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Matt. xii. 43-45.

PROF. E. P. GOULD.

THE form of this statement, in both Matthew and Luke (xi. 24-26), makes our Lord say that the disastrous result takes place whenever the unclean spirit leaves a man. The condition of all that follows is found in that one act of leaving. This is manifestly absurd, and the only way to get rid of the absurdity is to extend the conditional part of the statement through verse 44, so that it will read, "Whenever the unclean spirit has gone out from the man, and goes through waterless places, seeking rest and finding it not; and it says, I will return into my house, whence I came out; and having come, it finds it empty, swept and garnished; then it goes and takes with it seven other spirits, more evil than itself, and having entered, they dwell there, and that man's last condition becomes worse than the first." That is, the thing which determines the spirit's return is that he finds the house unoccupied, and the lesson is that a man must not only expel his evil spirits, but fill himself with good ones. But it does not follow that the house is left empty whenever the evil spirit departs. Or the statement may be left as it is, simply introducing a conditional particle before *εἰρίσκει* in verse 44, so that it will read, "and having come, if it finds it empty." What is wanted is to make this one thing, on which evidently the result depends, contingent.

It has occurred to the writer that the evident misplacing of the connectives in the Greek gospels may have arisen from the use of the simple connectives in the Aramaic speech of Jesus. There, the simple copulative conjunctions being used, the logical connections of the several statements are not indicated, but left to be implied from the nature of the whole and the evident relations of the parts. Then, in transferring it into Greek, it is easy to see how the proper connection of the parts may have been missed.