

CHAPTER VIII.

ST MATTHEW.—I.

FROM an early period in the second century, therefore, the Four Gospels were regarded as a unity. As early as the middle of the second century they were read in the weekly assemblies of the faithful; and not much later we find them translated into other tongues, so that remote and newly evangelised peoples might learn for themselves the wonderful works of God in human redemption. The tradition connecting them with Apostles and followers of Apostles is already established, and from that time onwards is practically unanimous. The Four Gospels are anonymous books. In St Matthew and St Mark the personality of the author is nowhere betrayed by the use of the first person. In St Matthew's Gospel the Apostle himself is indeed mentioned¹ as called by Jesus, and included among the Twelve,

¹ Matt. ix. 9; x. 3.

but with nothing to identify him as the author. The names of St Mark, St Luke, and St John are not once found in the Gospels bearing their names. From the fourth Gospel it can be gathered that the author was a Jew and an Apostle of the Lord; but it is doubtful whether, from the indications furnished by the Gospel itself, the shrewdest of the early Fathers could have determined that he was the son of Zebedee. From the preface of the third Gospel and the We-sections of the Acts of the Apostles, as well as from the medical phraseology which abounds in both books, a conclusive argument has been built up in favour of the authorship of St Luke, St Paul's companion in travel and beloved physician. But there is absolutely no sign in early Christian antiquity of any attempt thus to read the internal evidence of St Luke's invaluable histories. There was, however, no necessity for such an appeal to internal evidence. Theophilus of Antioch, when he, first of the early Fathers, named St John as the author of the fourth Gospel, only followed the tradition which had come down to him; and Irenæus, when, in his great work 'Against Heresies,' he named St Matthew, St Mark, St Luke, and St John as the authors of the four, did so because those names had come down to his time along with the Gospels. It might, of course, be alleged that

the editor, or, if it should seem more probable, the community, who, early in the second century, brought the Gospels together in a collection, on their own authority ascribed the Four Gospels to Matthew, John, Luke, and Mark respectively. Since, however, the Gospels were written singly and independently, and without reference to any such later collection, and since they were read, copied, and circulated before being gathered into a collection, there would be during the period of their separate circulation no lack of tradition concerning their origin and authorship. Such traditions have been preserved for us in the pages of Eusebius, Irenæus, Papias, and elsewhere. The description in the titles of the Gospels, in the originals and in the earliest versions, assigning the authors at a later time, finds its most natural explanation in the fact that particulars as to authorship contained in the titles accompanied the individual Gospels from the beginning. The most recent discussions of the internal evidence confirm this early tradition in the case of St Luke and St Mark, to the extent of conclusively settling their authorship of the third and second Gospels respectively; and if we cannot, in the present state of our knowledge, claim such a full accord between the external and internal evidence in the case of St Matthew and St John, we shall see that in their

case also the tradition is not contradicted, but to a large extent borne out by a due consideration of the internal indications of authorship contained in these Gospels.

Of the early and wide circulation of St Matthew's Gospel there are abundant proofs. Of all the New Testament books it has the largest attestation in early Christian literature. There are references to it, or coincidences with its language, in practically every one of the early Fathers. There is some reason to believe that it was the first of the New Testament books to be translated into Syriac, and as the Syriac was probably the earliest of the versions, the translation of St Matthew's Gospel would be the first to be executed. It is quite likely that it was early read by the Rabbis, and that this is one explanation of those parallels which have been set up between the teaching of Jesus and the Rabbis, discrediting the originality of Jesus.¹ Not only by Catholic writers, but by heretics, St Matthew seems to have been held in authority and esteem. The Ebionites, before they became schismatical heretics and rejected the Supernatural Birth, seem to have used the Gospel

¹ The saying of "the mote" and "the beam" (Matt. vii. 3-6), which is ascribed to Rabbi Tarphon (100 A.D.), might well have been borrowed from St Matthew. See Erich Bischoff, 'Jesus und die Rabbinen,' pp. 1-8, 89, 90.

according to St Matthew.¹ Ptolemæus, one of the disciples of the gnostic Valentinus, quoted frequently words of our Lord recorded by St Matthew; and the Marcosian sect of heretics, who had a fondness for apocryphal gospels and forged spurious writings of their own, also exhibit references to it.² Even the heathen Celsus is a witness to the wide circulation and use of St Matthew's Gospel. While Celsus knew the other Gospels he was most familiar with St Matthew, being acquainted with the incidents recorded in the first two chapters, and many circumstances attending the passion of Jesus,—the putting a reed in His hand, the giving Him gall to drink, the earthquake at the Crucifixion, the rolling away of the stone by an angel.³ A singular proof of the wide circulation of St Matthew's Gospel is seen in the fact that Pantænus, the head of the Catechetical School of Alexandria, on the occasion of a journey to India,—that is possibly to South Arabia,—found a Gospel under the name of St Matthew written in Hebrew characters circulating among the Christians of this region. "For Bartholomew, one of the Apostles," says Eusebius,⁴ "had

¹ Irenæus, *Adversus Hæreses*, i. 26. 2.

² Westcott, *Canon*, p. 313 ff., where examples are given from the pages of Epiphanius and Irenæus.

³ Patrick, *The Apology of Origen*, p. 91.

⁴ *H. E.*, V. 10. 3.

preached to them and left with them the writing of Matthew in the Hebrew language, which they had preserved till that time." This was possibly as early as 180 A.D.

It seems singular that the one Gospel which assuredly grew up on the soil of Palestine should have outdistanced the others so completely in the race for the favour of the Gentile Churches. "But for their admission into the canon," says Professor Harnack,¹ "Mark certainly, and Luke probably, would have disappeared. Wherein lies the lack in Mark and Luke and the sufficiency of Matthew? The Gospel of Matthew is a work vindicating Christianity against Jewish aspersions and objections which were early taken up by Gentile opponents. This Evangelist alone has a distinct interest in our Lord's teaching as such: he instructs, he proves, and all the while he keeps the Church well in the foreground. . . . The Gospel which in point of contents and by its tendencies stands farthest away from Greek ideas, the Gospel which is throughout occupied with sharp and detailed controversy with the unbelieving Jews of Palestine, was early laid hold of in the Greek communities as the Gospel most to their mind, because it met the requirements of defence against the narrower Judaism; in short, on account of its theological and doctrinal char-

¹ Luke the Physician, pp. 167, 168.

acter, and its solemn and ceremonious style." Possibly the very fact that it was the work of an Apostle of the Lord, and the belief, early spread abroad, that it preserved in their most authentic form the words of Jesus, contributed to the popularity of this Gospel. A Gospel, moreover, which had the approval of the Churches where the great events associated with human redemption had transpired, was assured of general acceptance.¹

No doubt St Matthew, by its very size,—though in this respect it comes short of St Luke,—lends itself to frequent reference and quotation. But, after all, its character and contents were the ground of its early popularity. It presents the Lord to men pre-eminently as the Saviour of the world, the Promised Messiah, the Desire of all nations,—an aspect of Christ always attractive to sin-burdened, sorrow-laden humanity. A Gospel containing the Sermon on the Mount, the Great Invitation, the Missionary Marching Orders of the Church, and many other notable sayings and discourses of Jesus, could not fail to meet with general acceptance, and was certain to be widely circulated and read and quoted. Its parables and miracles, its sayings and doings of Jesus, were early woven into the ever-enlarging Christian literature. Irenæus calls

¹ See Zahn, *Einleitung*, ii. 570, 571 (Eng. trans.)

it St Matthew's, and quotes largely from it by name. We have touching evidence of its preciousness to the Christians of the province over which Irenæus was set as ecclesiastical overseer. One of the most beautiful and heart-stirring relics of Christian antiquity is the Letter of the Churches of Vienne and Lyons, written in 177 A.D., in a time of terrible persecution, to their brethren far away in the Churches of Asia and Phrygia. It is in this Letter that we find the story of the youthful martyr, Blandina, whose loyalty to Christ amid tortures unspeakable remained unshaken till death, and of the aged Pothinus, the predecessor of Irenæus in the see, who suffered martyrdom at the age of ninety. The Letter is saturated with New Testament phraseology. And what connects St Matthew with it is a reference which it contains to the wedding-garment (*ἔνδυμα γάμου*) in the parable of the Marriage of the King's Son, which is spoken of as an object of ambition to those martyrs and a hope to cheer them amid the agonies they were called to endure. It is possible to say that this was an expression which had come down from the lips of the Lord by oral transmission. But it seems rather to be one of those indirect proofs which go to show that St Matthew was read, and pondered, and yielded comfort and strength to persecuted

Christians, in the Valley of the Rhone on the western frontiers of Christendom, in the third quarter of the second century. Such incidental allusions, employed with such effect, are often more convincing than direct citations.

Another such allusion, clearly indicating acquaintance with another discourse of Jesus preserved by St Matthew and by him alone, may be noticed. It is found in Justin's First Apology, where, claiming that the Christians are helpers and allies of all who seek the public good, he declares that one great motive with them is the thought that they are going forward either to everlasting punishment (*αἰώνιον κόλασιν*) or to eternal salvation, according to the lives they have lived and the works they have done. The allusion to "everlasting punishment" is made in such a way that we naturally ascribe it to St Matthew's record of our Lord's discourse on the Last Judgment, and it shows how His teaching wrought itself into the lives of His followers as an influence of the greatest moral power. Whilst incidental allusions have great value, there is no lack by the last quarter of the second century of large quotations. Irenæus quotes large passages from St Matthew by name. Athenagoras the Athenian, in the reign of Marcus Aurelius, has quotations of considerable length from the Sermon on the Mount in the Apology

which he presented to the Emperor in vindication of the character of the Christians.

But it is time to set forth in a more connected fashion the chief proofs of the early and wide circulation of St Matthew's Gospel, beginning with JUSTIN MARTYR in the middle of the second century. We have seen that Justin's *Memoirs of the Apostles*—that is, *Memoirs* written by Apostles and their followers—included the Four Gospels of the New Testament canon. Whilst making use of all these, and probably of the Gospel of Peter besides, Justin shows a preference for St Matthew and St Luke. In his *First Apology*, addressed to the Emperor, Justin has quotations from all the Gospels, in the case of St Matthew and St Luke often extending over two or more verses together. From St Matthew there are at least 112 quotations and from St Luke at least 60. Of these two Evangelists, every chapter except one is laid under contribution either in the *Apologies* or in the *Dialogue*. In the *Dialogue* he more than once (c. 23 and c. 100) claims that the Virgin is of the family of David and Jacob and Isaac and Abraham (Matt. i.) We find in Justin a very clear and explicit reference to the Virgin Birth. He takes pains to show that it happened in fulfilment of prophecy, and to explain the sense in which he and the Christians of early days held it to be miraculous.

Referring first to the prophecy of Isaiah, he quotes the prediction, apparently from memory, "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call His name (*ἐροῦσιν ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ Μεθ' ἡμῶν ὁ Θεός*) God with us." In case the Emperor should think this was just such a thing as was fabled by the poets regarding Jupiter, Justin proceeds to explain.¹ He gives the view of the Virgin Birth held by the Church from the beginning, and tells how the angel "proclaimed to her the glad tidings (*εὐηγγελίσαστο αὐτήν*), saying: Behold thou shalt conceive of the Holy Ghost, and thou shalt bear a Son, and He shall be called Son of the Highest, and thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins, as those who recorded (*οἱ ἀπομνημονεύσαντες*) all things concerning our Saviour Jesus Christ taught." The words of the Evangelist are: "The angel of the Lord appeared [unto Joseph], saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins" (Matt. i. 20, 21). Justin conceives it necessary to explain what St Matthew does not, how the name Jesus is connected with the salvation of His people: "Jesus in Hebrew

¹ Apol. i. 33.

is Saviour (*σωτήρ*).” Justin appeals chiefly to St Matthew, but there is a clause introduced from St Luke, who is his authority for “He shall be called Son of the Highest,” and in the context he refers, though not in exactly quoted words, to the Holy Ghost, who was to come upon the Virgin, and the power of the Highest who was to overshadow her. The birth at Bethlehem—not named, but described as a village thirty-five furlongs from Jerusalem—is also connected by Justin with Micah’s prophecy (v. 2; Matt. ii. 6), and—a point which might weigh with the Emperor—its historical truth is referred by him to the enrolment papers in the time of Cyrenius (*ὡς καὶ μαθεῖν δύνασθε ἐκ τῶν ἀπογραφῶν τῶν γενομένων ἐπὶ Κυρηναίου, τοῦ ὑμετέρου ἐν Ἰουδαίᾳ πρώτου γενομένου ἐπιτρόπου*).¹ When we remember that St Matthew writes upon Jewish soil and that his thoughts move within the circle of Jewish ideas, we see how groundless the suggestion is that the Virgin Birth belongs to the region of classical myth and legend. But we see from Justin’s deprecating remark how easily such an explanation of the Virgin Birth could have arisen when the miraculous event was told to the people of classic lands.

Of other incidents recorded in St Matthew Justin has many examples. The Wise Men

¹ *Apol. i. 34.*

from Arabia, who were guided by a star and presented offerings of gold and frankincense and myrrh, and who were warned not to return to Herod—the flight into Egypt—the massacre of the innocents and Rachel weeping for her children,—are all given, even with occasional exaggeration of language, as in the first Gospel. We find also notices of the preaching of the Baptist and latterly of his death, of the Temptation by Satan, following the order of St Matthew, and general references to the miracles of Jesus. Between the commencement of our Lord's ministry and the closing scenes Justin refers to few events. Of the events and details of Passion week Justin has many notices—the triumphal entry, the institution of the Lord's Supper in remembrance of Him, the Agony, the Crucifixion, the parting of the raiment by lot, the mocking of the bystanders, the last Word of resignation, the Burial, the Resurrection on the day of the sun, the appearance to the disciples on the way to Emmaus, and the Ascension. There is a considerable mixture of St Luke and St Matthew, the former here having the preponderance. The Agony is referred to in the Dialogue twice, in one case in terms clearly taken from St Luke (xxii. 44) (c. 103), and in the other in terms strongly suggestive of St Matthew (xxvi. 39) (c. 99): "On the day when He was about to be crucified He took three of His disciples aside

with Him to the mount which is called Olivet, immediately adjacent to the Temple in Jerusalem, and prayed, saying—Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. And after this He prays, and says: Not as I wish, but as Thou wilt." The references to the calumny of the Jews as to the alleged theft of the body of Jesus by His disciples and to the Great Commission are from St Matthew alone.

Whilst Justin's references to incidents of the Gospel narratives are not scanty, his references to the teaching of Jesus and quotations of His words are numerons. St Matthew furnishes a large proportion of these references. There are long quotations from the Sermon on the Mount, and in the Apology (cc. xv. xvi.) they are made with a view to show the power of moral transformation that dwelt in the teaching of Christ. The parable of the Sower, the sign of the Prophet Jonah, the charge to the Apostles, and others, are to be referred to St Matthew only. But there are many quotations in which there is a weaving together of both St Matthew and St Luke, as if already there were a Harmony in existence; and there are references where we cannot tell whether it is St Matthew or St Luke that is quoted.

One very remarkable reference on the part of Justin is to those notable words of Jesus: "All things have been delivered unto Me of My Father,

and no man knoweth the Son save the Father and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him" (Matt. xi. 27). Two things are to be noted here. First, this is one of the passages in a Synoptic Gospel which enable us to understand how Jesus could have delivered the discourses we find in St John. In the Dialogue (c. 100) Justin quotes the words in the following terms: "And in the Gospel (that is, the Gospel record) it stands written, All things have been delivered unto Me of My Father, and no man knoweth the Father save the Son; nor yet the Son save the Father and they to whomsoever the Son may reveal Him." These words appear specially to have attracted Justin, whose theological, and especially Christological, views have a distinct affinity with St John. They are quoted also in the First Apology, simply as words of Jesus, twice in the same chapter (Ap. i. 63), though without the lofty claim which introduces them, and in the same order as in the Dialogue, inverting St Matthew's order. Irenæus,¹ it should be said, also quotes the passage in its context, giving the words in Justin's order. Marcion also has the passage, and uses *ἔγνω*, as Justin does, in preference to *γινώσκει* or *ἐπιγινώσκει*. But the quotation is clearly one of those cardinal sayings of Jesus which were often quoted, and not always in exact terms, by early

¹ i. 20, 3.

writers. Secondly, the passage is found also almost in exact parallelism in St Luke (x. 22 ff.) It belongs, accordingly, to the non-Marcan source, which is drawn upon both by St Matthew and St Luke, which Wellhausen calls Q, and which, being the earliest collection of sayings of Jesus that we know, has been called by critics the very earliest Gospel.¹ This source has been extracted from the evangelic materials and set forth with much ingenuity by Professor Harnack,² who has an elaborate and interesting discussion of this very passage. If this collection of discourses, as Holtzmann calls it, is St Matthew's, and if it was written, as Professor Ramsay thinks probable, in the lifetime of Jesus, then it is a witness, remarkable and most precious, to the lofty doctrine of the person of Christ which we find in the Synoptic Gospels and in St John. No wonder that Justin and Irenæus prize it so highly.

There are in Justin sayings attributed to Jesus which have a basis in discourses recorded in St Matthew, but cannot be said to be citations from his Gospel or any other of the four. "The very things which He declared beforehand would happen in His name we see enacted before our eyes and in serious fact. For He said, Many shall come in My name, outwardly arrayed in

¹ Sir William Ramsay, 'Expositor,' May 1907.

² Sprüche u. Reden Jesu.

sheep's skins, while inwardly they are ravening wolves. And, There shall be divisions and heresies. And, Beware of false prophets, who shall come to you, outwardly arrayed in sheep's skins, while inwardly they are ravening wolves. And, There shall rise up many false Christs and false apostles, and they shall lead astray many of the faithful."¹ The predictions of divisions and heresies and false apostles are not found in St Matthew's Gospel, although false Christs and false prophets are predicted in the great eschatological discourse in Matthew xxiv., and in the same discourse the disciples are warned against teachers of error who are to come in His name. St Paul, in his Epistles to the Corinthians, has references to schisms and heresies (1 Cor. xi. 18, 19), and to false apostles (2 Cor. xi. 13). The Clementine Homilies (xvi. 2) combine the two predictions, and Hegesippus² speaks of false Christs, false prophets, false apostles. Tertullian and Lactantius attribute to our Lord a prediction of heresies. Considering that Justin writes in the period between the days of oral teaching and those of entire dependence on written Gospels, we should not perhaps go far wrong to say that he has been indebted to oral tradition; and this view would find support from references in other Christian writers. And yet

¹ Dial., c. 35.

² Euseb. H. E., IV. 22.

we may have here nothing more than free quotation from the canonical Gospels on the part of Justin, with that rhetorical colour and exaggeration in which he sometimes indulges. Another example of this treatment of the Gospel record is found in the Dialogue with Trypho:¹ "Christ also Himself, saying that the kingdom of heaven is at hand, and that He must suffer many things of the Scribes and Pharisees, and be crucified and rise on the third day, and again present Himself in Jerusalem and there drink again and eat together with His disciples, also predicted that in the interval before His coming again, as I said before, priests and false prophets would arise in His name, and so it seems to have come to pass." Here we have no quotation from a Gospel, but we do have a *memoriter* blending of words of our Lord with portions of the Gospel narrative. There can be no doubt whatever of the high estimation in which Justin, by the middle of the second century, held the Gospel according to St Matthew.

Ever since Bryennios discovered a complete text of the so-called SECOND EPISTLE OF CLEMENT, it has been recognised that the work is not a letter but a homily. "After the God of truth," says the writer, "I send to you an exhortation to

¹ c. 51.

the end that ye may give heed to the things which are written, in order that ye may save both yourselves and him that leadeth in the midst of you” (c. xix.) It is clearly one of those exhortations which the president of the Christian assembly delivers after the reading of the Memoirs of the Apostles or the writings of the prophets, of which Justin has spoken.¹ But who the author is we cannot tell. That it was Clement was doubted as long ago as Eusebius, and none of the early writers credit him with more than one epistle. Although Professor Harnack² has strongly pressed the claims of Rome as the Church to which it is addressed, the marked allusion to the Grecian games, and probably to the Isthmian festival, in similar terms to St Paul’s well-known allusions in 1 Cor. ix., points more decisively to Corinth. If the audience addressed belonged to Corinth, this fact would explain the dissemination and reputed authorship of the document, for it would thus come to be associated with the genuine Epistle of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians.³ The internal evidence, in the judgment of Lightfoot, whose opinion is adopted by Stanton against Harnack, points to 140 A.D. as the date of its composition. That the unknown

¹ Ap. i. 67.

² *Zeitschrift f. Kirchengeschichte*, i. 264 ff., 329 ff.

³ See Lightfoot, ‘*Apostolic Fathers*,’ ii. 197 ff.

preacher was acquainted with all the Synoptic Gospels is clear, for there are quotations from all of them, St Matthew being still the favourite, though St Luke is not far behind. In chapter ii., after two quotations from Isaiah liv., "Rejoice thou barren that bearest not, . . . for the children of the desolate are more than of her that hath an husband," the author continues, "again, another Scripture saith, I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." The quotation agrees exactly with St Mark (ii. 17), but might be taken from St Matthew (ix. 13). In Luke (v. 32) the words *εἰς μετάνοιαν* are added. The formula of quotation not only assigns to the words the character of Scripture, but expressly places them on the level of the Old Testament already quoted. In chapter iv. reference is made to the Sermon on the Mount: "Let us therefore not merely call Him Lord, for this will not save us; for He saith, Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall be saved, but he that doeth righteousness," which is a free quotation of "Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven" (Matt. vii. 21; cf. Luke vi. 46). In chapter viii. there is a quotation expressly said to be from "the Gospel": "For the Lord saith in the Gospel, If ye kept not that which is little, who shall give unto you that which is great?"

For I say unto you that he which is faithful in the least is faithful also in much." This is a combination of St Luke (xvi. 10) and St Matthew (xxv. 21, 23). In chapter xiv. there is an interesting distinction between the Old and the New Testament: the former he called "The Books" (*τὰ βιβλία*, the Bible), while the latter is called "The Apostles" (*οἱ ἀπόστολοι*). If the latter term implies that the Gospels, to which reference is made, are not yet technically and expressly placed on the level of Holy Scripture, there are expressions elsewhere which substantially include them in that category. The author (c. xiii.) introduces a saying of our Lord in the Gospels with the words "God saith," having immediately before referred to the Oracles of God (*τὰ λόγια τοῦ Θεοῦ*) in the same connexion—a mode of expression which surely implies that he regarded the passage read as part of the Word of God. And when towards the close of his discourse he describes the reading of the Scriptures as the voice of "the God of Truth" speaking to the congregation, we feel that there is but a little way to the full recognition of the Gospels as Holy Scripture which we find in Irenæus and Clement of Alexandria. There is a strong resemblance to Justin's manner of quoting, both in the freedom with which citations are given and in the combining of passages from St Matthew and St Luke.

The fact that there is no trace of St John's Gospel need not be taken as implying that it was not known, for the references to St Paul's Epistles, which could not but be well known to the writer, are comparatively few, and the writing from its small size does not give scope for many quotations. No fewer than four sayings are attributed to our Lord which are not to be found in our canonical Gospels. One of them, at least, belongs to the Gospel of the Egyptians, which, with its teaching disparaging the relations between the sexes, never had any wide circulation, and never was a serious rival of the Four Gospels. When we remember that Clement of Alexandria, and even Origen, who drew an absolute line of demarcation between our Four Gospels and any other, still quoted from the Gospel according to the Hebrews in the beginning of the third century, we need not be surprised to find this writer in the middle of the second using an apocryphal Gospel. The Gospel according to St Matthew has at any rate the assured position which it occupies in the earliest Christian writings.

Still earlier there is in the recently recovered Apology of ARISTIDES, the Athenian, which was presented to the Emperor Hadrian about 125 A.D., a significant reference to St Matthew's Gospel.

It also relates to the Virgin Birth. "The Christians," says Aristides in his vindication of the character of his co-religionists, "trace the beginning of their religion to Jesus, the Messiah; and He is named the Son of God Most High. And it is said that God came down from heaven, and from a Hebrew virgin assumed and clothed Himself with flesh; and the Son of God lived in a daughter of man. This is taught from that Gospel which a little while ago was spoken among them as being preached; wherein if ye also will read, ye will comprehend the power which is upon it."¹ It is, upon the whole, rather St Matthew than St Luke who is referred to: "Behold a virgin shall be with child and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is God with us" (Matt. i. 23). But in the reference, the words "the Son of God Most High" are suggestive of St Luke. That it was from a written and authoritative record that Aristides makes his appeal to the Emperor seems clear from the context; and in another place he designates his source "the writings of the Christians" (c. xvii.)

¹ Apology of Aristides, c. ii.