

four verses of Mark are not found in the others. The very words used by Mark in his narrative are used by Matthew or Luke in their descriptions of the same events. Dr. E. A. Abbott, in the article on the Gospels (Encyclopædia Britannica, 9th Edition), sets down, from the first two chapters of Mark, all the words contained therein that are common to Matthew and Luke, omitting every word not in the other two, and the words so used make an understandable narrative. Herewith is the narrative, the words in italics being the only ones added :

"Esaias, the prophet ; the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight. John in the wilderness preaching repen(t). All wen(t) forth *to be baptiz(ed) by him.* There cometh One stronger than I, whose shoe latchet (Matt., shoes) I am not worthy to loose (Matt., bear) I baptize you with water, He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit. Jesus *was* baptized. The heaven and the Spirit as a dove descend(ing) on Him. And a Voic(e) from heaven, My beloved Son, in Thee (Matt., whom) I am well pleased. The Spirit *drives Him* into the wild-ern(ess) forty days tempt(ed) by Satan (Luke, devil.) *He came* into Galilee. Cometh into the house of Simon (Matt., Peter.) Step-mother *sick* of a fever. And the feve(r) left her : she ministered to them, etc."

This verbal similarity, (including all the material part of Mark,) in the three Gospels cannot be a mere coincidence, No two independent writers can possibly use the same language in describing the same event. The inference to be drawn from this verbal identity, is one of two suppositions.—(1) Mark's Gospel was the first written, and formed the basis of the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, who added such matter as they personally possessed. (2) All three are copied from an older narrative than any now in existence. Prof. Abbott adopts the latter theory. Rev.

S L Calthrop, in a pamphlet entitled "The Primitive Gospel," compares with great scrutiny the narratives of Mark with those describing the same events of Matthew and Luke, and draws the conclusion that Matthew and Luke used the Gospel of Mark as a basis for their own narratives and states that "the reason why the tradition is triple is simply that two writers use the third" I append a few of his illustrations (1) In the calling of Peter and Andrew, James and John, Mark i., 16-19, has just sixty-seven words and Matthew uses fifty seven of these.*

(2) In Mark i., 29 34,—Healing of Peter's Wife's Mother, eleven words are common to all three, twelve are common to Mark and Matthew, twenty to Mark and Luke

(3) In Mark ii., 23-28,—Fasting—forty nine words are common to all three

(4) In Mark ii. 23 28. — Disciples Gathering Corn— forty complete words are common to all, while Mark and Matthew have fifty-one words in common, Mark and Luke sixty-four, Matthew and Luke have only five in common that are not found in Mark, and four of these are "and," "but" "he said," "they said" Mr Calthrop says of this "It is thousands of chances to one, (in the calculus of probabilities,) that Matthew copied the whole paragraph from Mark, many *ten* thousands to one that Luke did "

(5) In paragraph Mark iii., 1-6—The Man with the Withered Hand,— there are fifteen words common to all three, twenty-four common to Mark and Matthew and 25 common to Mark and Luke, while Matthew and Luke have only three other words in common, viz. "the," "but," and "he said." Here says the writer the probability that the paragraph of the Primitive Gospel that both Matthew and Luke copied, was the paragraph which we actually have intact in Mark certainly amounts up to millions to one. Here again, if all three

*He uses the King James' Version for his illustrations.