Logia* are thus two original, independent documents.

3. We have the *subjective* method. We apply this designation to the ingenious theories of Dr. Bernhard Weiss.¹ He has proved very satisfactorily (*a*) that the

¹ Weiss' *Manual of Introduction* in Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton's "Foreign Biblical Library," vol. ii., pp. 225, 247.

Logia did not contain discourses merely, but also some narratives which served as a setting to the precious gems; and (b) that Mark was in some passages *indebted* to the *Logia*, while in other passages our present Greek Matthew was indebted to Mark. The consideration which directed Weiss in threading his way through this maze, and in deciding how many of Mark's narratives belonged to the *Logia*, and how many were original to him, was this: In what cases does Mark show "an inferior text"? Taking it for granted that all borrowers amplify, he proceeded thus: when Matthew (or Luke) gives a "short, sketchy, and withal polished and condensed" form of a narrative, whereas Mark "gives a richer and freer embellishment of the same, and yet seems ever going back to this simpler form, so familiar to him that his adherence to it often disturbs the flow of his own description," such parts are borrowed by Mark from the *Logia*. With whatever scholarship and sobriety of judgment this method may be applied, it is evident that it affords too much scope for the play of subjectivity. What two men would always agree on what constitutes "an inferior text"? The method lacks objective certitude—even though in some hands it may lead to correct results: a more tangible dividing-rod is eminently desirable.

4. As supplying to some extent this desideratum, we would respectfully submit for consideration a *linguistic* method. We venture to think that it yields more objective certitude than the foregoing, and leaves less room for caprice and egoism. If the method be accepted, all who are conversant with Greek and Aramaic are well-nigh certain to come to the same conclusions; and thus some degree of scientific accuracy will be attainable. Besides this, although our investigations were conducted in ignorance, or forgetfulness, of the results of Dr. Weiss, it is gratifying to find how nearly our table of contents of the *Logia* corresponds

with his (*Matthäusevangelium*, pp. 18-35). When the same answer is obtained to a mathematical problem by two distinct modes of working, each confirms the other; and the attainment of closely similar results by the totally independent use of two different methods is a confirmation of both. We proceed now therefore to the exposition of

THE LINGUISTIC METHOD.

A careful and minute study of a Greek harmony of the Gospels reveals a threefold classification of their contents.

A.—There are numerous passages—sections, verses, or phrases—in which each of the evangelists *stands alone*.

B.—There are many instances in which two, or sometimes three, evangelists *agree verbatim*; or at all events the differences are not greater than may have taken place in process of transcription from a Greek text, nor than are actually found in different MSS. of the same Greek author.

C.—There are other instances where the parallel passages *agree in thought, but not in words*. Verse after verse, thought corresponds with thought, phrase with phrase; and yet there is far from a verbal identity. The passages are tantamount, but not identical; the resemblance is substantial, but not verbal. It is these portions which we shall claim for the *Logia*, and shall try to show that in many instances these verbal divergences are traceable to a variant translation of a common Aramaic original. The distinction between classes B and C is, for our present purpose, radical. Do the parallel passages resemble each other substantially *or* verbally? That is our criterion. And taking this dividing-rod in our hands, we shall use it calmly and firmly. We shall allow no preconceptions to influence us as to what a primitive Gospel might be expected to contain. We shall be guided solely by linguistic considerations. Those sections or verses which bear marks of being translation work we shall claim for

the *Logia*; and those in which the agreement is verbal we shall not claim, except in some instances to be afterwards specified.

The question we would now therefore ask is this: What are the indications of translation work? What are the phenomena which present themselves regularly, in college life, for instance, in connexion with productions that are known to be translations from the same foreign author?

May we be forgiven if we first mention an abnormal phenomenon? It *is said* that occasionally in the schools on the Continent *and elsewhere*, it has been observed that there is a remarkable similarity in some few examination papers: line after line is the same, not only in thought, but in the minutest details of words. The attention of the ever-unsuspecting examiner is at last aroused to this resemblance, and he feels obliged to attribute it to one or other of two causes: either these men sat near each other during the examination, and copied in succession from some one paper; or each of them has in his possession the same "crib," and has committed it to memory. In the latter case we have no *bonâ fide* translation work at all; in the former, we have one translation and several transcriptions. In accordance with these phenomena, when, in our microscopic study of the harmony of the Gospels, we come upon passages where, for one or more verses, the agreement is *verbal*, we shall feel justified in saying: "This is not translation work." Those passages where the verbal identity is evident we shall, with few exceptions, relegate to class B, and shall not claim them for the *Logia*. The exceptions referred to are those cases in which, embedded in a narrative which we take to be Aramaic, we find the *words* of the Lord Jesus given in two or three evangelists *in verbal agreement*; and we shall then raise the question, whether these identical Greek words may not (since the narrative setting is Aramaic) be the words actually spoken

by our Lord, transmitted with faithful, literal accuracy exactly as they were uttered. Whether the *longer* sections and narratives, which present verbal agreement in the Greek, ever formed part of one and the same primitive document; whether there is any affinity or thread of connexion between these detached fragments, may furnish a theme for other investigators; but the task will be much simplified when the *Logia* has been eliminated.

In seeking now to classify the ordinary indications of translation work, we intend in almost every case to give *illustrations* from the two translations of the Hebrew Scriptures, presented respectively in the Septuagint and the New Testament quotations. The wisdom of this procedure will appear more clearly later on, but some advantages may be mentioned now. (1) The circumstances are precisely similar. On the one hand, we have two translations from the Hebrew; and, on the other, we have presumably two, or three, evangelists translating from the Aramaic *Logia*. (2) Both primary documents are in a Semitic language, and hence the points of resemblance are closer than if our illustrations were drawn from a European language. (3) It will curb our imagination. We shall escape any danger into which an exuberant fancy might fall, in the selection of "indications of translation"; for we shall rigorously confine ourselves to those which are *actually present* in the existing records. (4) When we have arranged our classes of the discrepancies actually occurring in the two extant Greek translations of the Hebrew Scriptures, we might argue from analogy that the same *kinds* of variations would occur in the work of two Greek scholars translating from an Aramaic exemplar; and it is no slight confirmation of the soundness of our hypothesis, that there is an exact correspondence. (5) The analogy goes further. When we are exhibiting the verbal discrepancies between the New Testament quotations and the Hebrew text, we are dealing

with two inspired records. We have thus a most instructive study as to what extent verbal divergences are compatible with inspiration. And ever bearing in mind that the evangelists were inspired of God, we shall have a *safe guide* as to how far it is reverent to suppose these inspired men capable of verbal inaccuracy in their translations from the Aramaic, if we confine ourselves strictly to those kinds of divergence which do actually occur between the Old Testament and the New. We shall not adduce one species of discrepancy between the evangelists which has not been shown to exist in the New Testament as compared with the Hebrew. (6) Inasmuch as the New Testament quotations have not been classified in this manner heretofore, our labour will incidentally serve as a small contribution to *that* important subject.

And now we will re-state our question: *What are the well recognised indications of translation work?*

I. The surest indication of good, honest work in translating from a foreign author is when the different members of a class express the thought of the original in diverse ways, corresponding to the idiosyncrasy of each student. No one knows so well as an examiner of papers translating from some foreign classic, into how many ways the same thought *may* be thrown; and if each man translates independently, there will be agreement in substance, but not in words. We cannot illustrate *this* point very well from the translations of the Hebrew as presented in the LXX. and New Testament, because confessedly they are not independent translations. Whether the New Testament writers translated directly from the Hebrew, or used a recension of the LXX. slightly differing from that which we at present possess, it is apparent that the translator of our New Testament quotations had in mind a familiar Greek text, and only deviated from it when the Hebrew MS. from which he was translating seemed to *him* to demand an emendation.

II. A desire to be literal leads a translator to introduce *idioms* into his work which are foreign to his native tongue. The Latin scholar is in danger of falling into a Latinized style, even when he is not translating. When the student of the Greek classics passes from the study of Xenophon and Thucydides to that of the Septuagint, he is struck by the deviations from classical propriety; and if he is at the same time familiar with Hebrew, he observes that these are in most cases distinctly traceable to an imitation of the Hebrew idiom. The Septuagint became a sort of model for Greek-speaking Jews; and thus some of its peculiarities became stereotyped into a dialect known as Hellenistic Greek. Winer, in his *Grammar of New Testament Greek*, has a valuable chapter on "the Hebrew-Aramaic colouring of New Testament diction." It is quite unnecessary to quote instances of what occurs often on every page of the LXX. and New Testament.

III. Every examiner knows that it is very difficult to secure uniformity in the strict rendering of a verb; even when the meaning of the verb is correctly given, there is diversity in giving the precise voice, tense, and mood. We find the same freedom in the rendering of Hebrew verbs in the LXX. and New Testament. For instance:

Exod. xii. 46 & LXX. : And a bone thereof ye shall not break.

John xix. 36: And a bone of him shall not be broken. συντρίψετε.

συντριβήσεται.

Ps. cxvii. 1: Praise Him, all ye people (so Heb.).

ἐπαιέσατε.

Rom. xv. 11: Let all the people praise Him.

ἐπαιεσάτωσαν

Compare Matt. xv. 4, τελευτάω, with Exod. xxi. 16, τελευτήσει.

Isa. xxv. 8, κατέπιεν ὁ θάνατος, with 1 Cor. xv. 54, κατεπόθη.

IV. When the translation is made from a Semitic text without points, translators may differ as to what *vowels* should be supplied. The insertion of different vowels

among the same consonants may cause a great difference in the translation.

Ps. ii. 9:	Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron.	תִּרְעֵם.
Rev. ii. 27 & LXX.:	Thou shalt shepherdise them (<i>ποιμανεῖς</i>).	תִּרְעֵם.
Ps. li. 6:	Justified when thou speakest.	בְּדַבְּרֶיךָ.
Rom. iii. 4 & LXX.:	Justified in thy sayings.	בְּדַבְּרֶיךָ.
Gen. xlvii. 31:	Israel bowed on the head of the bed.	הִפְטָה.
Heb. xi. 21 & LXX.:	Israel bowed on the head of his staff.	הִפְטָה.
Prov. iii. 12:	<i>Even as a father</i> the son in whom he delighteth.	וַיִּכְאֵב.
Heb. xii. 6 & LXX.:	<i>And scourgeth</i> every son whom he receiveth.	וַיִּכְאֵב.

V. It is a well known fact that very few words in any language are *univocal*. We scarcely notice this in our native tongue until we try to translate it into another language; but we are very sensitive as to how equivocal the words in any foreign language are. The first few weeks with a Latin dictionary mark a period of pain and suffering in the life of a young student, remembered ever afterwards. The long list of meanings which every Latin verb seems to possess is at that stage most bewildering, and the difficulty of selecting the meaning which seems to suit the chaotic context most distressing. This remains a difficulty even when men become proficient in a language; men will always differ as to which word best represents the original. The following are some of the instances of diverse rendering of the same Hebrew word:

- Ps. lxxviii. 2: I will *utter* dark sayings of old.
The word נָבַע means (1) to pour or gush forth;
(2) to utter, speak. Each is appropriated by the
translators: Matt. xiii. 35, *ἐρέξομαι*; LXX., *φθέξομαι*.
- Ps. xxii. 23 (22): I will *declare* Thy name unto my brethren.
הִפְתִּיחַ becomes *διηγέσομαι* in LXX.; *ἀπαγγελω* in
Heb. ii. 12.

- Job v. 13: He *taketh* the wise in their own *craftiness*.
 ܕܩܘܠܝܝܢ is καταλαμβάνων in LXX.; δρασόμενος in 1 Cor.
 iii. 19.
 The word ܕܩܘܠܝܝܢ vacillates between "prudence" and
 "cunning." Accordingly LXX. gives φρόνησις;
 1 Cor. iii. 19 πανουργία.
- Mal. iii. 1: And he shall *prepare* thy way before thee.
 ܩܘܠܝܝܢ means to turn, look, overhaul, clear out, get
 ready. So LXX. gives ἐπιβλέψεται; Matt. xi. 10,
 κατασκευάσει.
- Jer. xxxi. 32: And I was a husband to them (ܩܘܠܝܝܢ).
 Since ܩܘܠܝܝܢ means both to marry and to divorce, LXX.
 (chap. xxxviii. 32) and Heb. viii. 9 have ἡμέλησα
 I regarded them not.

VI. There may be discrepancies in the exemplars from which the translation is made; and thus, through no fault of the translators, their work may vary. Classical scholars know well how difficult it is to secure a correctly *printed text* of the classic authors; and how much worse off we should be, if the work were, without revision, stereotyped as it comes from the compositor, is very evident. Equally liable to error, if not more so, were the MSS. When men of imperfect education took the trade of transcriber, and with imperfect tools and weary eyes wrote on from morn till night a text of unjoined capital letters, without vowels and usually without any space between the words, we can well imagine what "errors of the scribe" would creep into the text. And when we bear in mind that the translator in perusing a MS. is liable to the same blunders as the scribe, and may fail to *read* his MS. accurately, we see that the possibility of variant translations is thereby almost doubled.

The sources of error may be classified thus:

1. One letter may be mistaken for another, or two words which at a cursory glance closely resemble each other may be confounded.

Isa. xlii. 4: The *isles* shall hope in His law. ܕܡܝܢ
 LXX. & Matt. xii. 21: The *nations* shall hope in His name. ܕܡܝܢ

Amos ix. 12: That the remnant of Edom אדום they may possess.	יירשו.
Acts xv. 17: That the remnant of men אדם may seek Me.	ידרשו.
Isa. xxviii. 16: He that believeth shall not make haste.	יחיש.
Rom. ix. 33: He that believeth shall not be ashamed.	יביש.
Hab. i. 5: Behold ye <i>among the nations</i> , and gaze, etc.	בגוים.
Acts xiii. 41: Behold, ye <i>despisers</i> .	בגדרים.

2. The scribe or translator may err in the omission or insertion of a letter.

Joel iii. 2: Upon the bondsmen . . . I will pour My Spirit.	העבדים.
Acts ii. 18: Upon My bondsmen. . . .	עבדי.
Ps. xvi. 11: There is fulness of joy in Thy presence.	שבע.
Acts ii. 28: Thou shalt fill me with joy in Thy presence.	תשבע.
Exod. ix. 16: To show thee My power.	הראתך.
Rom. ix. 17: To show in thee My power.	הראת בך.

3. In transcription or translation two letters may be transposed.

Hos. xiii. 14: O death, <i>I will be</i> thy plagues.	אה.
1 Cor. xv. 55: O death, <i>where</i> is thy victory?	איה.
Hab. ii. 4: Behold, his soul is lifted up, it is not upright in him.	
Heb. x. 38: If he shrink back, my soul has not pleasure in him.	
Hebrew text has הנה עפלה לא ישרה נפשו בו.	
Heb. x. 38 requires הן עלף לא ירצה נפשי בו.	

4. In a text which does not always leave a space between the words, it is likely that different translators would divide the letters differently into words. There are several instances in which the Jewish scribes were themselves doubtful as to the correct division of letters into words. In the *Massoreth Ha-massoreth* of Elias Levita, as edited by Dr. Ginsburg, there are (p. 193) fifteen cases specified in which a word given entire in the printed text is in the Massoretic margin divided into two; and eight instances in which the text has two words, while the margin runs the two into one. One illustration of each will suffice. In Psalm x. 10 the word הלכאים, "the helpless ones," occurs

in the text; but the Qeri divides it into two words, **הל כאים**, "the host of weary ones." In Isaiah ix. 6 Kethibh has **לם רבה**, "to them the government shall be great"; whereas the Qeri has **למרבה**, "as for the increase of His government."

There is one instance of this in the New Testament quotations:

Isa. liii. 8: By oppression and a judgment he was taken away.

LXX. & Acts viii. 33: In *His* humiliation His judgment was taken away. (In many MSS. the word "His" is omitted.)

Hebrew is **מעצר וממשפט לקח**.

Acts viii. 33 requires **בעצרו משפטו לקח**.

5. There are other cases in which it is impossible by a simple re-arrangement or substitution of letters to account for the rendering of the Hebrew text found in the New Testament. One is obliged in such cases to say, either that the text of the Hebrew exemplar was very corrupt, or that we have a "free" quotation. The number of these is not so great as some suppose, but they do exist; *e.g.*—

Gen. xv. 14: Afterward they shall come out with great substance.

Acts vii. 7: Afterward they shall come out, and serve Me in this place.

Ps. lxxviii. 18 (19): Thou hast received gifts among men.

Eph. iv. 8: He gave gifts to men.

Compare also Amos v. 26 with Acts vii. 43, and Isa. x. 23 with Rom. ix. 28.

VII. If the translator write two copies of his work, there may be some points in which, in his second copy, he may see cause to make some slight alterations; and thus we may have "various readings" in a work, which are not due to subsequent scribes, but can be traced back to the translator himself, and are due to an uncertainty as to the reading of the original exemplar.

Let us now reverse the conditions. We have thus far

been investigating the phenomena which ordinarily occur in connexion with work known to be a translation from some foreign author. But suppose it to be a disputed point whether the writing of some three men *is* translation work from an unknown foreign author, how should we proceed to detect it? Suppose we have a passage in three English authors which we surmise is not in any one case original. It savours of Germany. There is that indefinable quality about it which marks all German-English translations. The authors cannot have used each other's books. How should we proceed to confirm or disprove our surmise that each has been translating from a German author who is unknown to us? This, I need not say, is precisely the position in which my hypothesis places us. There are certain passages in our synoptic Gospels which have a strong Aramaic colour. We have very insufficient *external* evidence as to the subject. Papias and Pantænus and others tell of a Gospel written in Aramaic, but they tell only of Matthew as having written such a work, whereas we think we notice the Aramaic colour in some passages in all the three Gospels. Besides this, many scholars have thrown serious doubts on the *trustworthiness* of Papias. He had peculiar views on the millenarian question. Eusebius regarded him as a "noodle"; σφόδρα σμικρὸς τὸν νοῦν is his blunt estimate of him. Papias collected some very silly stories about the Saviour, and apparently regarded nothing unworthy of Christ, if it favoured his pet doctrines. Therefore some eminent scholars, as Erasmus and Calvin, have distrusted his evidence altogether: though it is but fair to say that *most* scholars would endorse the words of Meyer, that "a simple historical remark, which stood in no connexion either with millenarianism or fabulous miracles, cannot *à priori* be regarded as suspicious; especially if, as in the present case, there is added the confirmation of the whole subsequent tradition of the Church." But some of

my readers may be sceptical of Church traditions, and insist still on doubting the accuracy of the statement of Papias as to the Aramaic *Logia*. Be it so. Our position is not in the slightest affected. We are grateful to Papias for the suggestion, but if the reader insists, we will proceed as though the Church were silent on the subject. The fact still remains, there are certain passages in the synoptists which impress us as being translations from a common Aramaic document. How shall we proceed to prove our surmise well founded? Which of our indications of translation work will be of most use to us now? Let us see.

I. If in the parallel passages in the synoptic Gospels we find "resemblance in substance, but not in words," this is the indication that first places us on the alert. If, *e.g.*, one evangelist says *πορεύου εἰς εἰρήνην*, while the other says *ὑπαγε εἰς εἰρήνην*; if one says *ἀνέστη*, and another *ἠγέρθη*, our attention is aroused. We shall not feel secure to build on such superficial cases; but it is in such passages that we begin to dig for deeper indications of the fact that the evangelists are translating from some common document—whether in absolute independence, or with a memory dominated by some current Greek translation of the *Logia*, we must afterwards investigate.

II. If in such parallel passages we notice an unusually rich Aramaic colouring, and, III., if the verbs differ in voice or tense, we have confirmatory evidence. This evidence is much increased if IV. be also present: that is, if two divergent Greek words in the several Gospels can be shown to be derived from the same Aramaic consonants, only differently vocalized. But No. V. is our main support. If in homologous passages which possess some or all of these marks we come across two Greek words, in two several Gospels, which are unlike in meaning, but these meanings can be shown to belong to one and the same Aramaic word, we may then with confidence affirm that

the two Greek words have been translated from the same Aramaic original. For instance, Matthew vi. 12 says: "Forgive us our debts," *ῥφειλῆματα*; Luke xi. 4: "Forgive us our sins," *ἁμαρτίας*. Why this disagreement in so peculiarly sacred a passage? If the prayer had originally been given by our Lord in Greek, such a diversity would be impossible. When we remember however, that the Aramaic word ܘܒܝܢ means (1) a trespass, (2) a debt, we perceive that the two evangelists were translating the same word ܘܒܝܢ. We intend to adduce about *thirty* clear cases like this.

Our most numerous instances will, as in our illustrations, fall under VI. If in those parallel passages in the synoptists which are redolent with Aramaisms, and present a substantial, but not verbal agreement, we note that the verbal differences can, by re-translation, be shown to be due to a mistake between two Aramaic letters, or to a confusion between two Aramaic words, alike in sound or appearance; or to the transposition of two letters, or the omission of a letter in the original, we may with almost equal confidence affirm that the evangelists were translating from the same Aramaic source.

VII. We hope also to show that some of the most ancient of the "various readings" in the New Testament are traceable to a variant translation of a primitive Aramaic document, or perhaps a "various reading" in different copies of the document itself.

There are several deeply interesting and important ramifications of our theory into which we hope to enter, but upon which we cannot now expatiate. Suffice it to say that we are hopeful that our theory will establish its claims to be regarded as a demonstration by satisfying the test to which every valid hypothesis should conform—that it gives a fairly "satisfactory explanation of all the phenomena in question."

J. T. MARSHALL.