

T H E

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IN WHAT LANGUAGE WAS MATTHEW'S GOSPEL ORIGINALLY WRITTEN?

BY D. M'ALLISTER.

THREE opinions have been broached and more or less widely entertained among Biblical scholars as to the original of the Gospel according to Matthew. One is, that the Greek text is the original. Another sets forth that this gospel was first written in Hebrew, or more accurately speaking, Syro-Chaldaic, the vernacular language of the inhabitants of Palestine in the days of the evangelist. The remaining one seeks to reconcile the two preceding views by assuming a *double* original—an inspired and independent gospel in each of the above languages. In weighing the testimony adduced in favor of these different opinions we will take them up in reverse order.

I. *The theory of a double original.* This, though supported by such names as Bloomfield, Olshausen and Thiersch, who, accepting a Hebrew original, are still loth to part with the Greek, bears upon its face the stamp of a shift made to avoid a difficulty. True, instances of an author writing a work in two languages are not unknown. Josephus, for example, as he himself tells us, wrote his History of the Jewish Wars originally in Hebrew, and subsequently translated it into Greek. But such cases are not parallel to the one in question; for in all of them the second performance is essentially, and even formally, a *translation* of the first, whereas the theory under consideration is that Matthew wrote his gospel in two entirely independent forms, first in Hebrew, afterward in Greek, the latter *not* a translation of the former, and both alike inspired.

No satisfactory reason can be given why this particular book of Scripture should be signalized by a double original and a reduplicate inspiration. Other portions of the New Testament were primarily intended for Jews though designed also for Greeks. Why, then, should there not be a double original for them as well as for the Gospel of Matthew? The other gospels were no less liable to omissions and interpolations than this. What special call, therefore, could there be

poses of carousal than of prayer, and we have every reason to believe that Rehoboam was not of a prayerful frame of mind, at all. So we must look elsewhere for examples of mischief resulting from young men's prayer meetings. And, rather than spend time in fruitless search for such mischief, let us heartily thank God if the spirit of prayer and work has taken hold of the hearts of any of the young men of the church. And let us, rather than find fault with the young brethren for laboring and seeking grace to aid them in their labors, rejoice as Moses did, when some nervous old gentlemen informed him that Eldad and Medad were transgressing the bounds of propriety in religious effort. Instead of rebuking the young men, he exclaimed, "Would that all the Lord's servants were prophets!"

No right-minded young men will shut the door of the prayer room in the face of the fathers. On the contrary, the fathers will doubtless be warmly welcomed and affectionately looked up to for counsel, in every "young men's prayer meeting," where they go in proper spirit. Anybody who goes to such a meeting in a fault-finding disposition, need hardly expect any welcome at all.

Pray on, young men; work on; for there is work for you to do, and you need God's grace, that you may do it. And when discouragement is thrown in your way, by the doubtful, of any age whatever, come all the more boldly, hopefully, and "with full assurance of faith," to the throne of grace.

A. T.

Missionary Intelligence.

SYRIA MISSION.

LATAKIYEH, Oct. 27, 1867.

DEAR BROTHER—When I wrote to the Board of Missions two or three weeks ago, my letter grew so long on my hands that I was ashamed to make it any longer, although I had plenty more to say; and besides, the arrival of the mail steamer made it impossible to transgress further on the patience of my brethren, the members of the Board, if I had been so resolved. And now, it is not my turn to write to the Board—in truth, the time has not yet come around for anybody to write; so that I cannot now finish my story "*resmiyan*," as the Arabs say; or in plain English, officially! So, what circumstances forbade me to say to the Board, I take the liberty to say to its excellent and most venerable chairman.

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Then in reference to another subject to which allusion was made in some of the recent letters of the Board, and to which I had not space and time to advert when writing on behalf of the Mission, a few words will not be out of place here. I mean the length of time which has elapsed without Miss Crawford's having entered fully on her missionary labors. It is quite natural that this should give rise to more or less of a feeling of disappointment at home; but such a feeling, if it exists, is due, more than any thing else, to a want of acquaintance with the facts of missionary experience. I suppose it is not generally known in America that the most elementary branch of school teaching—simple

reading—is beyond the power of almost any European, till he has spent years in the country. There are plenty of missionaries, and some of them very efficient missionaries, who have been here from ten to fifteen years, who have never been able to tame their tongues to Arabic habits so far as to make it possible for them to achieve a decent measure of success in an attempt to teach a class of children to read; and Miss Crawford would have much to boast of if she could do it efficiently after another year given wholly to the study of the language. It was never expected—by us, I mean—that she could do this till she had been many years in the country, or that she would ever have occasion to do it at all. But what she could have done is this: if she had found a school in existence, under a corps of competent native teachers, she could very soon after her arrival—long before now—have taken upon herself the superintendence of it, and given such direction to its instruction and discipline as to make it an effective evangelistic agency, and added to the branches taught by her native assistants, such European accomplishments as to make it an object of attraction to the community; and it was for this specific service that we brought her out to Syria. Such a school was in existence (and it comprised fifty or sixty bright little Arab girls) when the Mission sought to be reinforced by a female teacher from America.

The dissolution of the school by the anathemas of the semi-papal church to which the children belonged, was one of the unforeseen vicissitudes of missionary experience, which neither was nor ought to have been counted on; that is, it ought not to have been so counted on as to hinder us from making the necessary provision for turning to the best account such a school when we shall have the like in our hands again, as we have no doubt we shall in due time; although not till it shall have attained by a gradual process of growth the dimensions which on the first trial, before opposition awoke, it had at the outset. When the Mission opened a girls' school last year, it was the first thing of the kind that had been seen in Latakiah, and it took the clergy at unawares, so that they were not prepared to oppose the commencement of it. Besides, it was gratuitous. When it is reopened it will have to compete with a female school organized since then by the Greeks—a very poor one, to be sure, but heartily supported by the clergy, who will be prepared to meet our efforts to get up a rival institution, with a well-concerted opposition—and we intend to charge for tuition, except in some of the lowest branches, or in the case of children of very poor people, and to give more full and direct religious instruction than we have ever heretofore been free to give in our day-schools in town; two conditions which will necessarily be very unpopular with the people of Latakiah. Such being our plan, and such the situation, it is highly desirable to have the advantage of external circumstances the most favorable in making our start—an attractive place, commodious rooms, and able native assistance. The two former we shall have in high perfection in our new mission-house, and it is impossible to get an approximation to them elsewhere in town; the last would not pay cost any where but in the new buildings; so that I am fully of the opinion that it would be better to wait till the mission-house is ready before opening

the school, even if that should not be for six months to come. Still we have to make some compromise with the impatience of some of the people at home, a thing which missionaries in a comparatively new field are often under strong temptation to carry to a sinful length; but when it can be done at small expense and without compromising matters in the field, I suppose it is often allowable and sometimes dutiful, especially when there is impatience to allay in the Mission as well as at home. We hope to meet the exigencies of the present case by a temporary arrangement, which will not hinder but rather promote the success of the plans which we have laid for the future, and in the meantime be productive of some good. There is a nice girl at Idlib, the daughter of our native helper there, to whom her father is very desirous of giving a good education, and the Mission is desirous of helping him in it, in the hope that she will in the future be useful to us as a teacher. She can now teach little girls to read well enough, and perhaps teach them to write a sort of a way. Her we intend, as soon as we can go to Idlib, to bring with us, and board her in one of our families, and as soon as she comes, we shall open a school in as good a room for the purpose as we can get, for a limited number (say a dozen) of girls, and give her to Miss Crawford for an assistant, till our own rooms are ready, when we must look out for an accomplished native assistant, that we may have a school fit to recommend for all purposes to the general public, and for admission to which we can reasonably make the payment of a respectable fee, a preliminary condition; and then this Idlib girl will turn in and be a pupil, still continuing to board in one of our families, till she shall have acquired a good education. We would have gone on this errand to Idlib several weeks ago, but a journey thither involves also a journey to Aleppo, the whole of which would have required a longer absence from home than we could afford, considering how full our hands were with the affairs of the Fellahin, and how many excursions we have been called to make into their country, the attention required by the building, and the confinement of Mrs. Beattie, which took place two or three weeks ago, not to mention that since we have emerged somewhat from the depths of pecuniary embarrassment, we have been making an effort, which hitherto has been but partially successful, to supply ourselves with horses, which have become quite a necessity to us, as the state of our work has come to demand a good deal of traveling. But we hope that one or the other of us will soon make a missionary journey to Aleppo and Idlib. In the mean time, more to allay Miss Crawford's impatience than anything else, we have set her at teaching three or four little girls; for, although making very remarkable progress in the knowledge of Arabic, she had become so impatient as to be quite unhappy, because she was not teaching. She feels better now. By the way, our Mission was earnestly solicited to let her go to Beirut this fall to take the oversight for six months of a large female boarding-school there, till they could supply themselves with a principal from the United States. They would have paid her salary for the time that she would have staid there—and something more, if we had demanded it—if we had but consented to let her go; but we thought it wiser not to accede to their request; although the time for

which they asked for her would have about filled up the interval that is likely to elapse before we can hope to give her full work here.

When we commenced to build our mission-house we hoped to have it finished about New Year's. From the progress that we have made, (which, by the way, is by no means despicable) we are hardly warranted to hope to see it finished before spring. We have met with no hindrances, but we cannot get as many workmen as we would like to employ. Deliberation, and, we trust, divine direction, have led us to modify our plan, so as to make it more comprehensive than in our first conception of it. We have long felt that one important arm of our Mission was paralyzed when we ceased to have an establishment for Fellah boarding-scholars. The establishment which for several years we kept up for that purpose, although very unsatisfactory, being in a great measure confided to the care of natives, on account of its distance from our own houses, thus making it impossible to guard against much waste in the boarding of the boys, and equally impossible for us to be constantly cognizant of their behavior, or directly cognizant of it at all for more than a small part of the four and twenty hours, was nevertheless the means of perhaps half the success which we have hitherto achieved. How much greater would have been the advantage if we had had the boys under the same roof with ourselves!—and how much greater still, if instead of boys only we had had under our care an equal number of Fellah girls! The latter, of course, we *could* not have except under our own roof; nor was it well to have even male boarding-scholars in a distant part of the town mainly under the care of native employers—taught, it is true, by Christian men, but boarded by a man of more doubtful character. For this reason, we did not regret it much when more than two years ago the man who had charge of the boarding-house resigned his post and refused to serve any longer. In all this part of the country there was no man that would have taken his place, nor any one who, if he had taken his place, would have discharged the duties of it half so well as he did, imperfectly as that was. But neither argument nor illustration is needed to make it plain, that considering the physical, social, moral and spiritual condition of the Fellahin, a most important and efficient means of promoting their evangelization, would be a boarding-school for their boys and girls under the same roof with a mission family, and under the immediate supervision and control of a missionary.

In planning our mission-house, we had this in view from the first, but still intended to confine ourselves at the outset to the erection of such a building as would do little more than furnish accommodations for day-schools for both sexes, and for public worship, purposing to meet the exigencies of boarding-schools, by wings added to the building at some future time,—a time, too, which ought not to be far in the future, for the want of boarding-schools is pressing all the time. But when we came to reflect on it, we found that this extension of the buildings necessary for boarding-schools, if made at a future time, would cost one or two thousand dollars—perhaps even above the last mentioned figure—more than it would cost by adding another story to the building, and thus putting it on the foundation already laid, and under the roof that

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we must have in any case; which seemed to us a sinful waste of money, and we modified the plan accordingly. In the plan which we are now carrying out, we have ample accommodations, 1st, for public worship; 2d, for a male and female school of from 60 to 75 pupils each; 3d, for the boarding and lodging of at least 12 boys and as many girls, who can go down stairs to school and take their lessons with the day-scholars—together with room for all the stores of provisions necessary for so many boarders, and for the two servants to sleep, who will be needed to do the work of the establishment; and 4th, for a mission family to keep charge of the whole establishment; for which accommodations, of course, the family that uses them will, at the present rate of rents in Latakiyeh, pay \$100 (gold) per annum to the Mission treasury. Less than this amount of room in the mission-house will not furnish accommodations for all the different branches of labor for which the station calls—preaching, day-schools, and boarding-schools. It will cost more than the original estimate, but far less than the cost of any patch-work which by future additions would bring the building up to the requisite dimensions.

I take for granted, that the importance of the proposed boarding-schools is unhesitatingly recognized, the more especially as they would open the highest possible sphere of usefulness to Miss Crawford; but the question naturally arises in your mind, “when will these boarding-schools be in operation?” to which I think I may safely answer, as soon after the building is finished, as we are supplied with the necessary funds for carrying them on. The next question, of course, will be, “what will it cost to carry them on?” and to this I can answer approximately, that to board 20 scholars, 10 of each sex, would not cost more than \$1,250 in gold. For a smaller number, the cost will be somewhat more in proportion, and for a larger number somewhat less. The building furnishes ample room for 15 boarders of each sex, 30 in all. Now, let us suppose we have 20 boarders, 10 of each sex, at an annual cost of \$1,250. To meet this expense in part, we have already Mr. Lyde’s annuity of £60—\$300; then the rent paid by the family that lives in the mission-house—\$100. This is all pretty sure. Then we may, perhaps, count—not at first, but after we have overcome the prejudices of the Latakiyans, and the opposition of the clergy—on some income from the day-schools, say \$200 per annum. Then as we have about three acres of ground, I think it might be so managed if we were but able to fence it in, as to diminish the expenses by, say \$100 per annum. Thus we have \$400 sure, besides \$300 more or less problematic; leaving of the \$1,250 only \$850, or \$550, to be furnished from America;—and is it worth while to let such a paltry sum stand in the way of having in operation such a mighty evangelistic agency, as would be a boarding-school containing ten Fellahin boys and ten Fellah girls, the latter under the constant instruction and control of Miss Crawford, and all of them under the eye of a missionary all the time, and listening every Sabbath to the preaching of the Gospel? And is it worth while for the sake of say \$1000 of difference in the cost of our mission-house, to stop the building of it at a point short of what is demanded for the accommodation of such a boarding-school, with the certainty that we

cannot afterward provide the room for it at a cost of less than \$3,000 or more?

The little schools out in the villages, too, are of excellent use in preparing boys for such a boarding-school, and enabling us to discern in candidates for admission to it, the presence or absence of signs of promise. We had six of them till the late troubles came in the mountains. Since then we have had but two, but we hope soon again to have six, as the troubles of the Fellahin have in a great measure subsided. We ought to have ten or a dozen of them, but we cannot get so many teachers. The average cost of these country schools is about \$100 each per annum. If we had ten of them they would cost about \$1,000, and the money would be well laid out. The other expenses of different kinds, connected with the work here, if the schools in town were once re-opened, might be assumed at \$250 per annum; so that the whole expense of the work in the Latakiyeh field, when the boarding-school and all shall be in operation, will amount to not less than \$2,500 per annum in gold.

But to return to the mission-house. I forgot to observe that from the time when it shall be finished till the time when it shall be wanted for the boarding-school, there will be ample accommodation in it for a second mission family, who will be glad to get it, at a rent of \$100 per annum. So that, to sum up all, besides the uses at first sought to be served by it, it will accommodate from 20 to 30 boarders of both sexes, and a family to take care of them; and bring in, so long as it is not used for a boarding-school, a revenue of \$200 in gold, to the Mission treasury; and after it comes to do full duty as a boarding-school, it will still yield a revenue of \$100. And it is so ingeniously contrived, that in the schools and in the boarding department the two sexes will be as completely separated, except at hours of prayer, as if they were at opposite ends of the town. It will cost considerably more than the first estimate, as I intimated the other day, when I wrote to the Board; but, as I have just taken pains to explain, it will serve, and serve well, an important—I might say necessary—end not contemplated by the Board in making the appropriation; and the whole cost will be much less, I think, than you would have thought to be requisite to the attainment of all these ends; and certainly much less than you would think it possibly could be, if you saw the building. I believe the funds raised last year for that purpose would cover the whole expense; but since the Board has found it necessary to apply a part of those funds to the defraying of the ordinary expenses of the Mission, it will be necessary to meet the demands of the case in some other way. This, with the consent of the Board—which I think may in this matter be safely counted on—may be considered as partly done already. The proceeds of Dr. Matheny's practice since spring has exceeded the amount of his salary for the same period by more than £50. There is no reason, at least none that I can see, why this surplus may not be turned over for good and all to the building-fund; and on the other £100 of the proceeds of the Doctor's practice, which is supposed to cover his half year's salary, we might at least be allowed to rest temporarily so as to keep us out of difficulties. Also, if his practice for

the next half year yields a surplus over the amount of his salary for the same period—a thing which, however, is never certain beforehand—it might be disposed of in the same way as I have suggested in reference to the surplus of the last six months. Then, you know, an effort has been unsuccessfully made to reinforce the Mission to strengthen the Aleppo branch of the work. This reinforcement, since we have taken the Aleppo field in hand, has become an imperative necessity; but it is certain that it will not be accomplished for a year to come, and most probably not for two years. Now if the attempt which you have recently made, had succeeded, it would have called at once for an additional outlay of well up to \$1,000 per annum. And so long as the Mission is not reinforced, and a missionary residing in Aleppo has to shoulder the responsibilities and do the work which naturally belongs to two men, it will be no grievance to the Church to contribute to the finishing of the buildings, up to the point of highest utility, any amount that may be necessary for that end not exceeding what would have been requisite for the support of the new missionary from the time when he ought, if possible, to have been appointed, till the time when he shall actually have been appointed. This will only be furnishing for an object which Providence has indicated and placed within reach, funds, which the Church had intended to furnish for another object, to which Providence has, in the mean time, barred the way. And it will have the salutary effect of keeping, or rather bringing, up the liberality of the Church to the point which will be necessary to support the Mission after its contemplated reinforcement; and the effort which it will require will not be the tenth part so hard on any contributor, as it will be for a mission family to live a year, or a year and a half, alone in Aleppo. * * * * *

I have great faith in the success of the work in the Aleppo field. We have most excellent native helpers there. In Aleppo itself, the people to whom we would address ourselves are almost all papists, and popery is now going down so fast in Europe that they must soon feel the foundation, on which they have been standing, giving away under their feet. I had a letter ten days ago from our native helper in Aleppo. He had a school of thirty-eight boys, and his wife had a school of fifty girls; and they are not simply secular, but actively evangelistic schools. I have not had word from Idlib so lately; but the work there too is in a prosperous condition. The tuition in both places is gratuitous, and it must continue so in Idlib, for the people are poor, but when we remove to Aleppo we intend to put the school in that city on a paying basis, or rather a charging basis; for the charge will suddenly reduce the schools so much that they will come far short of paying expensés.

We have not yet decided who is to go to Aleppo. I would like to go to Aleppo, and I would also like to stay here; but I can't do both. Bro. Beattie is also perfectly willing to go to Aleppo, if the choice of the Mission should fall on him to go. If we have a boarding-school here—which we ought to have—we cannot count on working the two fields at an expense of less than from \$3,000 to \$3,500 per annum in gold, besides missionaries' salaries.

During the past year we have not by any means been lying on our oars; but we have been rowing against a strong current, and made little visible progress. Still, we are further on than a spectator unacquainted with the circumstances would imagine. Those who, from among the Fellahin, have believed in Christ during the course of our labors, are scattered over the country in their homes, or in schools which they are teaching, far from Latakiyeh and far from one another, so that it has hitherto been impossible to organize them into one visible body, and hence they make no show. So also those who being more or less enlightened, are inquiring after truth, are in like manner scattered and isolated. The consequence is, that if a brother missionary arriving at Latakiyeh, on a journey, were to stay a week, or even a month, he might go away without seeing any of these converts or inquirers, and would be sure to go away without seeing them assembled in one body. Their scattered condition too, makes it impossible to keep them under so advantageous a supervision as if they all lived in one place, or in one neighborhood, or to concentrate their influence on any one point. Latakiyeh does not feel them at all, any more than if they had no existence. But these are disadvantages under which we must labor for some time to come. In the meantime, although our Fellahin followers are too far away and too much scattered to meet with us in Latakiyeh from Sabbath to Sabbath, or to meet with one another at all, we still have had a congregation to preach to in Latakiyeh, not very large it is true, during the past summer, seldom numbering more than twenty, and most of these not natives of the town, but several of them likely to make their permanent residence here for the future; and this is quite an advance on former times; for up till the time that I went to America, during the summer vacation, when the Fellah boarders and the school teachers were scattered to their homes, we never could have a congregation at all, of more than two or three hearers. It appears, it is true, to be a great decline from the much larger congregations which assembled for awhile during the last year of my visit to America; but that sudden accession of members was an exceptional case, depending on transient cases, and was chiefly made up of poor people who became suddenly inspired with a hope that we would buy them by paying for them the small sum laid on them severally by the Turkish government as commutation for military service. This was not apparent at the time, but became known afterward. So the great decline since then is only apparent, while the comparatively smaller gain is substantial. One great obstacle with which we have still to contend, and shall have to contend till the Redeemer in his providence chooses to take it out of the way—and he will do it, when he has sufficiently tried our patience—is the bondage in which all the people here are to one another, and the multitude to a few. To illustrate the state of society in this respect by an example: there is one man here who, I firmly believe, would like to worship with us every Sabbath, and yet he never comes at all, and the reason is because he dare not, for there is but one thing on earth that he can do for a living, and if he would come to preaching two or three days his employment would be taken from him, and with his employment the daily bread of himself and family. Of course he is not a converted

man, or he would do his duty regardless of consequences. But it is unconverted men especially that we want to preach to, for faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God; and this bondage, under which almost every man in Latakiah is, at present, as ruthlessly and inextricably held as the one whose case I have mentioned, while it would have no power to hinder a believer from confessing, is all-powerful to hinder unbelievers from hearing. It is less felt in large cities, like Beirut and Aleppo, than in small towns like Latakiah; for there, there are more avenues to remunerative employment open to every one; but even at Beirut it was terribly felt at the beginning of the evangelistic work there; and I doubt whether the Mission work was as far advanced there after the lapse of twenty years or even twenty-five—it is now nearly fifty years old there—as it is here now. And what we need here most of all, next to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, is some startling dispensation of Providence, as severe as that which fell upon the poor Fellahin in the mountains this fall, which will tear apart that interlacing of interests which makes every man dependent on everybody else, and destroys all individual independence.

But I cannot write any more now; and as I have not done yet, you may expect to hear from me soon again. I don't intend to allow any long interval to elapse between my letters till I have made you acquainted with the whole situation. I will only add, that I hope the remittance of £200 for Mission expenses, for which we wrote in our last letter to the Board, will be on its way before you receive this; for if it is not, we will be in distress before it comes; and while I mention this, I do not forget that the unusually heavy drafts made on our people last year for the Mission buildings and for the reinforcement of the Mission, furnish a very good reason why the Board should be circumspect at the present time in its outlays, as we also are endeavoring to economize to the utmost that is consistent with the old maxim against being penny wise and pound foolish. Mrs. Dodds joins with me in the most affectionate good wishes to yourself and family.

Faithfully yours,

R. J. DODDS.

THE WASHINGTON MISSION.

IN our last number was published a letter from our missionary at Washington, Rev. J. M. Johnston, containing an account of the interesting exercises connected with the late celebration of the sacrament of the supper in that city. It is certainly a great satisfaction to know that our efforts to benefit the freedmen have thus, at last, been accompanied with some success. The fact that four of these people have already connected themselves with the church, and that in all probability others soon will, silences entirely those persons who argue that our creed prevents our Mission acting successfully among the ignorant and degraded. Only after the usual examination, were these applicants admitted. We regard what has already been accomplished but as the earnest of the coming harvest, and believe that before long a Covenanter church will be organized in Washington, in which white