

wonder expressed by the multitude. It could not, indeed, be said of any of them probably, that they were learned men, but it would be a mistake to suppose that they were not fairly educated. They were, we know, eloquent and powerful public speakers, and some of them became authors of books, and books, too, that were not written in their own vernacular, but in a foreign language—books, it may be added, which have stood the test of ages, and are destined to endure to the end of time. The Aramaic was their native tongue, and the Hebrew was the sacred language of their nation, in which their sacred books were written and their worship was conducted; and yet the Gospel of Matthew is the only one of the books of the New Testament that was written in either of these tongues, all the rest being written in Greek. Besides, at that time Palestine was a Roman province, it was garrisoned with Roman soldiers, the civil administration was carried on chiefly by Roman officers, and doubtless the Latin, the language of the Romans, was the official language. It is probable, therefore, that some, at least, of these men knew the Latin as well as the Greek. This must have been the case especially with Matthew, who was a revenue officer commissioned by the Roman Government. The disciples were not, therefore, the illiterate and ignorant men that they were supposed to be; but, though not in the technical sense scholars, persons of superior intelligence and fairly well educated, having a knowledge of three or four languages, two of these languages being the Greek and the Latin.

Then another thing which must have made a profound impression upon the spectators of what occurred on the day of Pentecost was the spirit of the speakers. They spoke of spiritual and eternal things with a courage, a depth of conviction, an intensity of feeling, and with an overwhelming energy, that we may believe was altogether unique, and which in the absence of the immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit would have been impossible. Besides there was in connection with this state of spiritual exaltation—as the result of it, in fact—a degree of intellectual quickening, which must have appeared to those about them as if they had become new men, or had been suddenly invested with new powers. They spoke as the Spirit gave them utterance. We must not anticipate what will be more appropriately treated when we come to the more direct treatment of the gift of the Holy Spirit; but this glimpse at the influences and agencies at work on that occasion, show that they were amply sufficient to account for all the effects which were produced, without investing the gift of tongues with attributes, and with an importance which, according to the clear teaching of the Holy Scriptures in other places, do not belong to it. And this view derives confirmation from the fact that St. Peter makes no reference whatever to this particular gift, in the highly apologetic discourse which he delivered on the occasion. Nor is there the slightest intimation in the whole of the New Testament that any apologetic use was ever made of this gift in apostolic times.

These observations are respectfully submitted to the consideration and candid examination of biblical students, who, like the writer, have no other object in view but the ascertainment of truth. It is in no dogmatic or controversial spirit that this humble attempt to remove what seems to be a real difficulty is made. And its acceptance or rejection will not have the slightest effect on the validity of the main argument of this and the preceding article, the object of which is to prove that the special gift of the