

single narrative which should contain every detail found in any one account was a most difficult but worthy task. The importance of such a work to modern apologetics—which would prove not only that the four gospels were in existence in the middle of the second century, but that they were at that time the authoritative and ancient historic documents of the Church—has long been recognized; but unfortunately until now the work itself has been lost, and has been known only in fragmentary quotations. Indeed “advanced thinkers” like M. Renan and the author of “Supernatural Religion” have denied that such a work ever existed, and have been sure that if the so-called “harmony” were ever discovered it would be found to be *not a harmony of our four gospels, which at that time could not all have been written*, but an attempted harmonization of the various conflicting accounts which were current concerning the life of our Lord before our four gospels became the authorized and standard histories.

THE DISCOVERY.

It was in 1886 that this Arabic manuscript was sent to Rome through the good favor of Antonius Morcas, Visitor Apostolic of the Catholic Copts, who had succeeded in getting it somewhere in Egypt. In 1888 the Arabic text with a Latin translation was published at Rome in honor of the jubilee of the priesthood of Pope Leo XIII. This manuscript, carefully compared with another Vatican manuscript, also from Egypt, and with the Armenian translation of the commentary on the Diatessaron by Mar Ephraem (died 373 A.D.) which had been published in 1876, and also with the Codex Fuldensis—ascribed by Victor, Bishop of Capua (died 554 A.D.) to Ammonius, but which the new discovery proves to have been another edition of Tatian’s work—has just been translated and published at Edinburgh, with a scholarly introduction by Rev. J. Hamlyn Hill, of Cambridge.

From this we find that this fourteenth century Arabic manuscript was a translation from a ninth century Syriac text. But Syriac was Tatian’s own native language, and therefore there is little doubt that the Syriac text is a copy of Tatian’s Syriac original. The fact that Tatian wrote in Greek his “Orations to the Greeks” seems no good reason for supposing that he did not write this work, which was intended for Syrians, in Syriac. But did he then translate the gospels from the Greek into the Syriac? Mr. Hill is confident that instead of this he used the ancient Syriac version of the gospels—the Curetonian. He says: “At all events, it seems incredible that the Gospels were not translated into Syriac in the first century; and though at first there may have been more than one independent private version, before the time of Tatian these must have given place to one which was more or less generally recognized.” If, indeed, it be true, as seems most probable, that Tatian used in this harmony the Syriac gospels, then in com-