

through these two nations, and partly through the Greeks and modern Turks. Herein lies a secret I am about to unlock.

The language of the people, with some dialectic variations, is much the same on the plains where the population is Christian and is spoken by five millions—about the population of Canada. This is the Georgian. The Imeritian is much the same; the Megrelian and Gurielian formally differ, while the Suani, Ossi, and Lesgi have a different language altogether.

The word Georgian is very deceptive in appearance. The accident of my sojourn among them and learning the language brought to me the true origin of the word, which has nothing to do with St. George, their patron saint, nor any other George, but a variant of the word *Hiuria*. The "h" as I said above, or any rough breathing, is expressed by the "g" in Persian and Russian. Thus *Darius Hystaspes*, the Anglicized Greek form, is in Old Persian, *Gustaspes*. Thus we have the forms *Giurhia*, *Glurgia*, and the "I" has become softened in transit to Georgia. The Persian name of the country is at present *Gurgistan* (*Hiurlistan*) and they call Palestine by this name also—land of the *Hiuri* or *Hiwri*; i.e., of the Hebrews.

Now let us look at the word *Imeritia*, the second province as we travel east from the Black Sea. This was a country

(Old Pontus) much visited by the Greeks, who transmitted its name to Western Europe. Now the Greek of the Christian era cannot sound "b": it invariably

writes for it 'mp,' 'mm,' or 'm.' Hence our *Imeritia* was *Iberitia*, the *Iberi* or *Hiberi* of the Romans, and this is the title of the people as it comes to us through Latin sources. *Gurielia* (the *Lazistan* of Persia) speaks for itself and has the same derivation. Russian and German writers on the subject nearly all allow their Hebrew origin, and enlarge upon their Hebrew customs still prevalent, and their Hebrew physiognomy. Their evangelization came from the apostles of the circumcision, St. Peter and St. James—all their traditions refer to this—while the early Armenian church helped them considerably, notably in giving them a translation of the Scriptures. It is founded upon the Syriac with emendations from the Greek Septuagint, and contains some renderings peculiar and in some cases very illustrative. An early copy, translated from the old to the popular tongue ten years ago by the British and Foreign Bible Society, is in my possession: "The Bible of the Decapylon, or Ten Tribes of Israel." St. Peter in his first Epistle addresses the "Sojourners (of the Hebrew) dispersion in Pontus," etc., and sends it by *Silvanus* (*Silas* or St. Luke) from the province of Babylon. St. James addresses the "twelve tribes scattered abroad." The rest of the great dispersion is localized by noticing the Jews (foreign) who were assembled at Pentecost.

We are not at all in the dark, therefore, as regards the later great dispersion from the Holy Land, and I hope to be able to show in a future article that we are not