INTRODUCTION. ] THE THREE GOSPELS. [cn. 1.   
   
   
   
 SECTION III.   
   
 THE ORIGIN OF OUR THREE GOSPELS.   
   
 1. It remains then, that the three Gospels should have arisen inde-   
 pendently of one another. But supposing this, we are at once met by   
 the difficulty of accounting for so much common matter, and that nar-   
 rated, as we have seen, with such curious verbal agreements and dis-   
 crepancies. Thus we are driven to some common origin for those parts.   
 But of what kind? Plainly, either documentary (i.e. contained in   
 writings), or oral. Let us consider each of these in turn.   
 2. No documentary source could have led to the present texts of our   
 Gospels. For supposing it to have been in the Hebrew language (or   
 Aramaic, the dialect of Palestine at the time), and thus accounting for   
 \_ some of the variations in our parallel Greek passages, as being independent   
 translations,—we shall still have no solution whatever of the more im-   
 portant discrepancies of insertion, omission, and arrangement.. To meet   
 these, the most complicated hypotheses have been advanced,—all per-   
 fectly capricious, and utterly inadequate, even when apprehended, to   
 account for the phenomena, The various opponents of the view of an   
 original Gospel have well shewn besides, that such a Gospel could never   
 have existed, because of the omission in one or other of our three, of   
 passages which must necessarily have formed a part of tt; e.g. Matt.   
 xxvi. 6—13 (see there) omitted by St. Luke’, I believe then that we   
 may safely abandon the idea of any single original Gospel, whether   
 Aramaic or Greek. :   
 3. Still it might be thought possible that, though one document cannot   
 have originated the text of the common parts of our Gospels, several   
 documents, more or less related to one another, may have done 60, in the   
 absence of any original Gospel. But this, it will be seen, is but an   
 imperfect analysis of their origin; for we are again met by the question,   
 whence did these documents take their rise? And if they turn out to be   
 only so many modifications of a received éral teaching respecting the   
 actions and sayings of our Lord, then to that oral teaching are we   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
 « Those who maintain the anointing Matt. xxvi. 6 to the same with that Luke   
 vii. forget that is incumbent on them in such to shew sufficient for   
 the inversion in order of It is no reply my argument, to say that St. Luke   
 omits the anointing Bethany, because he had related it before in vii. Had he   
 not had St. Matthew's Gospel before him, is very likely he may have inserted   
 an incident which he without date, in a where it might illustrate want   
 of charity a Pharisee ; Aaving (on their St. Matthew's Gospel before   
 im, and the incident there related in strict and connexion with our   
 Lord’s Death, it simply inconceivable that should have transposed it, oblite-   
 rated all of such connexion, deeply and important as it   
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