PART I
THE APPROACH

CHAPTER I

PREVIOUS WORK ON THE ARAMAIC OF THE
GOSPELS AND ACTS

In his Worte Jesu, the most elaborate study of the Aramaic of the Gospels hitherto undertaken, Gustaf Dalman includes a review of work prior to and contemporary with his own; his account may be supplemented by Arnold Meyer's Jesu Mutter-
sprache, in which Meyer also undertook to interpret and explain the Gospels from Aramaic originals.

Among earlier scholars the two most outstanding names are those of Wellhausen and Nestle. In his Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien, the former presented a certain amount of linguistic evidence which led him to think that an Aramaic document had been used by the author of the common source of Matthew and Luke known as Q, and possibly also by Mark. Similar views were held by Nestle and, among others, by Blass, who believed that Acts i–xii was originally composed in Aramaic by Mark, and that Luke was using a translation of this work.

The criticism which applies to this earlier work generally, and which was made by Dalman, is that it is defective on the linguistic side: Wellhausen, for instance, made no attempt to illustrate his observations of Aramaic construction or usage from the available sources of Palestinian Aramaic literature.

2 Leipzig, 1866; cf. pp. 72–140. An historical sketch of early ecclesiastical interest in the subject is given, pp. 7–35.
4 Philologica Sacra (Berlin, 1896).
In spite of this serious defect, however, much of the work of these earlier scholars is of permanent value. Not every Aramaic requires to be fully 'documented'; an Aramaic idiom may be so well known that illustrations of it are superfluous. And in other cases examples from the literature are not difficult to produce. In at least two instances of this kind from the work of Wellhausen and Nestle, Dalman did less than justice to the evidence, and the alternative explanations which he offers are much less satisfactory than those which he rejects.

Wellhausen's brilliant conjecture that the Synoptic variants καθάρσαν (Mt. xxiii. 26) and δότε ἐλεημοσύνην (Lk. xi. 41) go back to dakkau and zakkau respectively, and that in Luke the former, 'cleanse', has been wrongly read as the latter, 'give alms', has survived criticism.¹ The objection raised by Dalman, though with obvious hesitation, to the possibility of a confusion between the two verbs is unreal; and his alternative explanation that Luke is a kind of exposition of Matthew's Greek, the 'cleansing' of the vessels consisting of the distribution of their contents as alms, is forced.

It may be that δότε ἐλεημοσύνην in Luke is less a mistranslation than a wrong but deliberate interpretation of the Aramaic, made all the more easy, if, as Wellhausen maintained, the two verbs were originally identical in orthography. But the genesis of Luke's reading is quite certainly to be found in a wrong understanding of Aramaic dakko, 'cleanse' (dakkau is a Syriac form).

To Nestle's explanation that Luke's 'cities' in his form of Matthew's parable of the Talents (Lk. xix. 17 f.) has arisen as a result of a misunderstanding of סרוב 'talents' ('םropolis being 'cities'), Dalman objected that karškha is not the usual word for 'city' in Palestinian Aramaic.² There is, it is true, a more general word corresponding to πόλις, namely, mōdhinta; but both for

¹ Einl.4, p. 27; cf. Dalman, op. cit., pp. 50 and 71. Both verbs are fully attested for Jewish Palestinian Aramaic in these senses, saikki, 'to give alms', by Dalman himself from the Palestinian Talmud (p. 71, Worts Jesu).

² Worts Jesu, p. 53. The suggestion was first made by Nestle in the Theologische Literaturzeitung for 1895, No. 22; it is repeated in his Philologica Sacra, p. 22, and endorsed by Meyer, op. cit., p. 137.
larger and smaller 'cities', and especially for the fortified towns of Palestine, for which πόλις is employed in both LXX and New Testament, kar'kha is the usual word; in the Pseudo-Jonathan Targum of Num. xxiv. 19, kar'kha is used of Rome.

An observation of Nestle in his Philologica Sacra,1 unnoticed by Dalman, is worth recalling. Nestle cited from a privately circulated essay of Field (of the Hexapla) on the 'First Recorded Utterance of Jesus Christ' the latter's claim that ἐν τοῖς τοῦ πατρός μου in Lk. ii. 49 mistranslated Hebrew beth 'abhi'; this 'original Hebrew' of Luke should have been rendered ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ τοῦ πατρός μου: the LXX's rendering of beth occasionally by the neuter plural of the definite article, e.g. Gen. xli. 51, Esther v. 10, vi. 12, vii. 9, Job xviii. 19, was adduced in support of the conjecture, and Irenaeus's version of Jn. xiv. 2, ἐν τοῖς τοῦ πατρός μου,2 for the Greek text of John, ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ τοῦ πατρός μου, was cited as a case of the opposite mistranslation.3

What Field claimed for Hebrew holds also for Aramaic: Aramaic beth 'abba is ambiguous and may be rendered in either way; F. C. Burkitt actually renders the Old Syriac translation of ἐν τοῖς τοῦ πατρός μου in Lk. ii. 49, namely, beth 'abhi, by 'at my Father's House';4 this is a legitimate rendering of the Syriac, if it were not a translation of Lk. ii. 49; Burkitt's wrong translation, however, illustrates the ambiguity in Aramaic.

Since Wellhausen and Nestle, and partly contemporaneous with their work, the studies of Dalman represent the most important contribution which has been made to the subject.5 Dalman rejected all theories of written Aramaic sources as unproven, and believed that it was in the Words of Jesus only that we had the right to assume an ultimate Aramaic original. Whether he was justified in so confining the range of his study

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1 P. 49.
2 For the use of ἐν τοῖς in the Papyri in the sense of 'in the house of', Moulton, ProL., p. 103.
3 Evangelion da-Mepharreshe, i, in loc.
4 Worte Jesu und Jesus-Jeschua (Leipzig, 1902); Grammatik des jüdisch-palaestinischen Aramäisch (1st edit., Leipzig, 1894; 2nd edit., 1905; reprinted, Darmstadt, 1964); Aramäische Dialektproben (Leipzig, 1927); Aramäisch-neuehebräisches Handwörterbuch (and edit., Frankfurt, 1921).
remains to be considered. In his investigation of the Words of Jesus the exegetical interest is foremost: Dalman is less concerned to consider or estimate the extent of Aramaic influence on the language of the Gospels; he selected a number of the main conceptions, such as 'the kingdom of God', 'the World', 'the Father in Heaven', and sought to elucidate them in the light of their Jewish antecedents and parallels. The Words of Jesus which are discussed under these headings are themselves considered in their Jewish Aramaic form and context. The branch of Palestinian Aramaic to which Dalman attached most importance for his reconstruction of the Words of Jesus was the Aramaic of the Jewish Targums to the Pentateuch and the Prophets.1

Since Dalman, C. C. Torrey and C. F. Burney are the best known names; each attempted to prove the existence of Aramaic originals, the latter to the Fourth Gospel.2 Burney, in a subsequent work, undertook a study of the poetry of Jesus.3 Torrey goes so far as to claim in his first larger work that Aramaic originals lie behind all four Gospels,4 and, on the basis of this

1 *Infra*, p. 15 f.
4 *The Four Gospels: A New Translation* (Harpers, 1929); he makes an exception of Lk. i-ii (Hebrew), Old Testament quotations (Hebrew), and Jn. xxi (Greek). An earlier work is his *Composition and Date of Acts* (Cambridge, Mass., 1916).

In addition to the main works cited, C. C. Torrey has written a number of articles on the subject, e.g. in *Studies in the History of Religions, Presented to C. H. Toy* (New York, 1912), pp. 269–317; *Harvard Theological Review*, xvi (1923), pp. 305–44. The work of Burney and Torrey gave a fresh impetus to the study of the subject in America; see, e.g., articles in *Princeton Theological Review*, vol. xxvi, *Journal of Biblical Literature*, vols. xlix, li, and liii, *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, vol. i. Torrey's most recent article is 'Julius Wellhausen's Approach to the Aramaic Gospels' in *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, Band CI. (N.F. xxvi, 1931), pp. 125–37. Aramaic influence on John was rejected in toto by E. C. Colwell, *The Greek of the Fourth Gospel* (Chicago, 1931). A most useful discussion and summary of conclusions for St. Mark will be found in the chapter on 'The Semitic Background of the Gospel' in Dr. Vincent Taylor's *The Gospel according to St. Mark* (London, 1933). Among more recent continental work, reference should be made to the commentaries of A. Schlater (who is more concerned, however, with rabbinical and Hebrew parallels), and to P. Joüon's 'L’Évangile de Notre-Seigneur Jésus-Christ, traduction et commentaire du texte
view and of numerous conjectural reconstructions of Aramaic, has produced a new translation. He bases his conclusions mainly on examples of mistranslation of Aramaic originals. Most of his examples of mistranslation, however, and several of Burney's, are open to grave objection. Torrey's attempt at a new translation of the Gospels before any adequate presentation of the philological evidence was premature. His second larger study,\(^1\) in which the evidence of language is presented more fully, would have been of greater value had it been undertaken for the Aramaic scholar, and not for 'popular' reading by those who are unaquainted with Aramaic or have no more than a slight working knowledge; the evidence is often over-simplified and incomplete.

Burney's main approach was in this respect the right one, even if he failed to prove his theory of an Aramaic original for the whole of John; he investigated the grammar and syntax of the Gospel in the light of our knowledge of the Aramaic language.

Both Burney and Torrey approach the study of the Aramaic of Jesus on the same linguistic assumptions as Dalman, that the Aramaic of the Targums of Onkelos and the Prophets is the best representative of the Aramaic of Jesus.

Two important articles have recently appeared from the pen of the late A. J. Wensinck of Leyden.\(^2\) The second of these, original grec, compte tenu du substrat sémitique' (Verbum Salutis, v, Paris, G. Beauchesne, éditeur, Rue de Rennes 117, 1930). This latter work contains the results of a number of detailed studies with special reference to Aramaic in Recherches de science religieuse, vols. xvii and xviii, 'Quelques aramaismes sous-jacents au grec des Evangiles' and 'Notes philologiques sur les Evangiles'. Some extremely valuable observations have been made by J. Jeremias in his Abendmahlsorte Jesu (3rd edit., Göttingen, 1960), Die Gleichnisse Jesu (6th edit., Zürich, 1962), and in two articles in the Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft, xxxiv (1935), xxxix (1940). Consult also, among earlier works, A. Schlatter, Sprache und Heimat des vierten Evangelisten (Gütersloh, 1902). See further infra, p. 19 n.

\(^1\) Our Translated Gospels (Hodder Stoughton).

\(^2\) 'The Semitisms of Codex Bezae and their Relation to the non-Western Text of the Gospel of Saint Luke', in the Bulletin of the Bezan Club, xii (Leyden, 1933); the earlier article was 'Un Groupe d'Aramaismes dans le Texte Grec des Évangiles' (Mededelingen der Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen, Afdeeling Letterkunde, Deel 81, Serie A, No. 5).
PREVIOUS WORK ON THE ARAMAIC OF THE

'The Semitisms of Codex Bezæ', represents, in the principles of its approach to the Aramaic of the Gospels, as well as in some of its results, the most important advance in the subject in recent years. Wensinck no longer shared Dalman's view of the importance of Targumic Aramaic; and he extended his investigations to the text of Codex Bezæ. Most other Aramaic scholars, in particular Torrey and Burney, have based their investigations either on the text of Westcott and Hort or on that of Tischendorf.

Three main criticisms may be made of this earlier work of Dalman, Torrey, and Burney, and of the studies of their predecessors and contemporaries such as J. T. Marshall¹ or Arnold Meyer. They apply to a less extent to the pioneer work of Wellhausen or Nestle.

(1) While Dalman's criticism of the inadequacy of the linguistic approach of Wellhausen and Nestle is fully justified, the large claims he makes (accepted without criticism by succeeding workers in the field) for Targumic Aramaic as the primary authority for the language of Jesus cannot now be justified. This criticism, together with suggestions for a fresh approach to the language of Jesus, is developed in the following chapter.

(2) Hitherto most Aramaic scholars of the Gospels have confined themselves almost exclusively to the investigation of Aramaïsms in one text only, that of Westcott and Hort or that of Tischendorf. The unexamined assumption of this textual approach to the subject is that no other text has the same claim to the confidence of scholars as the best single representative of the Apostolic autographs. Wensinck, alone among modern scholars, but following the tradition of Wellhausen, Nestle, and Blass, included in his investigations the text of Codex Bezæ, and was able to claim, as a result of his comparison of the Bezæ text with non-Western texts of Luke, not only that there was much more evidence of Aramaic influence in Bezæ Luke, but also that the isolation and establishment of Aramaïsms in that text contributed substantially to the solution of the great textual problem. For if Aramaic influence is more extensive in one text

¹ In the Expositor, Ser. IV, ii, iii, iv, vi, viii.
rather than another, the presumption is that the ‘Aramaized’
text stands nearer to the kind of Greek which the Apostles
wrote. Other great texts had passed through the process of
διόρθωσις; their more polished Greek is the work of later editors.

Has the Bezan text any claims to represent a more primitive
type of text than that of the Vatican and Sinaitic Codices?
If it has, then Wensinck’s approach is justified, and the Bezan
authority, as the best representative of the ‘Western’ text,
should certainly be included in any investigation of the
Aramaic of Jesus and the Gospels, including Luke–Acts. More-
over, in view of such a textual approach, the study of the
Aramaic of the Gospels will not concern itself solely with
estimating the extent of Aramaic influence, or with questions
of source-criticism; it may also contribute to the textual
criticism of the Greek Gospels. This textual approach is also
discussed more fully in Chapter II.

(3) The third criticism of earlier work, especially the more
recent studies of Torrey and Burney, may be conveniently
considered in the present chapter. Both Torrey and Burney
attach much importance to conjectural mistranslations of
Aramaic as proof of source. Mistranslation of an original is, it
is true, the best proof of translation;¹ but it is doubtful if it can
ever have scientific value as evidence except in cases where
we possess not only the translation but also the original work.
Even then demonstrative proof is not always possible: not all
Syriac scholars accept Burkitt’s view that the Acts of Thomas
was an original Syriac work and the Greek a translation, though
we possess both Syriac and Greek and Burkitt based his hypo-
thesis largely on alleged misrenderings of the Syriac by the
Greek text.² What is not always possible in the most favourable
of circumstances becomes difficult in the extreme when there
is no original with which to compare the ‘translation’.

When a strong case can be made out for the mistranslation of
original Aramaic in the Gospels or Acts, such evidence must be
stated fully. But there are two demands which we can justifiably

make of all such conjectural evidence or proof: the mistranslation must at least be credible; and the conjectured Aramaic must be possible.

Both offences, incredible ‘mistranslations’ and impossible Aramaic, are among the worst features of recent work in the Aramaic of the Gospels. Nearly two generations after J. T. Marshall’s elaborate failure to prove on internal evidence of ‘mistranslation’ the existence of ‘an Aramaic Gospel’, and the considered verdict on such work given by the great Oxford Semitist S. R. Driver, the same kind of mistakes continue to be made. All dialects of the language are ransacked for an expression or usage, however rare and unusual, to explain a difficulty. There are even cases where Aramaic words which do not exist, or are not at any rate found in the lexica or literature, have been invented; and such false coin continues to be circulated by the non-specialist.

S. R. Driver’s judgement of Marshall’s work deserves to be quoted in full:

‘In composition in a foreign language, it is better, surely, to be cautious than to be bold, to be even (it may be) too scrupulous in the choice of expressions than to be not scrupulous enough; and I cannot understand how Prof. Marshall could have postulated for his original Aramaic Gospel, words of which there could be the slightest doubt that they were properly and correctly used, and that they really and unquestionably bore the meanings which he attributes to them. But again and again we find him making use of words to which some doubt attaches: they are not the ordinary and natural words that would be expected; sometimes they are words that do not exist at all; at other times they are either very rare words, the precise meaning of which is not readily determinable, or they are words which do not really express the idea required.’

The following are examples from recent work on mistranslations which are either incredible or linguistically unsound, or both.

In Mk. vii. 3, C. C. Torrey has suggested that an original Aramaic ‘the Jews do not eat at all (טומם, ligmar) without washing their hands’ has been misrendered ‘the Jews do not eat

without washing their hands πυγμῆ, *with the fist* (דְּלָן, *ligmodh*). But דְּלָן (= πυγμῆ) can only be pointed and read as Hebrew l'gomedh; the alleged Aramaic word *gumda*, ‘fist’, and from which *ligmodh*, πυγμῆ, is formed, occurs in none of the lexica. Moreover, Hebrew *gomedh* never means ‘fist’; *gomeḏh*, Aramaic *garmidha*, as likewise πυγμῆ when their equivalent, mean ‘cubit’, ‘ell’, the length of the arm from elbow to finger-tip.

The most likely explanation of the unusual πυγμῆ μισθεῶσαι is that given by John Lightfoot, who cited parallels from the Talmud on the ritual hand-washing before meals which is not to go beyond the wrist. Hand-washings were graded according to the degree of ritual pollution. When a strict ritualist came from the market-place, the greater pollution demanded a ‘plunging’ of the hand to the wrist in special water not less than forty seahs in quantity and contained in a special basin. The ‘dipping’ of the hand or the pouring of water on the hands for lesser degrees of ritual uncleanness did not require such elaborate precautions or preparations. The Talmudic phrases are ‘to plunge to the wrist (*t̄b̄al ‘adh happereq*)’ and ‘to dip or lustrate to the wrist (*m̄f̄al or m̄sh̄i ‘adh happereq*)’. Mark’s θητησαυσα in verse 4 corresponds to the first phrase, where the reference may be to the first type of ritual washing; πυγμῆ μισθεῶσαι may correspond to the second phrase. We may thus take the Marcan expression as equivalent to the Talmudic phrase and meaning ‘to wash the hands in ritual washing’.

In Mk. xiv. 3 (cf. Mt. xxvi. 6), Σίμωνος τοῦ λεπτοῦ is said by Torrey to contain a mistranslation of רָבָה, *garabba*, ‘a jar-merchant’; the same consonants had been misread as *garba*, λεπτός. The noun *garba* is the usual one for ‘leper’, and there is another word with the same consonants found in the Targum and meaning ‘a wine-skin’. But no noun *garabha* meaning ‘a jar-merchant’ appears in any of the lexica.

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1 *The Four Gospels*, in loc., and *Our Translated Gospels*, p. 93.
2 *The Four Gospels*, in loc.
3 In his *Horae Hebraicae*, in loc.
5 *The Four Gospels*, in loc., and *Our Translated Gospels*, p. 96.
6 Mt. xxvi. 6 (D) has λεπτωβα; the Aramaic equivalent adjective is *garban*, a word which might easily be confused with (Talmudic) *gādan* (Targumic *gardai*), ‘a weaver’.
Torrey’s restoration of the Aramaic of Acts ii. 47 has been accepted by a number of scholars; in the *Beginnings of Christianity* J. de Zwaan speaks of this ‘splendid observation of Torrey’, and Foakes-Jackson agreed that ‘an Aramaic original is at the back of this and other strange expressions’. Torrey rejects the ordinary LXX meaning of ἐν τῷ οὖρῷ, ‘together’ (Hebrew יָהַד), and suggests that Luke’s Greek phrase misrenders Aramaic laḥda; the adverb is found in the Palestinian Syriac version of Jn. xvii. 23 and in the Syriac versions of Jn. xi. 52. In Judean dialects of Aramaic it means ‘greatly’ (σφόδρα), and is the Targum equivalent of מִתָּד: a compound of l, ‘to’ and ḥad, ‘one’, laḥda had been mis-translated ἐν τῷ οὖρῷ. The following was the correct translation: ‘And the Lord added greatly day by day to the saved.’

But, as Howard has pointed out, if Luke is translating Aramaic, then he gives the correct rendering of laḥda, namely, σφόδρα, in Acts vi. 7. A still more serious objection is the assumed equation of ἐν τῷ οὖρῷ with laḥda; the evidence of the Syriac versions is irrelevant; laḥda is there equivalent to a quite different phrase, εἰς Ἑρ. The Aramaic adverb laḥda could never be represented in Greek by ἐν τῷ οὖρῷ; the Aramaic for Luke’s Greek adverbial phrase is ἱαδα.

In Jn. i. 5, Burney takes up the earlier suggestion of C. J. Ball

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1 See *Composition and Date of Acts*, p. 10 f., and *Beginnings of Christianity*, I, ii, p. 55, iv, p. 30.
4 This adverb means both ‘together’ and ‘at the same time’, e.g. Isa. lxv. 25, Hebrew ἐν θεό (LXX ὧμιλοι), Dan. ii. 35, Aramaic kahda (LXX ὧμιλοι). This latter meaning would suit Acts ii. 47 (D): ‘And the Lord was adding those who were being saved at the same time in the ecclesia’; the adverb refers back to verse 46—they continued in prayer in the temple, and were breaking bread from house to house, and at the same time, the Lord was adding those who were being saved in the ecclesia. Fresh light is shed on the peculiar Lucian expression προσεδέθη τῷ οὖρῷ by an exact parallel in the *Manual of Discipline* (ed. M. Burrows, 1951), Plate V, line 7, Ἰννυντικὴ ἐνσωματωσμος, where the phrase means ‘to join the congregation’. The relevant Qumrān evidence has now been fully examined by M. Wilcox, op. cit., pp. 93 ff. This is the fullest treatment available of this idiomatic Lucian expression and the Qumrān usage seems conclusive for the sense, ‘to be united to the (Christian) fellowship’ at Acts ii. 47.
that κατέλαβεν is a mistranslation of 'aqbel, 'darkened', which had been misread as qabbel, 'received'.¹ A similar mistranslation is suspected in Jn. xii. 35, ἵνα μὴ σκοτία ὑμῶς καταλάβῃ. But whatever meaning is to be given to κατέλαβεν here, it is not simply 'received', and cannot therefore be equated with qabbel. It may be possible that an original Aramaic read la qabbeh qabhla, 'the darkness did not receive it', a characteristic Aramaic word-play. It is this idea which we find in verse 11. But we have still to account for κατέλαβεν as a rendering of qabbel. Is it perhaps Greek interpretation, the choice of the Greek verb being suggested by its idiomatic use for darkness or night 'overtaking' a person? We may compare xii. 35 or Diodorus, 20. 86, τῆς νυκτὸς καταλαβοῦσας.

One of Burney's most valuable observations of this kind is that μηνογενὴς Θεός in Jn. i. 18 mistranslates γενὶς τῇ ἐλα, 'the only-begotten of God'.² It has an attractive simplicity, is free from philological difficulties, and the Greek reading is unusual. Equally remarkable, however, would be the ignorance of the translator who made the blunder, unless we look on his 'version' as a deliberate theological interpretation of the Aramaic.

Similar objections, mainly philological, may be made to most of the examples of 'mistranslation' of original Aramaic which have been adduced by Torrey and Burney.³ Nevertheless, it would be unfair to overlook a number of valuable suggestions, credible and sound in their proposed Aramaic, of both these scholars. Some of these are quite certainly the best and probably the right explanations of the difficulty in the Greek. And it is only in such instances, where a case both credible and philologically sound can be made out for mistranslation, that this precarious method of approach is justifiable. 'The fascinating pursuit of Aramaic originals may lead to a good percentage of successful guesses; but they are mere guesses still, except when a decided failure in the Greek can be cleared up by an Aramaic

¹ Aramaic Origin, p. 29 f.
² Ibid., p. 40. Professor G. D. Kilpatrick draws my attention to the reading (δ) μηνογενῆς alone (without τις or θεὸς), and adds that some think this is original.
which explains the error, and this acts as corroboration.'

Several of Burney's and Torrey's more convincing examples of mistranslation are considered in later chapters; especially valuable are the former scholar's examples of the mistranslated Aramaic particle ḏ. The following two examples from the work of Torrey merit the description 'brilliant', and deserve to rank with Wellhausen's observation on Mt. xxiii. 26 (Lk. xi. 41).

In Lk. i. 39 he suggests that εἰς τὸν ᾿Ιούδα mistranslated either Hebrew el m’dhinath y’hudhah or Aramaic liy’hudh m’dhinah, i.e. 'into the province, country of Judea', εἰς τὴν χώραν τῆς ᾿Ιούδας; Semitic m’dhina may be either 'province' or 'city'. The objection that m’dhina cannot be shown to have the meaning 'city' when Luke wrote is without foundation so far as general Aramaic, uninfluenced by any local usage, is concerned. But there is reason to think that m’dhina was specially and locally employed in Palestine for 'the Province', i.e. Palestine itself. The definite form m’dhinah meant 'city', and the two forms and uses are as a rule distinguished. An Aramaic l’wath m’dhinah y’hudhah might be translated either εἰς τὸν ᾿Ιούδα ορ εἰς τὴν χώραν τῆς ᾿Ιούδας. A translator who was not a Palestinian Jew may not have been acquainted with the special Jewish Palestinian use of the word, and have rendered by the familiar 'city'.

In Lk. xi. 48 = Mt. xxiii. 31 it is surely remarkable that the parallel in Matthew to Luke's 'ye are building' should be 'ye

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1 Moulton, Gramm. ii, p. 16.
3 Maimonides knew the whole of Palestine as 'the Province' (Levy, Chaldaisches Wörterbuch, ii, p. 10).
4 Where does Torrey's 'stereotyped' y’hudh m’dhinah occur? (cf. Harvard Theological Review, xvii, p. 87).
5 May the Greek πόλει not even have taken on something of the wider meaning of m’dhina = Province, Government, especially in Aramaic/Syriac-speaking areas? (See further, Wilcox, pp. 5 f., 42 ff.)

At Mk. vi. 21 the Harleian Syriac has the interesting marginal variant for τῆς Γαλιλαίας, i.e. τῆς πόλεως. There is no mention made of any 'city' in the context and 'district', 'province' by itself seems bare; perhaps the text read by Syh was τῆς Γαλιλαίας πόλεως (ἤπειρος καὶ ἐπωνύμῳ), the 'Province of Galilee'.
are children (of)'; an Aramaic נַחַת בְּנֵי אָבִּית could be rendered in either way. Moreover, Luke's 'and ye are building' is obviously anti-climax as compared with the clear point made by Matthew. An intentional word-play in the employment of two such similar sounding words may well have been original in the Aramaic of this saying from Q.¹

Wilcox recalls two examples of alleged mistranslation in Acts ii. 47 and iii. 14, both of which possess a high degree of plausibility. The first is the Bezan variant κόσμον for λαόν, possibly arising from the confusion of לְמָתָן and לְמָתָן in the original Aramaic (the confusion is also possible in Hebrew). Alternatively we may prefer to detect the influence on D of a Syriac version, where בָּשָׁם and בָּשָׁם have been similarly confused. Neither explanation can be more than plausible, for it is also possible to explain an alteration of λαόν to κόσμον as the work of a scribe seeking to magnify the impression made by these early converts on the 'whole world'.

The second instance is the Bezan ἐβαπίνατις (d aggravatīs) for ἐμπνώει at Acts iii. 14: here the original in Aramaic (or Hebrew) of ἐμπνώει (undoubtedly the 'true' text) can only have been נַחַת כָּפָר or נַחַת כָּפָר. It has been suggested that the variant ἐβαπίνατις has arisen by confusing the roots כָּפָר and כָּפָר or (so Torrey) כָּפָר and כָּפָר. Wilcox tends to favour Torrey's explanation, but suggests reading נַחַת כָּפָר, Aphel, (= ἐβαπίνατις) instead of Torrey's נַחַת כָּפָר, which it is by no means certain could mean ἐβαπίνατις. The same doubt, however, attaches to the Aphel which (like its Syriac equivalent) means 'to irritate' rather than 'to oppress' (βαπίνει). Nevertheless, some such explanation of this curious variant does seem plausible, for it is difficult to imagine a scribe arriving at ἐβαπίνατις in any other way. Another suggestion is that from an original נַחַת כָּפָר (or נַחַת כָּפָר) a translator gave ἐβαπίνατις in addition to ἐμπνώει by way of an alternative pesher on the original, perhaps understanding the Aramaic word in a Hebrew sense; or he

¹ Our Translated Gospels, p. 103 ff.
² For another instance of this word-play, see infra, p. 145.
may have found a variant which had arisen by corruption, e.g. הָכַּבְדָּא, and understood it in the sense of ‘oppressed’.

This line of evidence, mistranslation of Aramaic, while it can have a secondary value only as necessarily conjectural, cannot therefore be ignored altogether. But it must be pursued with the greatest caution.

The fulfilment of a third condition is desirable. The strongest argument in favour of a mistranslation is its inherent probability in its Aramaic context. Possible mistranslations should be studied, not as isolated phenomena, but, so far as that is possible, in their setting in the Aramaic saying or passage. The advice of S. R. Driver is again worth quoting in full: ‘... in order to judge of it [the translation and mistranslation of Aramaic] properly, we ought to have not single isolated phrases, but entire verses, or at least entire sentences, retranslated into Aramaic, and the origin of the variants in the parallel texts, examined and accounted for, one by one.’

1 Expositor, Ser. IV, viii, p. 430 f.