

copied a lost Primitive Gospel. it would be perfectly natural that Matthew, Mark and Luke shou'd have fifteen complete words in common and it is also perfectly natural that Matthew and Luke, when left to their own diction should happen to use only three other insignificant words in common, ('the,' 'but' and 'he said.') but it is out of the question as we say immensely improbable, as the calculus of probabilities says, that Matthew should in six verses use twenty-four other complete words exactly the same, and in the same position, as those used in Mark, and that Luke shou'd use twenty five other complete words and those entirely different ones. The improbability is millions to one."

The reader interested in this subject, beginning at Matthew xiv., 1, and reading to the end of the Gospel, will find a very striking coincidence of wording with Mark iv., beginning with the 14th verse and thence forward. Matthew xxiv., 15 and Mark xiii., 14, have even the same parenthesis as have also Matthew ix., 6 Mark ii., 10 and Luke v., 24. For verbal similarity of Luke and Mark note the close resemblance of Mark i., 21, to iii., 6 (inclusive) and Luke iv., 31 to vi., 11. Note also the identity of Luke's account of the woman who touched the hem of Jesus' garment, (Luke viii., 43-48,) with Mark's narrative (v., 25-34)

On the proposition that the language which is common to all three of the Gospels is the language of a Primitive Gospel used by Matthew, Mark and Luke as a basis of their narratives, Westcott thus sets forth the relation of each of the present Gospels to the original.

Mark has 93% of coincidences and 7% of differences.

Matthew has 58% of coincidences and 42% of differences.

Luke has 41% of coincidences and 59% of differences.

John has 8% of coincidences and 92% of differences.

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RELIGIOUS AND ETHICAL CULTURE.

(A paper read before the Young Friends' Association of New York and Brooklyn, First day night, 12th mo. 12, 1897, at Schermerhorn Street Meeting, Brooklyn, by Daniel Gibbons.)

The skeptic, or, as he is variously styled, the "unbeliever," the "infidel," the "heretic," the what not, is a familiar figure in history. In deed, for aught we know, he probably ante-dated written records, and may have been an object of greater horror or detestation to the savage ancestors of the refined nations of modern times than his successor has been to their descendants. Judging by analogy, it is not unfair to assume that some pre-historic thinker may have suffered discomfort, or may be death for daring to suggest to the forefathers of the English speaking race that Thor was a myth, that there was no such person as Friga, the goddess of love, and that he did not believe the thunder was the voice of an angry deity. Among the Hebrews, there does not appear to have been a very militant type of unbeliever at any time in their history; but among the Greeks and Romans, disbelief was very common and has left ample evidences in their literature. The most distinguished of the heretics of the old mythology was the famous Lucian of Samosata, who, though born in humble circumstances, arose to the first rank among the thinkers of his day, and has left works which are not without a great deal of interest in this day. In his famous "Dialogues," he satirized the theology of the Greek and Roman world in many ways, and also the affectations of the philosophers of his own and earlier times. That he was possessed of keen judgment and a great deal of the spirit of true humor, would seem to be amply proven by one or two things, which I shall digress far and long enough to mention:

In one of his works, for instance, he treats of an imaginary "Sale of the Philosophers." Socrates, who, with the good emperor, Marcus Aurelius,