## NOTES AND STUDIES

## THE ORIGINAL LANGUAGE OF THE SYRIAC ACTS OF JOHN.

The History of John the Son of Zebedee is the first of the Syriac pieces published by Wright in his Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles.¹ In his preface Dr Wright wrote: 'These Acts, which are obviously translated from the Greek, being of comparatively late date, and to all appearance destitute of any historical basis, are chiefly valuable from the linguistic point of view' (p. ix). This pronouncement, combined with the fact that the older MS states in the title that the work was translated from the Greek, seems to have warned off scholars from asking any further questions about the origin of the Acts. Considering the number and, in many cases, the peculiar character of the Gospel citations they contain, it is not a little strange that this should have been so; and in spite of the great authority of Dr Wright I am about to maintain that the piece was in reality composed in Syriac, and further, that the Gospel text used by the author was the Diatessaron.

I must begin by noticing the objection which is raised against this view by the title of the older MS (A). It runs: 'The history of John, the son of Zebedee, who lay upon the breast of our Lord Jesus at the supper, and said, "Lord, who betrayeth Thee?" This history was composed by Eusebius of Caesarea concerning St John, who found it in a Greek book, and it was translated into Syriac, when he had learned concerning his way of life and his birth and his dwelling in the city of Ephesus, after the ascension of our Lord into heaven.'<sup>2</sup>

In the other MS, B, the title has nothing about either Eusebius or a Greek original. It runs: 'The history of the holy and beloved Mār John the Evangelist, who spoke and taught and baptized, by the help of our Lord Jesus the Messiah, in the city of Ephesus.'

Now if we turn to the colophon we shall find reason to believe that the title of B is the more ancient. A reads: 'Here ends the doctrine of John, the son of Zebedee, who (leaned on the breast of our Lord at the supper, and) instructed and taught and baptized in the city of Ephesus.' B omits the bracketed words.

Thus in B the title is taken up quite naturally by the colophon;

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The text printed is that of a St Petersburg MS of the sixth cent. (A). Variants are given from a British Museum MS of the ninth cent. (B).

<sup>2</sup> Wright's rendering.

while the chief point of connexion between the title of A and the colophon lies in the words omitted by B.

If then there is any question of either of the MSS having preserved the original title of the piece the probabilities are on the side of B rather than of A.

In what follows I have to try and establish two points: (1) that the Acts of John is a Syriac composition, (2) that the author used the Diatessaron.

With regard to the latter it must be said at once that the existing text of the Gospel citations agrees for the most part with the Peshitta, especially in passages with a theological bearing. But there remain a considerable number of readings which could not have come from the use of the Peshitta, and several of these agree with known readings of the Old Syriac and the Diatessaron. We must be prepared, then, for a large amount of assimilation to the Vulgate text even in a MS of the sixth century. This process is several times betrayed by the variants of the later MS, B sometimes bringing expressions into line with later theological language, sometimes preserving a reading which implies the use of one of the older versions, i. e. either of syr. vt. or of the Diatessaron.

But it was not the character of the Gospel quotations that first led me to question Dr Wright's verdict that the Acts were translated from the Greek.¹ There are certain ideas, theological conceptions, and modes of expression, which are extremely characteristic of Syriac writers; and there are far too many of these crowded into the Acts of John to allow us to think of the work as a translation from Greek. In giving some examples of these Syriac characteristics I shall, with Professor Burkitt, count the Acts of Judas Thomas and also the Syriac Acts of Philip² as original Syriac documents. That the former work was composed in Syriac is now recognized, and I am personally convinced that the same must be said of the latter also.

## Evidence of Syriac authorship.

1. On p. 4 (transl.) the demons are called 'the sons of the left hand', and on p. 11 the Apostle prays that the Lord would direct his path 'to the right hand'. The expressions 'sons of the right hand', 'sons of the left hand', or simply 'the right hand', 'the left hand', are found over and over again in Syriac writings to denote the good and the bad, without any attempt to explain the allusion to Mt. xxv 31 ff. A good example of the bald manner in which the allusion is sometimes made is to be found in St Ephraim's tract against Julian: 'For all of them were

<sup>1</sup> Of the supposed Greek original nothing is known.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> See Evangelion Da-Mepharreshe ii p. 106 note 3.

depending upon the head of the left hand (i.e. Julian); for while the right hand was in sorrow over sinners, the sons of the left hand were greatly rejoicing.' Again: 'All the apostates rejoiced in the Apostate, and the sons of the left hand in the head of the left hand.' In Acts of Philip we read: 'Quit the destroying left hand, and the unconquered right hand shall receive you' (Wright p. 80). Aphraates (Wright p. 285) speaks of 'sons of the left hand, heirs of darkness'; again (p. 287), 'sons of the right hand, who travel by the strait and narrow way'. This Syriac use of 'right' and 'left' may be paralleled by modern political use of the words—from the conservative point of view.

- 2. On pp. 7, 14, 26, and 33 it is said that at the incarnation the Word 'entered by the ear' of the Virgin. This is a favourite idea with Syriac writers. St Ephraim in his commentary on the Diatessaron (Moesinger p. 249) writes: 'Quia mors per aurem Evae intravit, per aurem Mariae vita intravit.' Isaac of Antioch (Bedjan i p. 715) makes it clear that this was the accepted notion among the Syrians, and bases upon it an argument for Christ's divinity: 'If He was not God, how did He enter by the ear?' Again (ibid. p. 716): 'By the ear Spirit entered, and from the womb flesh came forth.'<sup>3</sup>
- 3. The phrase 'put on a body', which occurs so frequently in Aphraates, Acts of Thomas, and other early Syriac writings (cf. Acts of Thomas p. 210; Aphr. pp. 144, 403, 414, 421, and 472; Addai pp. 9, 18), and is used almost invariably by St Ephraim to describe the incarnation, is found in our Acts on pp. 33 and 52. It fell into disrepute in later times, and so it is not surprising to find that in the later MS, B, other expressions have been substituted, viz. 'became flesh' on p. 33, and 'became man' on p. 52.
- 4. The expressions 'the sign' (rûshmâ, or nîshâ), 'the sign of baptism', 'the sign of life', and the like, to signify 'baptism', are so common in early Syriac writings as to be almost the rule. One or other of them occurs on pp. 25, 36, 48, 49 (bis) and 52. 'Baptism' simply occurs only three times, and in one of these cases it is the baptism of Christ that is meant; it is scarcely, if at all, to be found in the Acts of Thomas, but the use of rûshmâ as a synonym is frequent (cf. Wright, transl., pp. 166, 191, 256, 257, 259, 283).
  - 5. The ritual of Baptism, described in detail on pp. 38-40, 42, and

<sup>1</sup> Overbeck S. Ephr. aliorumque op. select. pp. 4-5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> For further examples see Lamy i 41 (Ephr.); Overbeck p. 3 l. 14, p. 8 l. 24 (Ephr.); p. 335 ll. 11-13 (Balai); Carm. Nisib. xxxvi 18 (fin.), and Ed. Rom. vi 103 A (Ephr.).

<sup>3</sup> Other examples of this view may be seen in Lamy ii 515 (author?), ii 569 (author?), ii 801 (Ephr.), iii 979 and 981 (author?).

54-55, is practically identical with that which we find in the Acts of Thomas on pp. 166, 258, and 267-268, sharing with the latter a very remarkable feature as compared with Greek and Latin rites: there is no chrism after the immersion. First in each case comes a solemn unction, or signing (rûshmâ), accompanied by the anointing of the whole body, and followed immediately by baptism in the threefold Name. Then comes the reception of Holy Communion, without any further anointing. Now this is in perfect agreement with what we find in St Ephraim's Hymns On the Epiphany. These Hymns deal for the most part with Baptism; and here again the only anointing alluded to is that which comes before the immersion. Both the order of treatment and the language used make this quite clear. Hymn iii treats of the unction and Hymn iv of the laver. 'Christ', says St Ephraim, in the first verse of Hymn iii, 'and chrism are conjoined . . . the chrism anoints visibly, Christ signs secretly, the lambs newborn and spiritual, the flock of His twofold victory; for He engendered it of the chrism, He gave it birth of the water.' And further on he writes: 'When the leper of old was cleansed, the priest used to sign him with oil, and lead him to the waterspring. The type has passed and the truth is come; lo, with chrism have ye been signed, in baptism ye are perfected, in the flock ye are intermixed, from the Body ye are nourished.' In Hymn iv he passes on to the baptism: 'Descend, my signed brethren, put ye on our Lord.' The evidence from Aphraates points in the same direction: he puts the rûshmâ before the water. Speaking of the celebration of Easter (p. 229), he says there must be fasting and prayer, and the chanting of psalms, 'and the giving of the sign (rûshmâ), and baptism after its due observance' (حازهن). He, like St Ephraim, speaks of this prebaptismal 'sign' in the most solemn manner. He speaks of 'the olive wherein is the sign of the Mystery of Life, whereby (men) are constituted Christians and priests and kings', and 'which makes light them that are dark '(p. 449). I repeat, I have been unable to discover any trace of a post-baptismal unction in Syriac writings of the fourth century.

Now in the Greek and Latin Churches the baptism seems always to have been followed by the chrism of confirmation, the variable element being the preliminary anointing.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Lamy i 5 ff. These Hymns may be read in Dr Gwynn's translation in *Post-Nicene Fathers* vol. xiii. Especially important for the study of the subject in hand are iii, iv, v, and vi.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Mr Brightman, in J. T. S. i pp. 247 ff. The use of oil at Baptism, as described in the Acts of Thomas, met with the strongest disapproval of Turribius, a Spanish bishop contemporary with Leo the Great. He goes so far as to say that the Acts of Thomas, which he tells us was one of the apocryphal books in vogue amongst the Priscillianists, contained a command to baptize with oil instead of water (Mr C. H. Turner, in J. T. S. vii p. 604). Mr Turner observes on this: 'Of the

6. There are indications that the author of these Acts was acquainted with the writings of St Ephraim, or, vice versa, that Ephraim knew the Acts. On p. 33 (transl.) we read: 'And . . . he was narrating from the Torah and the Prophets, how God . . . sent His only Son, and He came, and entered by the ear of the Virgin Mary . . . and put on a body from her, whilst the height and the depth were full of Him, and there was no place in which He was not; and whilst forming children in the wombs <sup>1</sup>, He was with His Father.' A similar passage occurs on p. 14: 'And he entered by the ear of the woman . . . without quitting Him who sent Him; and the heights and depths were full of Him, and were ruled by Him by the will of His Father.'

Compare the following from St Ephraim's third Hymn On the Nativity 2: 'He was wholly in the depths and wholly in the highest. He was wholly with all things and wholly with each. While His body was forming in the womb, His power was fashioning all members. While the conception of the Son was fashioning in the womb, He was fashioning babes in the womb.' And again, in the sixteenth Hymn: 'Heaven was filled with Him, and every creature. The Sun entered the womb, and in the height and depth His splendour abode.'

- 7. Minor indications of Syriac composition might be multiplied. I will content myself with quoting only a few.
  - (1) Play upon Syriac words.
- (a) On p. |a: |AAAA | Joo! | Jooe, 'and he took upon him to be taking the incomings of the bath'. For the idiom 'to take upon' oneself cf. Vita Rabbulae, Overbeck p. 177 l. 27, and Isaac of Antioch, Bedjan i p. 718 l. 11.
- ( $\beta$ ) On p. %: حدبا حدبا هدنا. 'for I am a slave ('abhdâ), a made ('abhâhâ) and created one'.
- (γ) On p. ω: ... | Line of soll | coll | co

use of oil for baptism, with which [Turribius] reproaches the Acts, mention is made in the extant text... on at least half a dozen occasions, and it is exactly the sort of feature, in that strange and weirdly fascinating story, which would arrest the attention of an orthodox reader in the fifth century.'

- <sup>1</sup> Dr Rendel Harris has suggested (Apology of Aristides p. 37) that 'we should correct the text so as to read "and when formed as a child in the womb He was with His Father".
- <sup>3</sup> Ed. Rom. v p. 411. An English translation of the passage may be seen in Post-Nicene Fathers Xiii p. 232.

- (2) The accumulation of similar verbs to emphasize a single idea: e.g. 'I agreed and believed and affirmed' (p. عدما المناه الم
- (3) The paradoxical expression 'to gain loss', which comes on p. 'and we have gained loss to our souls' ( Lian Lima Lillo)— occurs also in the Romance of Julian': 'lest we gain damage and loss to our own selves' ( Lian Lima Local Local). This suggests that the phrase was a familiar Syriac conceit. Otherwise we must either suppose that the author of Julian copied it from our Acts, or else explain its double occurrence as a curious literary coincidence, for a translator could scarcely have copied from Julian.

The story is written throughout in good and idiomatic Syriac, and so far as I am competent to judge betrays no signs of translation from Greek.<sup>2</sup> The Greek words which occur are for the most part those which had become thoroughly naturalized in Syriac at an early date.<sup>3</sup>

- <sup>1</sup> Hoffmann p. 105 l. 8.
- <sup>3</sup> Cf. especially pp. , p., p., and the end of p. ou to the middle of p. ou; and compare in contrast the first few pages of the *Decease of John*—the next piece in Wright—which is from the Greek of the Leucian Acts of John.
- 3 There is one word which demands notice, since, according to Wright's interpretation, it might seem to favour the idea of a Greek original of the Acts. On p. Le Nero is spoken of as Lie Lo. Dr Wright translated, 'this wicked ruler', and suggested that was from rayos. But rayos is not found elsewhere in Syriac; moreover, had a translator wished to take over the word he would probably have written and, or at least . Now . (a loanword from the Persian) is, of course, very common in Syriac in the sense of 'crown'; and the mention of a crown seems not out of place in connexion with an Emperor. The question arises, could a Syriac writer possibly have called Nero a 'wicked crown'? I had thought of the emendation ........... (p. 423) speaks of المناف , 'kings (men) bound with the crown'. But then again it seemed questionable whether L could be used absolutely for 'sovereign'. Further search has convinced me that the emendation is unnecessary even if legitimate. St Ephraim in his attack on Julian (Overbeck p. 8 l. 14) writes: 'The Good (One), in that He put to shame those that were demoralized by the one calf, (this He did) that he might put to shame the many that were demoralized by the one king. He shattered that calf that He might cut off the disorder, and He destroyed that sovereign ( that he might cut off mad licence. As a physician He cut out the cause of the disorder.' For

8. The evidence from Old Testament quotations may be counted as merely negative, since we must allow for the possibility of a translator having looked up his Peshitta and worded the quotations according to it; still, so far as it goes, it is in harmony with that already adduced. The quotations follow the Peshitta, and I find no trace of any LXX influence. What is more important for the present purpose is the fact that some of the quotations are quite informal, or even mere reminiscences. I venture to think that the following examples are positively unfavourable to the view that Acts were written in Greek.

On p. 1 the Apostle prays: 'Remember Thy Church which Thou didst acquire with Thy precious blood.' This comes as a reminiscence from Ps. lxxiv 2, 'Remember Thy congregation (which) Thou didst acquire of old', and agrees with the Peshitta version. Now the aptness of the quotation in our Acts depends entirely on the Peshitta rendering, the ordinary Syriac word for 'Church' being the same as that which translates 'congregation' in the Psalm (it is in fact the borrowed Hebrew word). The verse would scarcely suggest itself to a Greek writer, since the LXX there translates 'Thy congregation' by  $\tau \hat{\eta} \hat{s}$   $\sigma vvay wy \hat{\eta} \hat{s}$   $\sigma vo$ .

Evidence of the use of the Diatessaron.

I. On p. (Engl. transl. p. 39) there is a description of the blessing of the baptismal oil, in the course of which we read: 'And again the third time he said: Holy is the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, Amen. And straightway fire blazed forth (low line ) over the oil, and the oil did not take fire, for two angels had their wings spread over the oil and were crying: Holy, holy, holy, Lord Almighty.' Again, a little further on: 'And when the oil was consecrated, then the holy man drew near to the water, and signed it, . . . and straightway these two angels came and hovered over the water.' On pp. (53-54) we have a blessing pronounced over the oil and water together, with special reference to the water: 'And he said: Lord God Almighty, let Thy Holy Spirit come, and rest and dwell upon the oil and upon the water . . . Yea, Lord, sanctify this water with Thy holy voice which

instances of ... in the metaphorical sense of 'sovereignty' or 'majesty' cf. Julian pp. 112 l. 14, 113 l. 13; Overbeck p. 13 l. 6 (Ephr.); and Isaac of Antioch i p. 790 ad fin. (ed. Bedjan).

resounded over Jordan and pointed out our Lord Jesus with the finger (saying): This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him. Thou art here who wast at Jordan. Yea, I beseech Thee, Lord, manifest Thyself here before this assemblage who have believed in Thee with simplicity. And in that hour fire blazed forth over the oil, and the wings of angels were spread over the oil' (B, rightly, 'water').

Now Isho'dad, a ninth-century writer, professes to quote the text of the Diatessaron for an account of the appearance of a bright light and angels over Jordan at the time of Christ's baptism: 'And straightway, as the Diatessaron testifies, light shone forth ((), and over Jordan was spread a veil of white clouds, and there appeared many hosts of spiritual beings who were praising God in the air.' Jacob Barsalibi, a later writer, cites the Diatessaron for the same statement: 'A mighty light flashed upon Jordan, and the river was girded with white clouds, and there appeared many hosts that were uttering praise in the air.' 2

St Ephraim (Hymn x In Epiph.) writes: 'When He was baptized light flashed from the water.' In Hymn xv he makes repeated allusion to a light, or fire, on Jordan at the Baptism, and to hosts of 'watchers', i. e. angels.

Now in our last passage from the Acts of John the Apostle prays in effect that God would manifest Himself as He did over Jordan; and straightway fire blazes forth over the oil, and angels appear over the water. An allusion to the incident cited by Isho'dad and Barsalibi from the Diatessaron can scarcely be doubted. Some copies of the Harmony may have read 'fire', nûrâ, for 'light', nûhrâ. The finger of God pointing to our Lord is perhaps the ray of light flashed over Him.

2. On p. \(\simega\) (34) we have an account of the baptism of Christ, which begins thus: 'And He grew up as a man... And when thirty years were fulfilled (Lk. iii 23), He came to Jordan for baptism (cp. Mt. iii 13), and was baptized by John' (Mk. i 9). Compare with this Aphraates, p. 405: 'Jesus about thirty years old (Lk.) came to Jordan that He might be baptized'; also Ephraim's Commentary on the Diatessaron, p. 41: 'And Jesus Himself was about thirty years of age (Lk.) at the time when He came to be baptized of John' (Mt.). In the Gospel of St Luke (iii 23) the statement of our Lord's age comes after the baptism, and is made in connexion with the commencement of His teaching. It is evident from Aphraates and Ephraim that Lk. iii 23 was brought into connexion with Christ's coming to Jordan for baptism, as we find it in the Acts of John. We find this in the Arabic Harmony also, but there Mt. iii 13 precedes Lk. iii 23.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Rendel Harris Ephrem on the Gospel p. 43.

<sup>2</sup> Burkitt S. Ephraim's Quotations from the Gospel p. 68.

Lamy i 97. The incident is also alluded to in Ephraim's Commentary p. 43.

3. On p. ed (4) we read: 'For He said to us, when He was going up into heaven from beside us, as He was blessing us (Lk. xxiv 51): Go forth, teach, and baptize in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit (Mt. xxviii 19); every one that believes and is baptized liveth (Mk. xvi 16).'

The passage in the Arabic Diatessaron which deals with the ascension is thus composed: (Mt. xxviii 18b, Jn. xx 21b, Mk. xvi 15b), Mt. xxviii 19b-20, Mk. xvi 16 (-18, Lk. xxiv 49, Mk. xvi 19a, Lk. xxiv 50), Lk. xxiv 51, Mk. xvi 190 (Lk. xxiv 52-53). The bracketed passages do not concern us here. Thus we find in the Acts of John the command to baptize in Mt. xxviii 10 coupled with Mk. xvi 16 and connected with the ascension as in the Arabic copy. As in the latter, too, the Acts introduce a portion of the Lucan account of the ascension—the blessing of the disciples. In the Arabic this is followed by Mk. xvi 19°. Now on p. (16) of the Acts we read: 'And He ascended into Heaven, and sat at the right hand of His Father (cf. Mk. xvi 19c) ... And He said to us: Go forth, teach,' &c. (Mt. xxviii 19, Mk. xvi 16), as above.1 We may conclude that Lk. xxiv 51 and Mk. xvi 19c both came into the account of the ascension in the Gospel text used by the author. We may compare Aphraates (Wright p. 21): 'And when again our Lord gave the mystery of baptism (Mt. xxviii 19),2 thus He said to them: He that believeth and is baptized shall live, and he that believeth not is judged' (Mk. xvi 16).

- 4. On p. .... (16), in the course of a highly interesting harmonized account of the passion it is said that our Lord was given 'vinegar and gall' to drink on the cross. That 'vinegar and gall' was read in the Diatessaron is shewn by St Ephraim's Commentary (Moesinger p. 245): 'and they gave Him to drink vinegar and gall.'
- 5. On pp. (40) and (47) our author speaks of 'ravening wolves' (Mt. vii 15) as الحقاقة القائد But Pesh. and C represent 'ravening wolves' by اتحاق القائد ; so Acts of Thomas. S is wanting. It is surely improbable that a Syriac writer, or even translator, who was accustomed to use only the Peshitta or the Old Syriac version, would have referred to the wolves in Mt. vii 15 as anything but القائد الق

<sup>1</sup> These words—'go forth', &c.—occur three times in all in Acts of John, viz. on pp. 0, &, and \( \odots \).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> We know from the *Doctrine of Addai* (Phillips p. 20) that the command to baptize in the threefold Name stood in the Diatessaron.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> A document in which the Old Syriac version was used; cf. Burkitt Evang. da-Meph. ii pp. 101 ff.

 $<sup>^{4}</sup>$  I use C and S to denote respectively the Curetonian and Sinaitic MSS of Syr. Vt.

The fact that our author twice uses a different expression suggests that he may have got it from the Diatessaron.

Beginning on pp. — and — respectively are two long harmonized passages dealing, the one with the passion, the other with one of the miracles of feeding the multitudes. The harmonization in these passages, although it shews very significant points of agreement with that found in the Arabic copy, yet differs from the latter so considerably, and raises such important questions as to the relation of the Arabic to the original Harmony, that to discuss the passages here would be to expand this paper beyond reasonable limits. And so I must hope to try and deal later on with the issues involved, when judgement has been passed by competent critics on the arguments here put forward. I pass on now to notice some more Gospel allusions and citations which, if they cannot be said directly to favour the use of the Diatessaron, at least have the support of the MSS of the Old Syriac against the Peshitta: and the textual relation of the syr. vt. to Diat. is known to have been very intimate.

- (1) Pp. u to x (7): Last one can Lapt by cases by low Lo, I—with you am I until the conclusion of the world '(Mt. xxviii 20). S and C are wanting for this verse. The text agrees with that of Pesh., except that it omits 'all the days'. But this is a crucial point. In the Syriac Doctrine of the Apostles (A. S. D. p. 32) we read: 'with you am The same form of quotation appears in Aphraates p. 120 (Wright). But in Aphr. p. 484 we have, 'with you am I until the conclusion of the world' (حصصه بحكمه المحمد). Thus we have three other citations which all agree with Acts of John against Pesh. in omitting 'all the days'. Prof. Burkitt thinks the Doctr. of Apostt. used Diat., and consequently conjectures that the reading in Aphr. p. 120 is that of the Harmony, and that on p. 484 is taken from syr. vt. But it is possible that this conjecture should be reversed, since the evidence in the Doctrine elsewhere leaves little to choose between the two sources.
- (2) P. & (7): So all loss of isold loss of Be not anxious what thou shalt say or what thou shalt speak' (cf. Mt. x 19, Lk. xii 11). In Mt. x 19 Pesh. has: 'Be not anxious how or what ye shall speak.' C is wanting. S has: 'Be not anxious what ye shall say.' In Lk. xii 11 C and Pesh. have: 'Be not anxious how ye shall make excuse or what ye shall speak'; while S has: 'Be not anxious what ye shall make excuse or what ye shall say.'

Which of the two Gospel passages has most influenced the quotation in *Acts of John* it is hard to say; but it is noticeable that, whereas Pesh. has 'how' in both cases, S omits 'how' in Mt. x, and in Lk. xii reads 'what' twice, as in *Acts of John*.

- (3) In the harmonized passage on the passion, referred to above, we find, in addition to the reading 'vinegar and gall' already noticed, the following: 'And He cried out with His mighty voice (حمد خدا) on the cross.' S reads, 'with a mighty voice' in Mt. xxvii 46 and Mk. xx 34, 37, but 'with a loud voice' (حما زحما المعادية) in Mt. xxvii 50 and Lk. xxiii 46. Pesh. has 'with a loud voice' in all five places. C is wanting.
- (4) The following readings, which occur in the second of the harmonized passages (pp. ) to which I have alluded, differ from Pesh.:—
  - (a) 'And the lame walked, and the blind were opened.'1

The idiom 'to open the blind', which occurs also on p. L. of these Acts is found in S in Jn. ix 32 and x 21, and Ephraim (Lamy i 597) writes: 'He made clay of spittle, and opened the blind.' In both the passages in St John's Gospel Pesh. supplies 'the eyes of'.

(β) 'And the day inclined to dip' (فَعِي الْعُمْعُ).

The somewhat unusual word (in this sense) 'to dip' occurs in C in Lk. ix 12. S has there 'to set' ( $\angle a \leftarrow a \leftarrow b$ ), and Pesh. 'to decline' ( $\angle a \leftarrow b \leftarrow b$ ).

 $(\gamma)$  When Peter walks on the water it is said that he 'walked and was coming (B, went) to Him' (Mt. xiv 29).

S and C have 'and he came to Jesus'. Pesh. has 'that he might come to Jesus'.

(δ) 'And our Lord Jesus came and entered the ship' (Mt. xiv 32).

Pesh. reads: 'and when they went up into the ship the wind ceased.'

S: 'and when they went up into the boat the wind abated.'

C: 'and when He went up into the ship the wind ceased.'

Diat. Arab. (xix 9) implies a reading different from Pesh. and S, and approaching to that in Acts of John: 'and when Jesus had come near, He went up into the boat, Himself and Simon.' Cf. Ephraim's Commentary (Moes. p. 136): 'When our Lord came and went up into the ship with Simon, and the winds rested and ceased.'

(ε) 'Who then is this, that the winds and sea He commandeth and they obey Him?' (Lk. viii 25).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The healings referred to introduce an account of one of the miracles of feeding the multitudes; cf. Mt. xv 30 ff, which precedes the feeding of the *four* thousand. The number fed in our Acts is also *four* thousand, but nearly all the details belong to the account of the *five* thousand. The loaves are said to have been 'barley loaves', as in Jn.

<sup>2</sup> The writer has introduced this saying here, after the miracle of walking on the water, by a confusion. It is Luke's version of the saying which comes after the earlier miracle of stilling the storm. Ephraim's Commentary and the Arabic Harmony bear witness to the fact that both miracles were given by Tatian. The Arabic copy gives Luke's version of the saying after the earlier miracle; and there it is preceded by Mk. iv 39. Now in Acts of John the saying is immediately

S and C: 'Who then is this, that even the winds and the sea He commandeth and they obey Him?'

Pesh.: 'Who then is this, that even the winds he commandeth, and the floods and the sea, and they obey Him?'

Acts of John agrees with SC against Pesh. both in the order of words and in the omission of 'and the floods'.

(لا) 'And they brought to Him all those that were ill with divers (B, stubborn, احتجالاً) infirmities, and demoniacs and the paralysed and lunatics and the lame, and He healed them all' (Mt. iv 24).

There is a good deal of discrepancy between the texts of S, C, and Pesh. in this passage. Our Acts most resemble Pesh. in general character. But that the original text has been tampered with is proved by the peculiar reading 'stubborn', preserved by B, which is found here in both S and C, while Pesh. has 'divers' (laww). The Acts further agree with S and C in reading 'and He healed them all' (Pesh. omits 'all'), and with C in reading 'and they brought', while Pesh. has 'and they brought-near': the words are from different roots in Syriac.

(5) On pp. عادى (23-24) a youth who has been raised from the dead tells what he saw:—

'And I saw twelve men in one band, and in another seventy-two...

And I drew near to the great troop of seventy-two.'

In Lk. x 1 'seventy-two' is read by S, C, Acts of Thomas, Addai, Ephraim's Com. on the Diat. (bis), and Doctrine of the Apostles. Pesh. alone has 'seventy'.

(6) On p. (46) we read: 'And the multitudes were straightway crying out: We renounce Artemis... And they were beating upon their faces and saying: Woe, what has happened to us?'

Now in Lk. xxiii 48 S and C add, after the words 'beating their breasts' in the ordinary text, a cry of woe uttered by the multitudes, thus: 'and saying: Woe to us! What hath befallen us? Woe to us from our sins!' The Diatessaron, as attested by Ephraim (Moes. pp. 245-246), had the further addition, 'Lo! the judgements of the desolation of Jerusalem are come.' That the passage in Acts of John starts from Lk. xxiii 48 can scarcely be doubted. The words 'they were beating upon their faces' are in the Syriac identical with those read in the Gospel by S, C, and Pesh., except that 'faces' is substituted for 'breasts', thus:

preceded by the words 'and there was a great quiet' (Lac). This is the reading of Pesh. in Mk. iv 39. S and C are wanting there, but in Mt. viii 26 and Lk. viii 25 all authorities read 'calm' (Lac).

<sup>1</sup> For other references see Burkitt op. cit. i 413.

Then, in S, C, and the Acts, follows immediately the woe, not found in Pesh. The Acts omit 'to us' after 'woe', and read 'hath happened to us' for 'hath befallen us', thus:

If we allow that the passage starts from a reminiscence of Lk. xxiii 48, we can scarcely refuse to admit that it implies the use of a text which contained the addition found in S and C; and as we have independent evidence for the use of the Diatessaron, the probability is that it also lies behind this passage.

The words 'woe unto me, what hath befallen me?' which occur in the Acts of Philip (Wright p. ), are cited by Prof. Burkitt as evidence that those Acts were composed in Syriac, and that the author used the Diatessaron.

The above is not by any means an exhaustive examination of the evidence for the Syriac authorship of the Acts of John, or for the use therein of the Diatessaron; but I have hopes that it will suffice to establish both these contentions. If the Acts be accepted for what I take them to be, then they must rank as a work of considerable importance, not only for the study of the Diatessaron, but also for that of the Syrian Creed and baptismal liturgy. In date they can scarcely be much later than the end of the fourth century, and may be earlier. It may be well to mention here that the Syriac Acts appear to have nothing in common with the Leucian Greek Acts of John. There are points of contact with the Acts attributed to Prochorus<sup>2</sup>; but these are few, and mainly confined to a single incident, viz. John's connexion with the bath. Even where it seems clear that the author of one set of Acts was acquainted with the other set, it is equally clear that the later story (whichever be the later) has been rewritten on quite independent lines. A feature peculiar to the Syriac Acts is that the whole story is placed in the reign of Nero.

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<sup>1</sup> Op. cit. ii p. 106 note 3.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Dr Budge's translation of the Ethiopic Contendings of the Apostles pp. 222 ft.