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ESSAY

ON THE

RIGHT ESTIMATION OF MANUSCRIPT
EVIDENCE

IN THE TEXT OF

THE NEW TESTAMENT.



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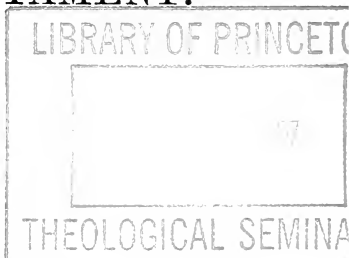
BY



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AND HON. CANON OF ELY.



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PREFACE.

THE present attempt to revise and improve our English Bible is mixed up inseparably with a further question, What is the true original Text of the New Testament, on which any such revision has to be based? It seems unfortunate that this more important question should be raised informally and indirectly in the course of an attempt to improve our English version, instead of being looked upon as a distinct preliminary, which requires to be first settled on definite principles, before the other work can be pursued with full prospect of success.

A vast amount of critical material, both in Manuscripts and Versions of the New Testament, has been amassed by the labour of collators and scholars through the last hundred years. A dozen critical editions have appeared in succession, by no means in full agreement with each other, but with a common tendency to depart rather widely from the Received Text, and to replace it by one which treats the five hundred cursive manu-

scripts nearly as if they were non-existent, and depends almost entirely on the readings of five or six of the oldest Uncials alone. The changes thus introduced are neither few nor unimportant. The greater part of them are not unlikely to be adopted in the revision now in progress, and then to be commended to the acceptance of the whole Church with the seeming authority of all the eminent names to whom the secondary task has been practically confided.

I have a strong conviction that it is highly inexpedient that so grave a matter as an authoritative decision, which is the true text of the New Testament, should be settled by a side-wind in the course of an attempt to improve our English translation, without any previous discussion of the principles on which the adoption of the new text is to be maintained and enforced. Scholars are by no means unanimous, either in their estimate of the relative weight of different parts of the total evidence, or in the verdicts to which they are led by their varying judgments on this first prerequisite for any sure decision. One critic has followed another in adopting certain rules or methods, as if self-evident, which are at least open to very grave doubt, and in my own opinion demonstrably untrue. Dr Scrivener, inferior to no living scholar in diligence, learning, and soundness of judgment, makes the following remarks on Tischendorf's eighth edition, that "it differs from his seventh in 3369 places, to the scandal of the science of comparative criticism, as well as his own grave discredit for discernment and consistency. The evidence

of codex **N**, supported or even unsupported by one or two other authorities of any description, is with him sufficient to outweigh all other witnesses, whether manuscripts, versions, or ecclesiastical writers." This seems almost to justify the remark of Dean Burgon, that to have found an early uncial codex is every bit as fatal in Biblical Criticism, as in common trials to have taken a gift, and "doth blind the eyes of the wise."

The following pages are an attempt to bring stricter laws and principles of evidence to bear on this great question, the present state of which, I think, is most unsatisfactory. I fully agree with Dean Burgon, that "the hypothesis on which recent recensions of the Text have been for the most part conducted, will on fuller search be seen to be untenable." And I offer some reasons, more definite than have been, so far as I know, ever yet adduced, to justify my entire disbelief in the truth and soundness of the greater part of those changes which have been latterly advocated, as if they were restorations of the true and original text of the sacred oracles of God.

CAMBRIDGE,

December, 1877.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE Revision of the Authorized Version of the Bible, now in progress, makes it more than ever desirable that we should come to a clear decision on the laws which determine the relative weight of manuscript evidence. Only in this way can we arrive at a practical agreement, in all disputed passages, where the readings vary, what is the true and genuine form of the original text of the New Testament. Ample materials have been provided by the researches of scholars and collators during the three last centuries, since the revival of learning, and the appearance of the first critical editions. But there is still no slight divergence in the estimates of the relative weight which belongs to the different parts of the whole collective body of evidence.

The maxims, which are adopted by the majority of modern critics, are regarded by others with doubt and suspicion, and their truth is by no means self-evident. An immense superiority of weight is assigned to a small number of the oldest manuscripts. The true reading is supposed to be determined, not so much by the whole body of evidence, as by one hundredth part of the surviving witnesses almost alone.

2. This principle, which gives almost exclusive authority to the oldest extant manuscripts, in combination with early versions, was the basis of Dr Bentley's proposals for a revised edition of the New Testament, nearly two hundred years ago. He said that there was "a marvellous agreement between the oldest Greek MSS. and those of Jerome's Version, even in the order of the words," and that he could thus restore the text of the fourth century, "so that there shall not be twenty words, or even particles, different." He promised to set forth an edition of each in columns, without using any book under nine hundred years old, that should "exactly agree word for word, and what is more amazing, order for order, so that no two tallies of an indenture could agree better."

Bentley survived his Proposals 22 years, but the promised edition, which was to do such wonders in solving the great problem of restoring a perfect text, never appeared. "We cannot but believe," says Dr Scrivener, "that nothing less than the manifest impossibility of maintaining the principles his Letter enunciated, and which his Proposals of 1720 scarcely modified, in the face of the evidence his growing mass of collations bore against them, could have had power to break off in the midst that labour of love, from which he had looked for undying fame."

3. About forty years ago Lachmann revived the same idea, and pushed it to its farthest extreme. "He made," says the same scholar, "a clean sweep of the great mass of MSS. usually cited in critical editions. In fact, he rejects all in a heap except Codd. ABC, the fragments PQTZ, and for some purposes D, of the Gospels, and E of the Acts only, and DGH of St Paul's Epistles." Thus he entirely rejects the evidence of the later uncials, and of the five or

six hundred cursive manuscripts. The testimonies thus set aside are a hundredfold more than would suffice to settle, with the moral certainty of a very near approach to the truth, the text of any Greek or Latin author, if such were now, for the first time, rescued from oblivion.

Dr Tregelles adopts the same principle, and is only rather more temperate and cautious in its application. "It consists," he says, "in resorting to ancient authorities alone in the construction of the text, and in refusing, not only to the Received or printed text, but also to the great mass of MSS., all voice in determining the true readings." His ancient authorities are "those MSS. which, not being Lectionaries, happen to be written in uncial characters, with the remarkable exceptions of Codd 1, 33, 69 of the Gospels, and 61 of the Acts, which he admits, because he conceives them to preserve an ancient text." In his early edition of the Apocalypse (1844) two MSS., A and C of the fifth century, one of them deficient in nine chapters, and a third, B, of the seventh century, are held to outweigh "the whole mass of modern copies," that is to say, nearly a hundred MSS., which range upward from the fifteenth as high as the tenth century.

4. The principle of Dr Tischendorf is nearly the same. It prevailed fully in his third edition. In the seventh he varied from it, and restored the received text in six hundred places, where he had before abandoned it. But after his discovery of the Sinaitic MS. the theory of his earlier edition seems to have resumed its power. In his eighth and last edition he offers a new text, varying in 3369 places from that which had been the ripest fruit of his previous critical labours, which had then already lasted more than twenty years.

5. The same general character appears in the critical decisions of Dean Alford. "I have become disposed," he says, "as research and comparison have gone on, to lay more and more weight on the evidence of our few most ancient MSS. and versions, and less on that of the great array of later MSS., which are so often paraded in digests as supporting or impugning the commonly received text." And again, with reference to an appeal to mere numbers. "Perhaps these four or five are just the consensus of our most ancient and venerable authorities, and 'all the rest' may, for aught we know, be in many cases no more worthy to be heard in the matter than so many separate printed copies of our own day."

The view of Drs Westcott and Hort, in their introduction to the text of the Gospels (1870), privately circulated, and not yet published, is nearly the same. They continue the series of high authorities in its favour. They dissent from Tischendorf in ranking the Vatican higher than the Sinaitic MS. But they affirm of both alike that their age alone is no adequate measure of their excellence, and that comparatively few contemporary MSS. can have been so pure. Indeed this assumption seems almost needful to justify the relative weight assigned to them. Unless they were tenfold better than the average of those of their own age, which have perished, no valid reason appears why they should outweigh fifty times their number of later times, which must certainly have been derived from a very considerable number of MSS. of that earlier age.

6. Dr Scrivener and Mr Burgon represent a partial reaction or protest against what seems to them, in the able critics previously mentioned, an extreme deference to age alone, and assign a greater relative weight to the later

authorities. Yet the dissent, in Dr Scrivener's work, is very limited, and cautiously expressed. "No living man," he says, "possessed of the slightest tincture of scholarship, would dream of setting up testimony exclusively modern against the unanimous voice of antiquity." He only contends that, in the numerous cases where the earliest MSS. disagree, considerable weight is due to the multitude of later times. The consent, however, of the five or six MSS., all that now survive earlier than A.D. 600, can only by extreme violence be called "the unanimous voice of antiquity." It is really much less than a hundredth part of the evidence which must have existed at the time to which it belongs. Mr MacClellan, in his recent work on the Gospels, carries his dissent considerably further, and speaks of the confidence placed in the two oldest MSS. as a superstitious devotion, and says that a very different estimate will be formed of not a few readings, now maintained on their authority, when the science of Textual Criticism is better matured. The Bishop of Lincoln, no mean scholar, seems to share substantially in this judgment.

7. The two pillars, on which the popular school of criticism rests its decisions, are these; that the early age of MSS. is far more important than their number, in a true estimate of the collective weight of their testimony; and that their value, for critical purposes, depends mainly on a proper arrangement of them in certain groups or families. Are these principles true and sound? They are clearly not self-evident. I believe them to be really baseless. To unfold some of the reasons for this judgment is the main object of the following little work.

CHAPTER I.

THE DOCTRINE OF GROUPS AND FAMILIES.

8. THE principle that the critical value of MSS. is to be determined mainly by their distribution into certain classes or families was first distinctly laid down by Bengel, though in a rather indefinite form. It was then adopted by Griesbach, and was ripened into his hypothesis of three main families or recensions, the Alexandrian, the Western, and the Constantinopolitan or Eastern. To the first of these he ascribed the three Uncials A, B, C, also L of the Gospels, and the Egyptian and some derived versions. To the second were allotted D of the Gospels and Acts, those ancient copies which contain a Latin translation, the Old Latin and Vulgate versions, and the Latin Fathers. The third included the later Uncials, and the main body of the cursive manuscripts, the Greek Fathers, and most of the versions. Thus nine-tenths and upward of the witnesses, numerically, were summed up in one group, the least esteemed of the three, while the remaining tenth was divided, and formed the two others. Such a classification might seem an ingenious device to obscure and reverse the real proportion of the testimonies, and would make the decision depend on four or five uncials, and three or four versions, almost alone. Hug and Scholz

retained Griesbach's threefold division, but with one important change, that they gave most weight to the Eastern family, which included the great numerical majority of the witnesses.

9. This idea of three recensions, each internally consistent and mainly harmonious, but quite distinct from the two others, is now almost wholly abandoned. The facts, when closely sifted, fully disprove it. They reveal a mixture and variation and manifold crossing of agreements and disagreements, almost in every conceivable direction. And no wonder, when we reflect that what it is attempted to assign to geographical bounds, and arrange in provinces, is simply the total of errors produced in various MSS. by careless mistake or wilful corruption, in the course of all the successive copyings which part them from the original text. In these mistakes, so far as they are due to carelessness, there could not be the least concert. Manuscripts are also very easy to transfer from place to place, and must often have been so removed. The blunders of scribes and copyists have no patent to secure them from being reversed by more careful successors, and could not possibly observe any strict rule of geographical distribution. The theory, then, as Dr Scrivener remarks, "will scarcely again find an advocate, however attractive, and once widely received."

10. The same general conception, however, that the first business of criticism is to determine the affinities of MSS., and fix their lineage and descent, and only afterwards to assign them any weight as evidence, still finds its place in the views and reasonings of some of our ablest scholars. Thus Drs Westcott and Hort make a modified form of it their chief guide in the formation of a revised text. The principles laid down are briefly these.

(1) That all sound restoration of corrupted texts is founded on the study of their history, and the relations of descent or affinity, which connect the witnesses, and that the study of grouping is the foundation of all enduring criticism. (2) That the most striking phenomenon of the history of the first three centuries from the death of the Apostles, or A.D. 70—370, is the rapid and wide propagation of a text which may be called Western, since its best representatives are bilingual MSS. written in the West. (3) That this Western text is followed substantially by all the early Greek writers not connected with Alexandria, Irenæus, Hippolytus, Methodius, has a conspicuous place in Clement and Origen, and is predominant in Eusebius, and that no ancient version has escaped its influence, especially those of Upper Egypt, Ethiopia, and Armenia. (4) That its chief and constant feature is a love of paraphrase, and that words and even clauses were changed, omitted, and inserted with astonishing freedom; and there is also a readiness to adopt alterations or additions from traditional sources. (5) That the perpetuation of a purer text is due to the scholars of Alexandria, and its best representatives in the versions are the Egyptian, especially that of Lower Egypt; and the quotations which follow it are most abundant in Clement, Origen, Didymus, and the younger Cyril, all Alexandrians. (6) That in the fourth century mixture prevails everywhere, and all texts became more or less chaotic. (7) That at a later period the texts of Constantinople, which were Syrian, determined the character of nearly all the MSS. (8) That the task of the critic is to penetrate beyond the time of mixture, and to ascertain what was read in different churches, while the several streams of tradition held a parallel course. So that a double process is necessary, to recover the outlines

of the history from the total of all kinds of evidence, and then to apply the conclusions thus attained to determine the origin and character of each principal authority.

11. Such in brief is one of the latest expositions of the view on which recent critical recensions have been made to rest. However great the respect due to its successive advocates, it seems to me to be loaded with logical and historical difficulties of the most decisive kind.

And first, it seems to reverse and set aside one of the simplest instincts of common sense. Abundance of evidence ought naturally to produce certainty and assurance. But if the plan here enjoined is the only proper course of investigation, the copiousness of testimonies can only lead to an exactly opposite result. The MSS. which still survive, our helps in recovering the sacred original, are ample beyond those of any other work. In the Gospels they include, in whole or part, 56 uncials and 623 cursives; in the Acts and Catholic Epistles, 14 and 232; in St Paul's Epistles 15 and 283; and in the Apocalypse 5 uncials and 105 cursives. Besides these, we have 61 uncial and 285 cursive Evangelistræ or Lectionaries from the Gospels for Church use, and 7 uncial and 74 cursive Lectionaries of the Acts and the Epistles. There is thus an average of 40 uncials and 400 cursives for the whole of the New Testament.

Now if the first essential, before we can use these testimonies aright, is to trace the previous history of all or most of them, to fix their relations to each other and to their perished predecessors, and the geography of those predecessors, and to arrange them in two, three, four, or five distinct groups, each with a different text of its own, divergent and distinct at first, but afterward confused and mixed together, the labour must be interminable, and

the problem quite hopeless of solution. Laborious scholarship and extreme diligence can never supply the absolute want of direct and positive evidence. The genealogy of these four hundred cursives, and even of the Uncials, from twenty to forty in number, must be a guess and nothing more. The grouping of some thousand MSS. of the second century, all of which have now perished, is still further removed from definite historical certainty. It must be a guess twice removed. The materials are ample in amount, but beyond an approximate date, little is known, or can now be known, of the steps of their derivation from the originals. The room for conjecture is so wide, and the positive evidence to fix the descent of each MS. so scanty, that hundreds of schemes of derivation, more or less plausible, might be framed. Shaken by every fresh critic, the kaleidoscope will take a new form, as the materials enter into new combinations. The decision, in disputed passages, will come to depend on unproved conjectures as to the exact historical relations between our surviving MSS. and several thousands of others long since perished, for which scarcely any historical data can be found ; instead of resting on the data really within our reach, that is, the number of the extant witnesses, and the approximate date to which they severally belong. A decision so framed would not be freed from dependence on arbitrary dogmatism, but rather be subject to it in its extremest form.

12. The theory has a second fatal defect. It involves a vicious circle. It requires us to assume the true original text to be known, which is the very aim of the whole inquiry.

To classify MSS. properly by their errors, or deviations from the original, the true text must have been first ascertained. We may, indeed, form a provisional text, by assuming the true reading to be that, in each case, of the

majority of witnesses. With the actual divergences, this plainly reduces the total amount of error to a minimum. But when we vary from this simplest rule, in each deviation the readings of a majority must replace those of the minority, in our list of variations from the true standard. So long as the nature and extent of these substitutions are unknown, all grouping by affinities must remain uncertain. Its grounds cannot exist in any part of the true text itself, but only in the deviations from it, the amount of these, and their mutual relations to each other. Now these must vary with every change in our conception of the true original text. The problem, in such a scheme, must first have been solved, before the attempt to solve it can be successfully made.

13. The doctrine of groups implies three critical maxims. First, that each MS., viewed as evidence, must be considered as a whole, or as a single witness, of equal value in every part. Secondly, that there were in the second and third centuries several distinct and local texts; so that MSS. of the West, those of Syria, and those of Egypt, had a common character in their errors and deviations from the original, distinct from those of the other provinces. Thirdly, that the weight of evidence does not depend simply on the number and the ages of the MSS. and versions which contain it, but on the relative weight or goodness of some set or school of authorities, to which these witnesses, and this reading, seem on the whole to belong. Each of these maxims, I believe, is misleading and erroneous.

14. The Gospels themselves are four distinct witnesses to the life, character, and works of our blessed Lord. Each of them, also, is one single and separate witness. But the individual copies of these Gospels stand on a different

footing. Each of these is the same Gospel, plus or minus certain errors or faults, which the process of copying has introduced. Its value and excellence depends on the sacred original, so far as it transmits it unchanged. This it shares with every other copy. Its individuality depends on its errors and faults alone. And these are not bound together by any tie of lateral connexion, except so far as they may consist in a peculiar spelling of names, or in the preference for certain grammatical forms. They depend simply on the series of copies, through which this particular MS. has been derived from the original. If in any part all the transcriptions have been exact, or an error in one has been set right in the next and not repeated, the MS. will there give the true reading, however great its faults elsewhere may be. But the general goodness of the previous series will not make the copy derived from them better than one of the worst, in all those other places where these parent MSS. are actually tainted with error.

15. The Gospels contain nearly 70,000 Greek words. They may be parted, as in Codex Bezae, into ten thousand successive lines or *στίχοι* of nearly seven words apiece. Each of these, in the copy, is derived from the answering words of the original, through all the intervening copies. These ten thousand chains of evidence are nearly independent of each other. A MS. may be perfect in 9900 of these clauses, and still in the remaining hundred have only a negative value, so as to mislead the copyist who relies upon its authority. The right plan, then, must be to deal with the testimonies according to the real conditions of the problem. They cannot safely be fused together, as if a low percentage of error throughout the whole of the New Testament could make the error less real, or the weight of the MS. greater, in those particular clauses,

where one or more of the preceding copyists has actually gone astray.

16. The hypothesis of local texts has been called the most striking fact in the history of the three first centuries. It is evidently not a fact at all, but a pure conjectural inference and is wholly wanting in direct and positive evidence. It is also loaded with immense inherent improbability.

To make the inquiry definite, let us confine ourselves to the two centuries A.D. 100-323, or from the death of the last Apostle, St John, to the council of Nice and the reign of Constantine.

Is it a plain fact of history that in this interval the MSS. diffused through the West had in common a special set of deviations from the true text, nearly the same throughout, and quite different from the errors or deviations in the East? Nothing less than this will satisfy the terms of the hypothesis. If what are called Western readings were either, first, the true and genuine readings, those in the autographs; or, secondly, were shared by other parts of the Empire, the lands of the East; or thirdly, were limited to a small portion only of the Western MSS., and consist of a total of errors, some present in some, and others in others, and varying from time to time, and not constant, then the whole theory must fall to the ground.

Now what direct evidence can be offered for any one of these three necessary postulates of the theory? Not a single MS. of this period, either Eastern or Western, now survives. The number, in the East and West together, must have been a thousand at least before the close of the period, and probably at its beginning. It may have been a thousand in each half of the Empire alone. How can it be a prominent fact of history that the greater part of the

five hundred Western MSS. had one special set of wrong readings, not shared by the five hundred or thousand Eastern, when the true text is the very object of the whole inquiry, and not a single MS. either of the West or the East survives, to justify a contrasted statement so precise, full, and comprehensive in its range ?

17. The only evidence, then, for the existence of such a text has to be sought in the early versions, and the incidental quotations of the Fathers. The versions of the period are (1) The Peschito, (2) The Nitrian Syriac, of which one MS. only has been lately found, (3) The Old Latin, of the second century, (4) The Memphitic or Coptic, (5) The Thebaic or Sahidic, in the middle of the third century. The chief Fathers of the period are Justin, Athenagoras, Melito, Theophilus, Irenæus, Clemens, Origen, Tertullian, Hippolytus, Cyprian, Cyril of Antioch, Methodius, Lactantius, Arnobius, and a few others. Now it is plain that remoter shades of difference would wholly disappear in a version, or in quotations by Latin Fathers. Of such varieties there could thus be hardly any surviving evidence. Also the proof of a Western text must depend entirely on readings either known or assumed to be deviations from the original. The whole amount of the quotations in the previous writers can hardly be more than would form a single complete copy of the New Testament, and this too very unequally distributed. Some parts may occur two or three times, and many others not at all. Those in the Latin Fathers are much less. From these data it must be impossible to infer the sum total of errors in the fifteen or twenty copies which these Fathers separately used. How much less can we infer the readings in five hundred or a thousand copies, spread over all the provinces of the Western Empire ! To warrant a decision on the prevailing

character and dominant readings of all these, at least a hundred of them ought to be still extant. But not a single copy of the whole number has survived, and we have to guess at their character from a few versions, and loose patristic quotations alone.

18. Again, the text in question is said to have been used by all the Antenicene Greek Fathers, except those of Alexandria, to predominate in Eusebius of Caesarea whose home was in Syria, and to hold a conspicuous place in the writings of Clemens and Origen, both Alexandrians. But any set of readings, over the whole New Testament, witnessed by a consent of Greek as well as Latin Fathers, and by others dwelling in Egypt and Palestine, cannot surely without great impropriety be styled a Western text. The alleged facts disprove the accuracy of the title. If they were correctly stated, the natural conclusion would be that readings so widely attested were the true ones, and not, as the hypothesis requires, a special kind or set of errors and divergences, prevalent in the West alone. The Gospels and Epistles are the common inheritance of the whole church. But local texts could have no other possible basis than local faults of transcription alone.

19. Besides the entire absence of all direct evidence, the hypothesis of several distinct texts, that is, separate and parallel streams of false readings in distinct localities and spread through hundreds of manuscripts, is inherently improbable to the last degree. A copy is simply the original Gospel or Epistle, plus or minus certain faults of addition, change, or omission. No MS. of the second or third century survives, two only of the fourth, and three only of the fifth. The total number at the time must have been more than a thousand. The individuality of each copy consists only in the sum of its

errors, that is, of the mistakes or wilful corruptions, due to successive transcribers. These are most unlikely to have followed any definite law, or to be mainly the same in any two MSS. of the same date, unless one were copied from the other, or both from a third. Hence the formation of local texts, or sets of scores or hundreds of copies, nearly alike, with hundreds or thousands of common errors not shared by the copies of other districts, is almost impossible in the very nature of things. The chances against such a resemblance on one side, and contrast on the other, are almost infinite. As soon as the divergences were serious, and began to attract attention, efforts for the correction of them would be sure to follow. And thus the flowing onward, side by side, almost undisturbed, of several streams of error, each distinct from the other, is hardly conceivable. It would be no real loss, but rather a gain, for a cosmos of which the definition is only the coexistence and permanence of several different sets of corrupted readings, to be resolved by intermixture and correction into chaos again.

20. Another character, ascribed to the Western text is that words and even clauses were changed, omitted, and inserted with astonishing freedom. But the result of such a process could never be one distinct text or recension. It would rather be a medley of defective MSS., differing even more widely from each other than from the common original. And if there was the further tendency to introduce alterations and additions from doubtful or apocryphal sources, the resulting divergence must have been still greater. The effect of such a licence could never be to create one consistent variety of text, and then to spread it unchanged over half or two-thirds of the Empire. Nay, the mere assertion that such was the general character of

one-half or two-thirds of the extant MSS. of the New Testament in the second and third centuries, and this when not a single MS. survives, directly to prove it, goes very far towards degrading written revelation to the lower level of mere oral tradition.

21. The facts, alleged in proof of the existence of a separate Western text in the second and third centuries, seem to me to point naturally, and almost necessarily, to a very different view. They must consist entirely of the collective divergences from the Received Text of the earliest versions, and the quotations in ecclesiastical authors before Constantine and the Nicene Council. Now so far as these are common to the Greek Ante-Nicene Fathers with those of the West, they will yield some presumption that the Received Text is wrong, and that a different reading is the true original, but can yield no proof at all of a distinctively Western text. So far as they consist in loose paraphrase or apocryphal additions, they will illustrate and confirm the general habit of free or lax quotation in those early writers; but the errors, in the total absence of direct evidence, cannot reasonably be charged on the whole multitude of perished manuscripts. They will be referred more naturally to some carelessness or laxity of quotation in the individual writer. To transfer each paraphrastic change or apocryphal addition, made with astonishing freedom, first from the author himself to his copy of the New Testament, and next to the majority of copies then extant, at least in the West, is a process wholly unwarrantable, and opens the door to a serious degradation of the worth of all manuscript evidence. The same instinct, to paraphrase instead of quoting with verbal exactness, might exist in various writers; but its result must be variety and multiplicity, not unity and

sameness, in the derived copies. The tendency to insert spurious matter could never produce a Western recension, but only a great diversity of copies, deviating more from each other than from the true text. The total amount of error, gathered from five versions and twenty authors, may be large. And yet the share due to each author, and to the copy he employed, may be comparatively small, so that any faults might be readily removed by the simple plan of collecting two or three copies, when a new copy was to be made.

22. Another fact has also to be remembered, which will naturally account for more paraphrastic readings in the Western manuscripts. For in the West the Scriptures would be constantly read in the churches in a Latin version. What they heard constantly would react on the minds of those who heard it, whether as copyists or authors. Whenever their care relaxed in copying a Greek MS., or where it was illegible, the natural tendency would be to retranslate the version familiar to their ears, and in this way to modify the original text. The best representatives of the so-called Western text are said to be the bilingual MSS., with Greek and Latin in parallel pages or columns, which must plainly have been designed for the Latin-speaking churches. Thus various deviations from the true text might arise from the partial mixture of retranslations from Latin with the proper Greek original. The general character, however, of these changes as loose, paraphrastic, and adscititious, instead of proving that a distinct text with these features was widely spread, proves rather the exact reverse. There must thus have been many divergent varieties, differing at least as much from each other as from the truth, and easily capable, for this very reason, of being freed from their respective.

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accretions of error, as soon as the divergence was perceived, and reasonable care was exercised by later scribes to recover and maintain a purer text.

23. The error of the attempt to determine the true text of the New Testament by a supposed grouping of the early MSS., previous to the close of the fourth century, may be proved by three distinct arguments. The first is the want of direct evidence of the contents of those MSS., which makes any such process of decision really a guess in the dark. No MS. of the second and third centuries exists, and only two of the fourth, so that the readings of some thousand of perished MSS., by which to group and classify them are to be divined by conjectural inferences alone, in twenty thousand different clauses. Secondly, the main features of the actual evidence, from which a so-called Western text is inferred, agree much better with a wholly different solution, which refers it chiefly to the loose manner of quotation usual with the Fathers, or to occasional re-translation from Latin versions, and not to wide corruption in the majority of Greek manuscripts. For this second cause of divergence would plainly not apply to the manuscripts of Greece, Asia, Syria, and Egypt.

24. But a third objection remains. Even if the evidence were more abundant, the doctrine of groups is wholly erroneous in itself. It supposes that we must combine contemporary MSS., in case they were extant, either by their local nearness in place, or their critical nearness in common readings, and then treat each set or group as a single witness, to which the same weight is to be assigned in the whole range of the questions which need to be determined. But these assumptions have no solid ground. Two MSS. may be locally near, and yet have

been derived from the original by intermediate copies wholly distinct. Two MSS. may locally be wide apart, and yet may have been derived, even at the first remove, and still more probably, at the second, third, or fourth, from the same copy. Nearness in place, therefore, in the case of manuscripts, is no reason why two witnesses should be counted only as one. And the same remark must apply to a larger number of copies.

25. The same is true, with one case of exception, of critical nearness, or affinity in various readings. If there are many deviations from the probable original in two MSS., and nearly all of these are the same, this will be strong evidence that either one of them is copied from the other, or both from a common source. But a number of divergences from each other, rather below the average, which might lead a set of MSS. to be combined as one group, can be no real presumption for their common origin, low down in the successive steps of transmission. Let us put the case that instead of only two MSS. as early as the fourth century, a hundred had survived, each after six steps of transmission, and that fifty of these were the result of specially careful copying, introducing at each step, in the Gospels, only a hundred variations, great or small. Any pair of these would have less than 1200 differences from each other, or three times less than those of the Vatican and Sinaitic MSS. They would thus form a group to themselves. Let each ten of the other fifty have been derived from a copy in the third descent, which through careless copying or wilful change had a thousand variations from the true text. Three other copyings of a more careful kind might introduce three hundred more. But the thousand variations common to each of the ten, being three-fourths of the total number, would serve to

mark them out as one group, and being a different thousand for each of the five sets, would give five well defined groups of ten MSS. apiece. Thus, by the principle of grouping, the hundred MSS. would have a sixfold division, and the first fifty, because they were purer and better than the rest, and had suffered less change in copying, would count as only one sixth part of the whole. And thus the consent of thirty inferior MSS., giving a decided majority in four out of six groups, would be made to outweigh twenty of like value, with fifty other better and purer MSS.

26. The method of criticism, then, which is founded on the distribution of MSS. into groups and families, from the closer affinity of their readings, seems to me doubly fallacious and unsound. It fails, in the first place, because of the almost entire want of direct historical evidence, by which we would determine the actual process of derivation, and lines of descent, in the hundreds of cursive manuscripts, or even in the very few uncials which still survive. And it fails, in the second place, because, if the materials were a hundred times more abundant, it wholly mistakes the true relation between the witnesses, on which the force of the collective evidence must depend. For this is not lateral, but vertical. Each witness or manuscript must have its weight determined by the series of copyings through which it has passed, and not by its agreement or disagreement with other copies of its own age, of which the steps of transmission may have been, and often must have been, wholly different from its own.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE WEIGHT DUE TO ANTIQUITY.

27. A second maxim, current among critics of the New Testament during the last century, from Griesbach onward, is the vastly superior weight due to a few of the earliest MSS., compared with the hundreds of later times. The principle was carried by Lachmann to its farthest extreme. He treats all manuscripts, except a few of the earliest, as quite worthless, and leaves them out of sight altogether. But Dean Alford, Drs Tischendorf and Tregelles, and more recently Drs Westcott and Hort, scholars all of whom stand high in reputation in this branch of study, go very far in the same direction. With each of them the consent of the Vatican, Sinaitic, and Alexandrian MSS. would probably outweigh all the later uncials, and nearly the whole of the cursives, though these last are not less than a hundred even on the Apocalypse, where they are fewest in number, three hundred on the Epistles, and six hundred on the Gospels.

28. The following remarks of Dean Alford will show the general nature of the reasons alleged for this almost exclusive deference to the earliest manuscripts.

“We find a certain number of MSS. and versions, respecting which our knowledge is definite and reliable, whose date we can determine within narrow limits. So

far, as to external evidence, we are safe. We cannot by their means arrive at the original sacred text, because, before they were written, a course of correction and a series of mistakes in transcribing had taken place. But we can arrive at a result, of which we know the value. We can ascertain, in the main, what was the text of the time to which that body of evidence belongs. We can then, under safe caution, apply to that text the canons of subjective criticism. We now come to the great mass of cursive MSS. of later ages. What is stated above, that some of these may possibly be transcripts of texts of as much value as those of our most ancient MSS. hardly admits a doubt. But in the great majority of cases, where are we now, as to definiteness of evidence? What do we know of the character of the texts we are citing? How can we be sure that many of our witnesses ought not to be reduced to one, as mere transcripts of one and the same text? Here all is uncertainty, all is vague, and liable to wide mistake. In this field it is that the strong assertions may be safely made, which we so constantly find in the pages of those who would defend the received text at all hazards; who tell us again and again that four or five MSS. only read this or that, and all the rest agree with the received text; when perhaps those four or five are just the consensus of our most ancient and venerable authorities, and all the rest may, for aught we know, be in many cases no more worthy to be heard on the matter than so many separate printed copies of our own day...It is such considerations which have led me to banish from my digest long processions of cursive MSS., and to base my revision only on those witnesses respecting which I am able to speak with something like certainty."

29. The principle, laid down by Dean Alford in this passage, and by Dr Tregelles in his promise "to give the

text of the New Testament on the authority of the ancient witnesses, with the aid of the earlier citations, so as to present the text best attested in the earlier centuries," has a positive and negative side. Positively, it professes to determine the nature, contents, and prevalent readings of more than a thousand MSS. of the fourth and fifth centuries, now all perished, in twenty thousand different clauses, by the testimony of five MSS. of the like date, which are all that now survive, and which, as contemporary, have to those others neither the relation of parent nor child. And negatively, it refuses any weight, in deciding what were the readings of those thousand MSS., and their prevailing testimony, to four hundred later MSS. which are now extant, and which must certainly have been derived from at least fifty or a hundred, and perhaps from two or three hundred, of those very manuscripts in a direct and immediate line of succession.

30. The error of such a double assumption is surely very plain. And its consequences, when logically reasoned out, would be very fatal. If 450 cursive MSS. have no weight or power at all, to determine the contents of a hundred or more parent MSS., from four to seven centuries earlier than themselves, and from which they must have been derived, much less can four or five MSS. only, separated nearly three centuries from the times of the Gospel, be able to assure us of the true and exact contents of the sacred originals themselves. The theory tends to destroy all faith in the adequacy of written documents, however numerous the copies, to transmit a Divine message, unimpaired, through so long an interval as six or seven hundred years.

31. Surviving witnesses of an earlier date can only exclude and supersede the later, when they form nearly

the whole, or at least the greater part, of the evidence existing in their own days. In this case alone it would be certain that most of the later are derived from them. These will add nothing to the evidence of the present early copies. The remainder can only yield imperfect evidence of what was read in some of the perished copies. They will weigh, therefore, only as the fraction of a fraction of the voice of a minority. But the actual case is far different. Did we not see the fact before our eyes, it would seem incredible that critics should begin by setting aside nineteen-twentieths of the actual evidence, as if non-existent or quite worthless, and compensate this great sacrifice by treating one per cent., or less, of the ancient MSS. of the fourth and fifth centuries, the only part that now survives, as equivalent to the whole. Or that when these few witnesses happen to agree, while differing from the received text, this consent of less than one per cent. of the MSS. of those days should receive the high-sounding title of "the unanimous voice of Christian antiquity."

32. Let us now look at the subject more closely, and try to deal with it by strict mathematical reasoning.

The manuscripts of the Four Gospels, which survive, and of which approximate dates are given in Dr Scrivener's "Introduction", are as follows :

Cent. IV.....	2	Cent. XI.	123
„ V.	3	„ XII.....	116
„ VI. & VII. ...	fragm. only.	„ XIII.	78
„ VIII.	3	„ XIV.	57
„ IX.	10 & fragm.	„ XV.....	32
„ X.	22	„ XVI.	28

Thus of the Centt. IV. and v. only five MSS. remain, and thirteen of Centt. VIII. and IX.; while those of later

date are nearly five hundred, besides all the Lectionaries, and a supplementary list to which dates are not assigned. What are styled ancient authorities are just one per cent. of the whole. But they are also less than one per cent. of the MSS. of their own age. We have no distinct record, it is true, of the number of copies of the Gospels from the second to the fifth century. But they must have reached a thousand even in the second century, being read constantly in all the churches, and at the later date it is probable that they were several thousands in number. When we hear Theodoret, early in the fifth century, stating that he had replaced two hundred copies of Tatian's Diatessaron by others of the Gospels themselves in his own diocese of Cyrus in Syria, that the total number in all the Churches of the East and West must have been several thousands is tolerably clear from that fact alone.

33. Let us now suppose that the 18 MSS. to the close of the ninth century, all agree in a particular reading. There must plainly be very high probability in favour of its truth. It is most unlikely that all should have been corrupted, and all in the same way. Such evidence might well be reckoned decisive, if it stood alone.

But now let us put another case, that all the later MSS., more than four hundred in number, agree in one and the same reading. There must evidently be a very strong presumption for its truth. And this presumption will be even stronger than in the similar case of the older MSS. It is harder to explain how four hundred MSS. should have gone wrong together, and in the same way, than to account for it in the case of eighteen only. That the mean interval may be eleven or twelve centuries instead of three, four, or five, cannot outweigh the immense contrast in the number of the consenting witnesses; for

the longer the interval, the greater the risk of divergence, when once the true text has been forsaken.

Did such a case, then, arise, there would be a conflict of two extreme improbabilities. But there is no reason to believe that such an instance can be found. The Uncials, as well as the cursives, are usually divided in all cases of disputed readings. And the question is commonly of this kind, whether a small preponderance of the Uncials should outweigh either a small or a great excess of evidence from cursive MSS. for a different reading. The answer depends on the relative weight, as evidence, which ought to be given to different MSS. because of their greater or less antiquity.

34. The superior value of an early MS. depends on the likelihood that it has passed through fewer transcriptions.

Mere lapse of time cannot introduce error into a written or printed document. It may, however, render a MS. partly illegible, and, so far, worthless. But every time it is copied, it is possible, and even probable, that some new mistakes may be made. Of these copyings we have no record. It is on their number, and the care exercised in each of them, that the total amount of final error will depend.

Let us assume several transcriptions to be made successively with equal care. What law will determine the decrease in the evidential value of the resulting copy? It will not follow an arithmetical, but a geometrical rule. If one tenth of error is introduced by one transcription, two tenths and three tenths will not be introduced after two and three transcriptions. The proportion of the unaltered part to the altered will be the same for each copying, and the unaltered part, after two copyings, will

be $\frac{81}{100}$, and after three copyings $729 \div 1000$. Thus if ten to one were the excess of true over altered readings in a single transcription, then after three such transcriptions $1000 \div 331$ or $3\frac{7}{331}$ to one, will be the average evidential value of the resulting document.

35. The age of a MS. is of course a very imperfect guide to the amount of its error. One of the fifth century may, on the one hand, have passed through fewer transcriptions in the line of descent than another of the second century; or again, it may have had more than a third manuscript of the tenth or eleventh century. One transcription may be made from a copy not twenty years old, and another from one that dates backward five hundred years. One careless transcription, also, may introduce more faulty readings than three or four others made with especial care. Nay, a scribe, who took especial pains and care, and collated other copies in doubtful cases, might not seldom produce a copy more free from errors than its original. But these deviations, when we deal with many MSS., tend to compensate and neutralize each other. And since we have no historical record of the transcriptions, and no assurance, even if we knew the dates of all of them, that they were made with equal care, we can only approach to the truth by assuming an even rate of error for each century or half century, from the origin of the works copied. Then, if r is the proportion of the altered to the unaltered part of the transcriptions of a single century, $1 : (1 + r)^n - 1$ will be the proportion, after n centuries, and the evidential values will be $-\log r$, and $-\log (1 + r)^n - 1$.

36. The date of the originals of the Gospels, Epistles, and Apocalypse, vary from A.D. 50 or 60 to A.D. 100. It would seem, then, at first sight, that this amount should be deducted from the date of each MS. in years of the

Christian era, to get the value of n , or the number of centuries, in which the decrease of purity depends. But a little further thought will show that the most probable correction is of an opposite kind.

And first, the increase of error depends, not on the mere lapse of time, but on the number of transcriptions. But after the Gospels and Epistles were first written, one, two, or three copyings would be required, before the number of copies was enough to meet the wants of the early churches. A score of copies, perhaps, would be made within one or two years, and dispersed among the other churches, either near or at a distance. Each of these copies, in ten or twenty years, would be not unlikely to give birth to ten or twenty copies of the second order. And if we suppose the copies to have reached a thousand by the date A. D. 100, many of these would be the result of two and still more of three or four copyings. Thus this interval of one-third of a century would probably have more copyings, in proportion to the parent manuscripts, than a whole century in later times.

37. Fresh copies would be required for two reasons, to replace those which were worn out by use, or lost, or to meet the wants of new churches, or of private Christians, during a time of rapid enlargement of the whole Church of Christ. This latter cause must clearly have been in operation till near the middle of the fourth century. Also a MS. must always have been liable to be copied, even after one or two years. But the other limit of a MS. generation must plainly have been enlarging continually. In A. D. 100, no MS. copied could have been more than 40 or 50 years old. In A. D. 200, the limit would be 140 years; in A. D. 300, 240 years. And thus the mean interval between the age of each original and its copy must have

tended to increase, at first rapidly, and then more slowly. Also when the object was to provide new copies, and critical questions had hardly arisen, the nearest MS. would be likely to be copied, wholly irrespective of its age. But when copies were to be replaced, which had been long in use, it would be a natural instinct to choose out for transcription the oldest manuscripts. For this reason also, the mean interval of age between the original and its copy would tend to increase in later times.

38. The historical data are too imperfect to allow of more than an approximate estimate. But it seems probable that the transcriptions to the end of the first century, except for the Apocalypse, would at least equal those of a full century, and those of the second and third centuries be not fewer than the average of three centuries in later times. And since no MS. of those dates survives, the result will be that the degradation at A.D. 300 would be equivalent to that of four later centuries, and that $n=c+1$ where c are the centuries of the Christian era, would be a first approximation to the relative number of the degrees of descent from the purity of the original text, for any later age.

39. We are now able to gain approximate values for the relative weight of ancient and modern manuscripts, as depending on their age alone. The higher the rate of corruption, the greater will be the excess of value of the earliest over the latest. Let us first take a high rate of corruption, and suppose that at the end of the third century it is one-eleventh of the whole. This would answer to 6500 errors in the Four Gospels, or twice as many for the Vatican and Sinaitic separately as their divergences from each other. The index for A.D. 300 will be 4, for A.D. 1500, 16. Hence $1 \cdot 1^4 = 1 \cdot 4641$ will be the

representative number for the unaltered and altered portions at the later date. The evidential value for A.D. 300 is 10:1, and for A.D. 1500 $1 \div \cdot 4641 = 2\cdot 1547$. But $2\cdot 15443^3 = 10$. So that, with this extreme rate of degradation, three MSS. dating from the end of the fifteenth century would exactly equal in their evidential weight a single manuscript of the beginning of the fourth century.

40. Let us now suppose the error, after a mean interval of four centuries, to be only one part in 21. This would still answer to an alteration of 3300 words in the Four Gospels alone. But $1\cdot 05^4 = 1\cdot 215506$ and $1 \div \cdot 215506 = 4\cdot 640242$. Thus 20:1 is the evidential value of the earlier, and 4·64:1 of the later MS. But $4\cdot 64^2 = 21\cdot 55296$. So that, with this lower rate of corruption, two of the latest would slightly outweigh one of the earliest MSS.

41. Next, let us inquire what higher rates of corruption would be necessary, to justify the excessive weight assigned by modern critics to the few oldest manuscripts. We shall compare the dates A.D. 300 and A.D. 1100, or a little earlier than the oldest MSS. now extant, and the age at which, half of them earlier and half later, more than two hundred now survive. The values of n , the index, are 4 and 12; or $-\log r$, and $-\log (1+r)^3 - 1$, are the values for the two dates. Assuming $1+r$ to be 1·125, 1·15, 1·175, 1·20 in succession, the values of $(1+r)^8$ are 1·423828, 1·520875, 1·622234 and 1·728. But we have

$$\log \cdot 125 \div \log \cdot 423828 = 2\cdot 4224,$$

$$\log \cdot 15 \div \log \cdot 520875 = 2\cdot 9087,$$

$$\log \cdot 175 \div \log \cdot 622234 = 3\cdot 67375.$$

$$\log \cdot 20 \div \log \cdot 728 = 5\cdot 0698.$$

Thus we find that, with these high rates, a MS. at the opening of the fourth century would equal, in weight,

$2\frac{1}{2}$, 3, $3\frac{2}{3}$, and 5 MSS. at the opening of the twelfth century. And this last rate is one which would imply a corruption of more than ten thousand words, in the Gospels alone, in an average MS. early in the fourth century. Such an amount is contrary to all experience or probability, and wholly incredible.

42. What, then, is the conclusion which follows naturally, and indeed inevitably, from this first step in our inquiry? It is of a very plain and simple kind. The two hundred and forty MSS. of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, which still survive, instead of being of trivial weight compared with the five earliest, ought, at the lowest estimate, to be reckoned of nine or ten times greater weight. From this conclusion, as regards the average weight of their evidence, there seems no possible escape, unless, on purpose to depreciate them and exalt their rivals, we indulge in gratuitous conjectures for which there is no grain of historical evidence.

CHAPTER III.

ON LATER IMPROVEMENT OF MSS.

43. ANOTHER important fact has now to be considered. Constant increase of error is no certain and inevitable result of repeated transcription. Errors, after they have found entrance, may be removed as well as increased in later copies. A careful scribe may not only make few mistakes of his own, but he may correct manifest faults of the manuscript from which he copies, and avail himself of the testimony of others, so as to revise and improve the text of that on which he chiefly relies.

Here the scholars who rate the Vatican and Sinaitic MSS. so high as to make them outweigh a host of others less ancient seem to commit a great oversight. They admit and affirm that corruption of the text began early, and prevailed, even in the second and third centuries, to a great extent. Yet they overlook the conclusion which must inevitably follow with regard to the lessened weight of individual MSS. of the period which immediately followed, or of the precise date which belongs to the two oldest manuscripts.

44. The corruption of manuscripts by heretics was early a subject of complaint. Thus, about A.D. 240 Origen writes, "But now great indeed is become the diversity of copies, whether from the negligence of some scribes, or from

the evil rashness of others in correcting what is written, or from those who, in correcting, add or take away whatever seems good to them." And Dr Scrivener remarks that "the various readings of the New Testament from the middle of the second to that of the third century were neither fewer nor less considerable than such language would lead us to suppose." He continues as follows:

"It is no less true in fact than paradoxical in sound, that the worst corruptions of the New Testament originated within a hundred years after it was composed; and that Irenaeus and the African Fathers, and the whole Western, with a portion of the Syrian Church, used far inferior MSS. to those employed by Stunica, Erasmus, and Stephens, thirteen centuries later, when moulding the Received Text." (Introd. p. 453.)

Drs Westcott and Hort recognize the same fact, however adverse to their opinion of the vastly superior weight of the two earliest MSS. The confusion from variety of readings began, they say, not later than the third century, and increased greatly in the fourth. By the end of that century a large proportion of the worst known corruptions were in existence. They hold further that a text of which two main characters were capricious changes, alterations and omissions, additions of clauses, and insertion of apocryphal matter, was widely spread, and widely divergent from the true text, before the middle of the second century.

45. It is thus admitted, both by scholars who hold the immensely superior weight of the few oldest MSS., and by those who share this doctrine very partially, or even oppose it, that many copies were seriously corrupted and defective as early as one full century after the Gospels and Epistles were written. The evil had attracted notice in the days of Origen, occasioning loud complaints, and the efforts

of the more learned Fathers, Origen, Eusebius, and Jerome, were employed in devising some practical remedy.

When once this inquiry had begun, a simple means would suggest itself to any thoughtful mind, by which the desired object might to a great extent be attained. Tares had been sown while men slept. Errors had crept in and spread, almost before it was remembered how easy it is for a copyist to go wrong, and do his work without proper care. But when once the evil was patent, and had perplexed Christian students, the maxim of the Divine law would be remembered and applied,—“In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.” Truth is one, error is manifold. It is easy for copyists to go wrong and vary from the original. It is easy, also, for wilful corrupters to make altered copies, and put them in circulation. But it is not easy for scribes, from mere carelessness, to go wrong in the same passages, and just in the same way. This is almost equally true of wilful alterations of the text. And hence the simple plan of using three MSS., when a new copy was to be made, and following the majority where they disagreed, would be sure to weed out nearly all the errors, if successively adopted two or three times in the process of transcription. The worst errors would thus be very soon eliminated. Improved copies would be formed, in which the divergence from each other, and from the true original, would sensibly diminish, and soon almost wholly disappear.

46. An earlier MS. is not, in all cases, purer or better than a later one by reason of its date alone. It may have many faults, from which those who used it for a text would free their copies, by greater care, and the use of other materials within their reach, besides the correction of plain clerical oversights, and an avoidance of the grosser kind of

errors. We cannot even be sure that the number of transcriptions has been less, simply from a higher date. A MS. may be copied when only five or ten years old, or after a thousand years. The mean interval would probably increase after the first centuries. The maximum age of a copied MS. in the third century, till almost its close, would be less than 200 years. But in the middle ages, the copy might be younger than its parent by five, six, or seven centuries. A MS. of Cent. XVI. may have undergone fewer transcriptions, and one of Cent. IV. a much larger number, than corresponds to the average for sixteen or four centuries. And this will render it unsafe, when only a few MSS. are concerned, to rely too much on an estimate, depending on averages alone.

47. But the second element in the comparison is even still more important. A greater number of transcriptions does not prove a greater total of error. A transcript, made not only with care, but with critical pains and discernment, will give a copy nearer to the truth than its own immediate original. The effect will be much the same as if that interval of age had a negative sign, and the copy were higher and nearer to the source than its own predecessor, and not further removed from it. After six copyings, a seventh might lessen the error by an amount equal to its average increase in two transcriptions. The result would then correspond, in purity, to four transcriptions instead of seven. That is, if the average interval of transcriptions were fifty years, the effect would be to make the copy, as evidence, rank a century and a half higher than its actual date.

48. Another fact also demands separate notice, and must probably have had much influence on the process of transmission.

The Gospels and Epistles were read continually, throughout the Eastern Churches, from the Greek originals themselves. The scribes who copied them must generally have had their ears accustomed to the sound of them, as thus read publicly in the church of their abode, and the place where the copy was made. In copying any private MS. divergence from this public standard must commonly have been felt at once, and would often lead to spontaneous substitution of the publicly accepted reading. There would thus be a natural check upon wide and indefinite variation. The public copies, also, would be likely to have been made with especial care, under a double sense of responsibility.

The copyists in Africa and the West would have no such aid for securing accuracy and avoiding new variations. The New Testament, in those provinces, would be read in an old Latin version, and about ten copies, as old as the fourth or fifth century, still survive. In copying a Greek MS. they would thus be exposed to the risk of mingling their mechanical work, as mere copyists, with a partial retranslation of the Latin version with which their ears were familiar, whenever their attention relaxed, or the MS. they were copying was illegible.

49. Several features ascribed to a so-called Western text admit of explanation in this way. The loose and inexact style of quotation, often apparent in the writings of the Fathers, and especially the Latin Fathers, might be partly the cause, partly the effect, of a similar latitude and diversity in the Latin versions in early use in the Western Churches. One version would have no clear ground of preference over another, when the meaning was the same. There might be several varieties, from the most literal, to others loose and paraphractical, but more agreeable to the

Latin idiom. Copyists, whose ears were accustomed to a version in local use, would be liable to colour their work with occasional retranslations, whenever a clause of the Greek was illegible. And hence the two features, that "words and even clauses were changed with astonishing freedom" and that there was "a readiness to adopt alterations and additions from traditional sources," would both be explained in an easy and natural way. Such characters are wholly inconsistent with the notion of one definite Western text, present in nearly all the Western copies, and deviating from the true originals by one fixed set of variations. But they agree with the hypothesis that many MSS. copied in the West partook of the looseness, inaccuracy, paraphrastic style, and ease in accepting slight explanatory interpolations, which attend a double process of translation and retranslation.

50. We are thus guided to a further principle, which ought to modify our estimate of the comparative value of MSS. differing in age. Corruptions would increase gradually for a time, till their amount was such as to attract attention, and cause perplexity among observant readers. But about the close of the third century this process would be partly arrested, partly reversed, by the rise of a school of critical observers of that diversity, and by their efforts to remove it, and restore, if possible, a purer text. This effort would be most likely to be constant and successful in the Greek provinces, because in these there would be a constant comparison of any copies privately made with those which were read publicly in the churches. And if we suppose the corruption to have become conspicuous at the close of the third century, the inference seems tolerably clear and plain. The two oldest MSS. that now survive will belong precisely to the date, when the corruption had

nearly reached its height, and run its course, and when an arrest was put on its further progress by the process of comparison and collation of authorities which had then recently begun. After that date we have strong reason to expect, either a much slower decline in the purity of MSS. or even a positive improvement, from greater care on the part of the scribes and copyists, especially in the Greek-speaking provinces of the Roman Empire.

51. It has been shewn already that the frequency of transcription in the line of descent must have been greater in the three first centuries, so that on this account alone it would be reasonable to reckon that interval equivalent, in decrease of the purity of copies, to four full centuries of later times. Thus in the formula, $-\log(1+r)^n - 1$, which expresses the evidential value of a MS. the index n would have to be taken as $c+1$, or one more than the number of completed centuries of the Christian era. But now it must appear probable that there was a further excess in the rate of corruption, down to the close of the third century, compared with all later ages. They were a period, speaking generally, of unrevised copying. The later times were those of copying, after the fact of variation had been openly recognized, and when efforts to undo the process of corruption had begun. It would be quite possible, if that process were systematically pursued, for a general advance and improvement of MSS. in point of purity, to be attained, and of course, a lessened amount of divergence. But at least it seems a moderate estimate that the rate of decline from perfect purity might be one half greater, in the period of unrevised copying, than after revision and collation of MSS. had set in. The period from the date of the Gospels and Epistles to the end of the third century, instead of only four, would thus be

equivalent to six complete centuries, and $n = c + 3$ would become the value of the index, by means of which the comparative weight of MSS. of different ages would be determined. Thus for A.D. 300 $n = 6$, for A.D. 900 $n = 12$, and for A.D. 1500 $n = 18$, and the earliest MSS., those of the tenth century at its opening, and of the sixteenth, would have their error in a simple, a duplicate, and a triplicate proportion.

CHAPTER IV.

ON INTERNAL EVIDENCE.

52. THE Internal Evidence for a reading consists in the presumption for its truth, arising from its agreement with the drift of the passage, its emphasis or naturalness of expression, or its harmony with any special features in the style of the sacred author.

Modern critics differ considerably in the weight which they are disposed to assign to it. Dr Tregelles would exclude it entirely. Dean Alford, also, says that consideration of the context is the very last that should be allowed by the critic to be present in his mind as an element of judgment. He thinks that "it is from this very consideration that our deteriorated text has in many cases arisen," and that "the general adoption of it as a critical law would be the worst imaginable retrograde step in sacred criticism."

Such a maxim sounds very strange. Virtually it affirms that our acceptance or rejection of a reading, as part of an inspired message from God, ought not to be in the least affected by its making good sense rather than utter nonsense. The paradox of such a maxim, in extreme cases, would be insufferable. No one in his senses could ever act upon it. Even short of this, it could only be justified by the assumption, that we have a very clear,

certain, absolute rule, apart from the sense, for comparing the weight of external evidence, in disputed readings, on each side. But the same critics, who would shut out the internal evidence, unhappily measure the external by a mere hypothesis of their own, which is even demonstrably erroneous, and enables them to reduce it into a mere expansion of their own subjective prejudice in favour of two or three of the oldest manuscripts.

53. Drs Westcott and Hort reason somewhat in the same direction. They think that the possibility of sound textual criticism is destroyed by a premature use of what is called internal evidence. Of this, however, they distinguish two kinds. The first is the thought of what an author is likely to have written. The second is the thought of what a copyist is likely to have made him write. And it is against this second kind that the following remark is aimed. "A few hours," it is said, "spent in studying a series of the countless corrections which no one would think of accepting, will shew the variety of instinct to be found among scribes, the frequent disagreement between their instincts and our own, and the conflicting effects of different instincts in the same passage. It is possible to go wrong in interpreting the historical growth of a text. But the chances of error are beyond comparison greater in attempting to divine exhaustively the movements in the minds of unknown ancient scribes."

The two problems, I believe, are equally hopeless, to divine the motives for the adoption and rejection of every reading, in the minds of a thousand scribes of the third and fourth centuries, and to reproduce the results of those motive forces, through eight thousand verses, in the three or four thousand MSS. which were the probable fruit of their labours, and which have long since disappeared.

54. Dr Scrivener, on the other hand, observes with perfect truth, "Whether we will or not, we unconsciously and instinctively adopt that of two opposite statements, in themselves pretty equally attested, which we judge better suited to recognized phenomena, and the common course of things. I know of no person, who has affected to construct a text of the New Testament on diplomatic grounds only, without paying some regard to the character of the sense produced. Nor, were the experiment tried, would any one find it easy to dispense with discretion, and the dictates of good sense. It is difficult, writes Dr Tregelles, not to indulge in subjectiveness in some measure. And we may add, that is one of those difficulties which a sane man would not wish to overcome." He then proceeds to name the following usual canons, with the remark that, in spite of their simplicity, the application of them has proved a searching test of the tact, acumen, and sagacity, of those who handle them, and strive by their help to decide on the true text.

"(1) A hard reading is to be preferred to an easy one. (2) A shorter reading is to be preferred to one more diffuse. (3) A reading is preferable from which the others might have more easily been derived. (4) Also one which best suits the style, manner, and habits of thought, of the writer. (5) Attention must be paid to the usage and character of each authority, in assigning the weight due to it. (6) A reading may be suspected, which manifestly favours, above others, orthodox dogmas (Griesbach). (7) Lastly, probabilities of erroneous transcription must be taken into account." And he remarks in another place how difficult it is to hinder the internal evidence from sinking, even in skilful hands, into vague and arbitrary conjecture.

55. Internal evidence, I would first observe, is not really more liable to subjective bias than the external. For what do we mean by the external evidence? Not the bare fact that such and such MSS. of dates approximately known, have one reading, and such and such MSS. either of the same or different dates, have another. We mean the likelihood of truth, from the number and dates of the witnesses on either side, apart from any reference to the sense produced, and its agreement or disagreement with the context. Now this, as usually understood, involves conjectures on the derivation of MSS. from each other, the prevalence of different sets of readings in different ages or localities, the worth or cheapness of different witnesses or classes of evidence, all of which are just as much exposed to a subjective bias as the direct comparison of a text with its context. It is a thousand times plainer that, in Mat. xxvii. 28, the Evangelist wrote *ἐκδύσαντες*, which agrees with the whole context, and not *ἐνδύσαντες*, which makes nonsense, than that some five early MSS. ought to outweigh a hundred others. Reasons from the context may be not less objective, and far more forcible, than trains of argument on the probable or possible readings of a thousand perished MSS., which sustained the life of the church through four centuries, but have now wholly disappeared.

56. Next, the second kind of evidence, mentioned before, is not really internal. It is simply one of two factors, both alike essential to the existence of any external evidence. For the practical questions are of this kind. Given two lections, *A* and *B*, of the same passage, supported by *m* and *n* MSS.; is it more likely that the reading *B* should have been turned into *A* in *m* MSS. or that *A* should have been turned to *B* in the *n* others? Proclivity to change, one way or the other, is thus an essential factor of the

problem in each case, so far as it rests on external evidence alone.

It is thus an entire mistake to think that the difficulty of divining the motives and instincts of copyists is a reason for ranking the internal evidence below the external. It is just the reverse. The internal evidence, properly so called, is wholly independent of the caprices of copyists and scribes. It depends on the text and the context alone. But the external evidence does involve, as one inseparable factor, some decision as to the greater or less likelihood of a copier making one particular change, or the exact opposite.

57. Again, the proper internal evidence, and this internal factor of the external evidence ; that is, the comparative likelihood of a change from *A* to *B*, or from *B* to *A* on the part of any copyist, must usually weigh in opposite scales. If one reading is plainly more reasonable and natural than another, it will be easier to conceive that a scribe would replace the worse by the better, than the better by the worse. The same internal reasons, which tend to establish any reading as true, make it harder to account for any deviation from it. To put the case in an extreme form, if we assume it as equally probable that a verse in the Gospels was originally either good sense or direct and open nonsense, then, should MSS. be equally divided, it is far easier to see why scribes should have turned nonsense into sense in fifty copies than why they should have turned sense into nonsense in fifty others. The maxim, "*procliviscriptioni praestat ardua*" recognizes the latter truth, and neglects the former. It is thus open to Bishop Wordsworth's remark,—“To force readings into the text, merely because they are difficult, is to adulterate the Divine text with human alloy. It is to obtrude on the reader the solecisms of faltering copyists in place of the word of God.”

58. There are many readings, in which there is no clear disparity of reasonableness on either side. The adoption of either must then depend on the amount of testimony, the outward element of the external evidence, alone. There are a small number in which a difficulty at first sight may, on further and fuller thought, reveal some secret emphasis, or hidden beauty. In these cases the maxim will really apply. A copier might easily overlook the deeper sense; and not seeing it, an altered text might seem more reasonable. But there may be very many, where one reading both seems to be, and is, more reasonable than another, and we might expect that copyists would feel it so to be. This of course will of itself tend to diminish the weight, as evidence, of the MSS. which contain it, and to increase that of the others. Its introduction must be easier to account for than its rejection. But this secondary consequence of its greater naturalness, while it weighs in the opposite scale to the internal evidence, of which it is a kind of inverted reflection, can never really balance it. For it is certain that the Apostles neither wrote nonsense, nor feeble and diluted sense. But it is quite possible that a copyist might dilute their strength into a feeble paraphrase, and sometimes even, when his attention flagged, substitute direct nonsense.

59. The maxim that a shorter must be preferred to a longer reading depends on the hypothesis, that scribes were usually more disposed to enlarge their text, and incorporate new matter, than to make omissions. This is probably true as a general rule. But it is quite possible that some scribes were prone to an opposite fault, that of shortening their work by omitting words or clauses, when they could be retrenched without any evident loss to the sense. Of Codex B we are told that it leaves out words

or clauses "330 times in St Matthew, 365 times in St Mark, 439 in Luke, 384 in Acts, 681 times in the Epistles, or in all 2556 times." And that no small part of these changes were mere oversights of the scribe seems evident, because he has repeatedly written words twice over, "a class of mistakes which Mai and the collators have seldom thought fit to notice, and which by no means enhances our idea of the care employed in copying this venerable record." (*Scriv. Intr.* p. 108.)

Now if external evidence is weighed on the assumption that the instinct of all scribes is to add and enlarge, and not to shorten, while two or three MSS. have a weight assigned out of all proportion above the rest; and if in these cases the instinct of the two or three scribes were quite different, to spare their own work by slight omissions, the conclusions drawn from the union of such premises will be most misleading and deceptive. The maxim itself relates really to the external evidence, not to the internal. For it does not depend on the character of the reading in itself, but is a special hypothesis about the instincts and habits of copyists, that they are always more likely to have erred by adding to the word of God than by taking away.

60. The compound result of the critical rules now examined, as usually applied, seems to me highly injurious. The internal evidence, properly so called, is set aside as subjective and capricious, though in many cases its voice alone might seem almost decisive. Next, the internal factor, essentially involved in all the external evidence, is so explained as to create a steady preference for readings, in proportion as they are harsh in construction, abbreviated, difficult to explain, ambiguous in their bearing on Christian doctrine, and barely capable of any intelligible meaning. When to these rules is added the ascription of immensely

superior weight to two or three early MSS. abounding in clerical errors, and the utter depreciation and neglect of several hundreds of later times, and a complex theory of texts and recensions, and their formation, mixture and obliteration, for which no real historical evidence exists, deserving the name, the effect of the whole is to transfer our faith from a vast body of evidence, capable of at least approximate measurement by definite rules, to a minute fraction of the whole, and even this, interpreted by conjectural hypotheses which may easily be varied like the shiftings of a kaleidoscope. By such a method of criticism the mistakes and oscitancies of two or three copyists of the fourth century may come, in not a few instances, to displace the genuine text of the Gospels and Epistles, the very charter and title-deeds of the Christian covenant.

CHAPTER V.

ON HARMONISTIC CHANGES.

61. GREAT influence has been ascribed, by many modern critics, to a supposed tendency, in copyists, to assimilate the Gospels to each other. This form of license is said to have begun early, to have been universal in its range, and highly mischievous in its results, and that it tended to obliterate the characteristics of each Gospel through an impulse to harmonize and complete. Still it is admitted that there was no attempt at completeness in this assimilation, though the variety and universality of the changes actually made might have afforded precedents for a much more extensive and consistent removal of differences than what actually occurred.

Some liability of copyists to replace words of one Gospel by those of another or to insert words of one Gospel in another, by way of addition, may be admitted, without involving any charge of dishonesty or wilful corruption. For the Gospels, from an early period, were all read publicly in the Christian Churches. In the East this reading would be of the originals, but in the West, with a few exceptions, it would be in a Latin version. Now there are many verses common to two, and some even to three Gospels, and many which have a close resemblance

in two at least. A scribe, in copying, might sometimes trust to his memory, and transfer some of the words publicly read from one Gospel to another. He would thus produce unconsciously some degree of mixture, and a partial blending of two distinct narratives into one.

62. But the alleged harmonistic tendency seems to mean something more than such a liability. It affirms a deliberate and systematic effort to alter each Gospel in turn, so as to make it agree better with some other, either in the verbal phrase or in the substance of the narrative. If such a settled purpose or effort can be shewn to have existed, our faith in the integrity and correctness of our actual MSS. of the Four Gospels must of course be sensibly impaired. The effect of the hypothesis is to increase the presumption in favour of all those readings which make the Gospels diverge most widely from each other, either in form or in substance. If it be true at all, the limits of its application ought to be clearly defined, or else it must lead to very dangerous consequences. For if readings are to be preferred when they make the narratives inconsistent or contradictory, and those are held suspicious, however many the copies which contain them, in which one Gospel has the closest resemblance to another, a direct bounty will be given on the introduction of harshnesses, difficulties, solecisms, and even direct contradictions, into the sacred word of God.

63. But before we accept the maxim broadly as a rule of New Testament criticism, several facts should be borne in mind, which look directly the opposite way. First, even if we adopt the text of those critics who assign the greatest weight to this supposed tendency to assimilate, there still remain very many passages, in which the resemblance of two, or even three, of the earlier Gospels, is very

great, and almost complete. Again, in the Received Text, which is alleged to have suffered a good deal from these changes, the differences are so many and so great, as to have furnished ample pretexts for sceptical doubts and laborious controversies in every age. Only a narrow limit, then, remains, within which this harmonizing instinct can have been exercised, or have had power to introduce and give wide currency to any actual changes. But within this limit an opposite influence must also have been at work, which would tend to introduce unreal diversity and increased divergence.

64. The Four Gospels were of course written and also published separately. One probably appeared first in Palestine, another in Rome or Cæsarea, a third in Syria or Greece, and the fourth at Ephesus. The interval from the first to the last must have been at least thirty, and perhaps forty or fifty years. Each must have been widely used in the Churches, and copies made, and copies of copies, to the third or fourth descent, before it became usual to unite them into the single volume. The time when this took place was probably about the middle of the second century, or from seventy to ninety years after the time when they were written. Till then, each Gospel in the quaternion would be translated or copied from a copy of that Gospel alone, and not of all the four. So long as this was the case, it seems clear that the risk of artificial divergence, through faults in the transcription of each separate Gospel, would be much greater than the likelihood of systematic assimilation, or the danger of any process of harmonistic corruption.

65. Near the close of the second century attention was publicly drawn, by Origen and others, to the fact that a considerable variety of divergent readings had crept into

the MSS. of the New Testament. A second period must have followed, before long, when it would be a natural instinct to compare different MSS. together, to make efforts to harmonize them, and to recover a purer text. But for almost a full century, while the four were separately used and copied, and not yet joined into one volume, the tendency, alike of all careless mistakes and wilful corruptions, would certainly be to introduce divergences and discordant readings, and not to remove them.

66. The harmonistic tendencies that ensued later will have to be differently judged, as we start from one or the other of two opposite views with regard to the character of the original text of the four Gospels. We may assume that their first and primitive condition was that of writings crude and ungrammatical in style, and in frequent and glaring contradiction to each other; or we may assume that their first style was easy and natural, and that they were free from all positive error or direct contradiction. Defects of style, harsh constructions, or contradictory statements, might still be easily introduced by errors or blunders in the copyists of a single Gospel, not shared, in the answering passage, by the copies of the other three. Mistakes might also be made from suspecting corruption on insufficient grounds, and real faults be caused in attempting to remove those which were imaginary. But in many cases the true explanation would be just the opposite. What has been defamed as harmonistic corruption, effacing characteristic features of each Gospel, may often, perhaps, be only an effort, in the second stage of transmission, after the Gospels were united into one volume, to undo and reverse earlier corruptions, to which they must have been liable, so long as they were copied separately, and before a stage of more exact and careful criticism had begun.

67. The Gospel of St Matthew has always stood the first in order of all the four from the earliest times. It would thus be likely to be the first to suffer change, when scribes were tempted to alter the text from subjective reasons. On the other hand, the harmonizing tendency, removing apparent discrepancies, and assimilating the phraseology, would be more likely to affect St Mark and St Luke. For these would come later in the volume, after the first Gospel had been already copied, and any difference in authority would weigh in favour of the first Gospel, written by an Apostle, compared with two Evangelists who were only companions of the Apostles, and not Apostles themselves.

There are ninety places in St Matthew, where Dean Alford appeals to this harmonizing instinct, to justify his preference for a particular reading, and usually in opposition to a large preponderance of direct MS. evidence. In St Mark there are two hundred and fifty, and in St Luke one hundred and forty-five, or in all nearly five hundred. But in the far greater part of these cases, the operation of such a motive is really incredible and inconceivable. Take, for instance, the texts Matt. xiii. 9, 23, 34; xiv. 3, 12, 15. Is it credible that a scribe would insert ἀκούειν in Matt. xiii. 9, or substitute τὴν γῆν τὴν καλὴν for τὴν καλὴν γῆν in xiii. 23, or change οἰδὲν into οὐκ v. 34, or insert the name of Philip xiv. 3, or change αὐτὸν into αὐτὸ, *him* into *it*, in xiv. 12, or omit οὖν xiv. 15, after ἀπόλυσον, merely to make the reading, in these minute particulars, bear a closer resemblance to St Mark's Gospel, which would not be under his eye at the moment, and which it would be just as easy to alter in the reverse direction so as to make it accord with St Matthew? Yet in each of these cases and three-fourths of the rest, the lection of a large

majority of MSS. is set aside, and another preferred, for this shadowy and unsubstantial reason alone.

68. The simple enumeration, briefly given, of the changes ascribed to this cause, will make it apparent how unreasonable it must be to desert the preponderance of direct evidence and MS. testimony on such a ground. The Received Text will be given first, and after it the substitute preferred, in the seven chapters, Matt. iii—ix., by Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles and Alford.

- Matt. iii. 6, ἐν τῷ Ἰορδάνῃ, LTTr not A, + ποταμῶ.
 iii. 8, καρπὸς ἀξίους, LTTrA καρπὸν ἀξιον. Luke iii. 8.
 iii. 10, ἥδη δὲ καὶ ἡ ἀξίνη, LTTrA om. καὶ. Luke iii. 9.
 v. 44, εὐλογεῖτε...μισοῦντας ὑμᾶς, LTTrA om., from Luke vi. 28.
 vi. 12, ἀφίμεν, LTTrA ἀφήκαμεν. Luke xi. 4.
 vi. 28, πῶς αὐξάνει, οὐ κοπιᾷ, οὐδὲ νήθει, LTA κοπιῶσιν, Tr κοπιούσιν, LTTrA νήθουσιν. Luke xii. 27.
 vii. 2, ἀντιμετρηθήσεται, LTTrA μετρηθήσεται. Luke vi. 28.
 vii. 9, ὃν ἐὰν, LTTrA om. ἐὰν.
 vii. 10, καὶ ἐὰν, LTTrA ἦ καὶ.
 vii. 28, συνετέλεσεν LTTrA ἐτέλεσεν.
 viii. 10, οὐδὲ ἐν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ, LTTrA παρ' οὐδενὶ τοσαύτην...
 viii. 15, διηκόνει αὐτοῖς, LTTrA αὐτῷ. Mark i. 31. Luke iv. 39.
 viii. 31, ἐπίτρεψον ἡμῖν ἀπελθεῖν, LTTrA ἀπόστειλον ἡμᾶς.
 ix. 8, ἐθαύμασαν, LTTrA ἐφοβήθησαν.
 ix. 12, ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς ἀκούσας εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, LTTrA om. Ἰησοῦς, αὐτοῖς, from Mark, Luke.
 ix. 22, ἐπιστραφεῖς, LTTrA στραφεῖς, from Mark.
 ix. 23, λέγει αὐτοῖς LTTrA ἔλεγεν, from Mark.

69. Now in these, and most of the other passages, I think it plain, on the least reflection, that the suggested explanation is quite inadequate. What object could a tran-

scriber have in deviating from his copy to introduce such microscopic changes, by which there would be a slightly increased resemblance to another Gospel not under his eyes at the time? Can we suppose that copyists knew the later Gospels by heart, even to the minutest detail in the order of the words, and the exact phraseology? It is surely a most groundless supposition that a scribe would alter ἔλεγε to λέγει in ix. 23, or omit ἔξω in x. 14, to approach one shade nearer to the text of Mark or Luke.

The passages v. 44, and ix. 12, need separate consideration. But as to all the rest, the explanation of the change from a wish of copyists to assimilate one Gospel to another seems to me, on the face of it, quite unreasonable.

70. A similar remark applies to the four hundred alleged changes in the second and third Gospels. We may easily conceive of the interpolation of a fact from one Gospel into another, or an attempt to soften or remove a seeming discrepancy by a slight change in either text. But such changes as of εἶπε δὲ into καὶ εἶπε, or ἀναστῆναι into ἐγερθῆναι, or of ἐπεσκίαζεν into ἐπεσκίασεν, Luke ix. 9, 22, 34, could fulfil no object worth the labour and pains of any copyist to secure. And even in the few cases of a more important variation, it seems a strange paradox to lay down that a reading is more likely to be genuine, which makes one Gospel contradict the statements of the others, even where the testimonies are nearly unanimous the other way. Yet this is the practical result, in extreme cases, of the canons adopted by a majority of recent critics.

CHAPTER VI.

ON PROBABLE RATES OF MANUSCRIPT CORRUPTION.

71. TEXTUAL criticism, in recent times, has been remarkable for the variety and number of the hypotheses which have been framed to explain the mutual relations, first of the Gospels themselves, and next of the MSS. and Versions. There has also been an immense increase in the mass of materials collected by the assiduity of critics. But little has been done to bring exact reasoning to bear on the estimates of the total evidence in the case of rival or disputed readings. The internal evidence, of course, can hardly admit of strict quantitative measurement. But those critics who magnify external evidence to the exclusion of the other, and seem almost to hold that a reading is more probable in proportion as it is harsh, obscure, and difficult to explain, offer no distinct rule or law for the comparative weight which they ascribe to different kinds of manuscripts. They assume, with no attempt at proof, that five witnesses of the fourth and fifth centuries, and three of the eighth, carry more weight than fifty times their number of later times, or more than

an hundred of the eleventh, and the like number of the twelfth century. The result of such a view must be the preference of readings opposed alike to the internal and the main body of the external evidence, whenever there has been an accidental concurrence, either of careless error or mistaken correction of the text, on the part of those five or six scribes of the fourth and fifth centuries whose copies happen to have survived all the thousands of their own date, and alone have reached our own day.

72. The total error in a MS. must depend on the number of transcriptions it has undergone in derivation from the first original. It consists of the sum of the changes thus introduced, deducting all which have been reversed in a later transcription. But no record of these remains. We can only guess at their number from the date of the MS., and even this is seldom exactly known. These transcriptions may vary greatly in their distance from each other in time, and in the care with which they were made. A MS. may be copied from another made in the same year, or from another some centuries old. A copying may introduce less than half, or more than double, the average amount of error, and in some cases more faults may be removed than the new errors introduced. All we certainly know is that the total number of variations in the five or six hundred extant MSS. is very great, and must have entered somewhere in the interval from the date of the New Testament. There must, on the whole, have been an increase of error with the lapse of time, but even this is subject to important exceptions. For errors may be removed, as well as added to, in later copyings. This would always be the case, when they were copied with especial care, and collation of the earlier MSS. was

practised with moderate judgment, in giving birth to a new manuscript.

73. The altered and unaltered parts, after one transcription, being r and 1 , after n transcriptions they will be 1 and $(1 + r)^n - 1$, and the logarithms of the reciprocals of r and $(1 + r)^n - 1$ will represent the evidential weight of a manuscript after 1 or n steps of derivation. This index, for each copy, must have gone on increasing in its own descent. The mean interval would also probably increase from the first century onward, since the minimum limit of age was always the same, but the maximum went on enlarging continually. The ratio of error, also, in a single transcription, would probably increase for some time, but then diminish, when once the amount of actual divergence was considerable. When the diversity had become marked and conspicuous, a period of greater care and caution would succeed, with efforts to restore and then to retain a purer text. The simple plan of using three MSS. for a fresh copy, and following a double authority in cases of disagreement, would steadily lessen the amount of error in MSS. formed under such a rule, and the original be recovered, almost with perfect accuracy, by three or four steps of transcription and revision of this more exact and careful kind.

74. Since the dates of the several transcriptions are unknown, the intervals which separated them, and also the degrees of accuracy in each, it is useless to form a scale depending on their number alone, instead of one for the mean ratio of error accumulated in a given interval of time. In this way the two sources of irregularity will in some degree neutralize each other. The simplest plan, then, is to form a scale for the proportion of error after the lapse of so many centuries. The evidential weight,

after one century, being $\log 1 \div r$, and after n centuries $\log 1 \div (1 + r)^n - 1$, the first question to settle is the most probable values for the index n , depending on the date. A first approximation is to reckon the fraction of the first century to the year A.D. 100 as equivalent to a full century, and the second and third centuries together equal to three of later times, as in Nos. 35—38. But further reflection will shew the need for a further deviation from the uniform scale, in order to approach near to the relative values.

75. First, it is clear that the first thirty or forty years, from the dates of the Gospels and Epistles to the end of the first century, must have answered at least to two full centuries of later times, in their tendency to lower the purity of the text. If ten copies were taken from each of the originals, and ten again from each of these, and ten from each of the last, then, when the total reached a thousand, a hundred would be of the second order of descent, and the rest of the third. So that assuming one transcription in 100 years for the later centuries, the first correction of the scale would be to reckon the ages of the MSS. by the interval from B.C. 100, instead of their actual date.

But again, in the second and third centuries, the mean interval of descent, or the age of a MS. when copied, must probably have been from one-half to one-third of that in the latest time. And when the Church was yet in its infancy, and its numbers fast increasing, so that many fresh copies were required every year, there is reason to think that the average care and caution in copying was less than in later times. It was about the beginning of the third century that attention was first called by Origen and others to the diversity of readings, and to the number of careless errors or wilful corruptions which had crept in. Thus, on *à priori* grounds, there is reason to think that

each quarter century from A.D. 100 to 300 involved an increase of error equal to that of a full century in the latest times. And thus the index of A.D. 100 would answer to 2, that of A.D. 200 to 6, and that of A.D. 300 to 10, in a uniform scale, or be equal to that of two, six or ten centuries.

76. When the error had spread thus far, so as, with the $\frac{1}{40}$ scale, to affect nearly one part in four, it would naturally arrest the attention, and cause systematic efforts to counteract the evil. Soon after the days of Origen this process may have begun, and lasted perhaps for two centuries, through the season of special critical and ecclesiastical activity from the eve of the Nicene Council to the accession of Justinian. Then, probably for one or two centuries, the efforts for removing error in fresh transcriptions might nearly balance the risk of its further increase.

77. The seeming proportion of error will of course be larger with a larger unit. Our modern verses have an average of 18 words, and when a verse is made the unit, an error in any single word will transfer the whole verse from the pure to the faulty or altered portion. The clause of six words, or three clauses to each verse, will be a convenient unit, and is rather less than the ancient *στιχος*, which has an average of $7\frac{1}{2}$ words. The rate of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of error to a century will then answer, in sixteen centuries, to the error of one part in three, or to an average of one fault for every verse. This seems an extreme of probable corruption through the whole range of the Gospels, though a double rate; or higher, may obtain in special texts.

78. The index of degradation, by the former remarks, for the middle and close of each century from the third onward, and the relative evidential weight, or

$-\log. (1+r)^n - 1$ for the mean rate $2\frac{1}{2}$ per century, and the double, or 5 per cent rate, will be as follows :

A. D.	<i>n</i>	$r=2\frac{1}{2}$	$r=5$	A. D.	<i>n</i>	$r=2\frac{1}{2}$	$r=5$
250	8	66	32	800	$9\frac{1}{2}$	58	23
300	10	55	20	850	10	55	20
350	$9\frac{1}{2}$	58	23	950	11	50	15
400	9	60	26	1050	12	46	10
450	$8\frac{1}{2}$	63	29	1150	13	42	5
500	8	66	32	1250	14	38	1
650				1350	15	35	
700	$8\frac{1}{2}$	63	29	1450	16	31	
750	9	60	26	1550	17	28	

79. The witnesses to be combined include nearly five hundred dated MSS., two of the fourth, three of the fifth, and three of the eighth century, with sixteen fragments, and ten of the ninth century, these mainly uncial; and of the later centuries, all cursive except three of the tenth, Cent. x. 22; XI. 123; XII. 116; XIII. 78; XIV. 57; XV. 32; XVI. 28; or a total of 474 manuscripts, of which the date is given, approximately, in Dr Scrivener's Introduction.

80. There are eleven versions, between the close of the first and of the sixth century, if we count the Peschito, the Nitrian or Curetonian Syriac, of which one copy has been lately found, the Jerusalem and Philoxenian Syriac, as distinct and independent. To these are to be added the Old Latin or Italic, and the Vulgate; the Coptic and Sahidic; the Gothic, Armenian, and Æthiopic. The number of Fathers, or works of unknown authorship, cited by Dean Alford, is about 160. But barely one fourth of these supply any considerable amount of evidence as to the sacred text. The amount, also, varies much in different authors. Thus Irenæus quotes about 660 verses

of the Gospels out of 3760, or just one sixth of the whole, while Chrysostom gives us nearly a continuous commentary. In general, on examining the references in Alford, there is an average of five or six patristic authorities on each disputed reading. The evidence of a version may be roughly rated as equivalent to that of a MS. coeval with its own date. The evidence of the Fathers varies much from passage to passage, but on the average may be nearly equal to that of five or six early MSS.

The way is now prepared for a closer examination of the earliest witnesses.

CHAPTER VII.

THE VATICAN AND SINAITIC MSS.

81. Two very different estimates have been formed of the weight due to these two earliest MSS. compared with all of later times. Most recent critics exalt them to almost absolute supremacy, which reduces all the five hundred others to complete insignificance. Tischendorf gives the palm to the Sinaitic, his own discovery. He assigns it such weight that in his 8th edition he has altered the text of his 7th edition in 3369 places, chiefly from deference to this one added witness. Drs Westcott and Hort decidedly prefer the Vatican. But they say of both that we ought to be very thankful for their exceptional excellence, and that few of their own age can have been so pure. The final result of their discussion on the formation and mixture of texts is that a vast numerical majority of witnesses must be treated as having no primary authority. The right method of recovering the true text, in their judgment, differs by a mere shade from what it would be if the 480 MSS. from century IX. onward had perished altogether.

82. Dr Scrivener dissents in part, and Dean Burgon and Mr MacClellan more entirely, from this exclusive trust in two or three, or five at most, of the oldest MSS. The

last speaks of the servile deference paid to these two survivors of the fourth century, which threatens us, he says, with bondage to a corrupt Egyptian text. The Dean observes that much is required in the way of further collation of MSS., Versions, and Fathers, before textual criticism can emerge from its present infancy. "When this has been done, the plausible hypothesis, on which recent recensions of the text have for the most part been conducted, will be found no longer tenable, and the latest decisions in consequence will be generally reversed."

83. I agree mainly with these remarks. But I do not think the principles followed by most recent critics so much as plausible. Their entire error, when submitted to strict inquiry, seems to me a matter of demonstration, if we combine all the real data, and set aside a large amount of unproved hypothesis and loose conjecture, by which those data have been obscured and overlaid. Those principles, too, when carried out to their logical results, involve a complete undermining of all historical certainty as to the true text of the New Testament, which many of the able scholars who have adopted them would be among the first to deprecate and deplore. And I think it possible, from Dr Tischendorf's own labours, to obtain data for a full refutation of his own excessive estimate of these two early MSS., although shared by Dean Alford, and Drs Tregelles, Westcott, and Hort, and almost imposed on us as a matter of moral and religious obligation to receive.

84. Tischendorf's edition of the Sinaitic MS. in 1865 gives us the text, altered in 190 places in the Gospels to exclude some manifest errors, where he replaces the reading *à primâ manu* by one of the countless self-corrections that are one great feature of the MS. Three sets of notes are attached. The first gives these self-corrections, or varia-

tions of the MS. from itself. The second gives the different readings of B or the Vatican, and the third those of Stephen's Edition, or the usually Received Text.

The Four Gospels contain 1071 + 678 + 1151 + 880 or 3780 verses, and 2560 + 1616 + 2740 + 2024 or 8940 *στίχοι*. The words are about 67000, or 19100 + 12600 + 20300 + 15000. But the passages Mar. xvi. 9—20, Joh. vii. 53—viii. 11, are wanting in both MSS., and contain 12 verses each and about 30 *στίχοι* or clauses of six words each, and 360 words. When these are deducted the basis of calculation will be as follows.

85. The numbers for the Four Gospels will be these :

Verses	1071 + 666 + 1151 + 868 = 3756;
<i>Στίχοι</i>	2560 + 1586 + 2740 + 1994 = 8880;
Clauses	3213 + 2006 + 3453 + 2608 = 11280;
Diff ^s . of N and Σ	404 + 226 + 496 + 443 = 1569;
„ of N and B	835 + 638 + 952 + 1043 = 3468;
„ of N and R	1074 + 1030 + 1471 + 1176 = 4751;
Corrections of N	48 + 28 + 73 + 41 = 190.

But in comparing MSS., to determine their relative purity or proportions of error, no corrections can be introduced without falsifying the problem. Hence the numbers of the last row must be added to the two above, and they become

Diff^s. of **N** and B 883 + 666 + 1025 + 1084 = 3658;

Diff^s. of **N** and R 1122 + 1058 + 1544 + 1217 = 4941.

86. Now if we take the *στίχος* for the unit, we shall have for **N** and B differences 3658, agreements 5222; and for **N** and R, differences 4941, agreements 3939. Hence, on the hypothesis most favourable to the two MSS., that they are invariably right when they agree, and assigning half of their differences as the only errors of each, the

ratio is $7051 + 1829$, giving ratio of the altered part to the rest $\cdot 2594$, answering to rather more than 9 centuries in the medium or probable scale. If we take the clause of six words, or one-third of a verse, as the unit, the ratio in the same extreme case will be $9451 + 1829$, or $\cdot 19352$, answering to $7\frac{1}{8}$ centuries in the same scale.

Of the differences above, 1950 are common, in which B and R agree in their deviation from \aleph , so that the differences of B and R are only 2991, while those of \aleph and R are 4941, a proportion of 3 to 5. Dividing their differences 3658 in this ratio as a more probable distribution, we have 1372 for the errors of B and 2286 for those of \aleph , and $1372 \div 9908$ and $2286 \div 8994$ for the fraction of error in each. This is $\cdot 1384$ for B and $\cdot 2542$ for \aleph , and answers to $5\frac{1}{4}$ and $9\frac{1}{2}$ centuries respectively. In this extreme hypothesis, which assigns to B and \aleph infallible excellence when they agree, and distributes their certain errors between them in the ratio of their divergence from the Received Text, the weight of B is $\cdot 860$ and that of \aleph $\cdot 595$ by the table, that of a MS. of the 11th century being $\cdot 462$, and of cent. xv. $\cdot 428$. In other words, on the hypothesis most favourable to the early MSS., and specially to the Vatican, its weight is exactly that of two MSS. of the 15th century, while the Sinaitic weighs only one-third more than an average MS. of the eleventh century, or of index 12 in the table.

87. But the idea that all the differences of the Received Text from both B and \aleph , in number 2991, are due to its fault and not to theirs, is plainly preposterous. Let us next assume that one-fifth only are faults of B and \aleph , and let these be added to 1708 and 1950, the number of B's differences from both \aleph and R, and of \aleph 's differences from both B and R. Then 2304 and 2548 will be the num-

ber of faulty clauses in the two MSS. and the fractions of error $\cdot 2566$ and $\cdot 2918$ respectively. These correspond to $9\frac{1}{6}$ and $10\frac{1}{3}$ centuries in the scale.

88. But if we make the Received Text, provisionally, of equal weight to either of the two MSS., or their conjoint weight as 2 to 1, then one-third of its differences from both will probably be right, or 997 must be added to their errors, proved by their divergence alone. The two numbers will then be 2705 and 2947, or assuming them equal 2826, and the ratio of error $2826 \div 8454$, or one-third and upward, and answers to an index of $11\frac{2}{3}$ centuries in the scale.

89. These conclusions, from the internal evidence of the divergences of the two MSS., on which Dean Burgon has insisted in general terms, may be thus given in a tabular form. The 3658 differences of B and \aleph may be divided equally between them, or in the ratio of their respective disagreements with the Received Text, and taken either as their whole error, or else increased by one-fifth or one-third of the cases where their joint authority is opposed to the Received Text. The answering errors, out of 11280 clauses, will be 1829, 1372, 2286; 2427, 1970, 2884; 2826, 2369, and 3283. The resulting fractions of error are $\cdot 1935$, $\cdot 1384$ and $\cdot 2542$; $\cdot 27414$, $\cdot 2566$ and $\cdot 2918$; $\cdot 3342$, $\cdot 2658$ and $\cdot 4105$. These, in the $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. scale, answer to $7\frac{1}{6}$, $5\frac{1}{4}$, $9\frac{1}{6}$ centuries in the first case, $9\frac{4}{5}$, $9\frac{1}{6}$ and $10\frac{1}{3}$ in the second, and $11\frac{2}{3}$, $9\frac{1}{2}$ and 14 centuries in the third.

The scale provisionally assumed before, which ascribes a decline equal to 10 mean centuries to the date A. D. 300, and $9\frac{1}{2}$ to the date A. D. 350, is thus shewn not to be excessive, and is equalled or exceeded by the errors of the only two survivors of that date, as proved by their divergence alone, together with a moderate estimate of

their probable errors in their cases of common divergence from the reading of the Received Text.

90. The same general conclusion may be put in another way, which is perhaps still more striking. The interval of time from the date of the Gospels to that of these MSS., referring them to the middle of the fourth century, is 290 years. Now if the rate of error, proved by their divergence alone, and treating them as infallible where they agree, were continued in later years, it would make the erroneous or corrupt part one-half of the whole after 1136 years, or at the end of the 12th century. But if they are further in error only once in ten times, where they are jointly opposed to the Received Text, then a MS. of the date A. D. 1020 would cease to have any weight as evidence, and would contain as many corrupted or altered clauses as those which were still a faithful copy of the original text. Thus all MSS. after the close of the tenth century would be almost wholly useless as evidence for determining the original text. And thus the price which must be paid for the excessive value which modern critics have placed on these two earliest MSS. is the destruction of our faith in the power of writing to transmit any revelation in a trustworthy form beyond the limit of nine and a half centuries, or less than a thousand years. But such a conclusion is wholly unnatural and incredible.

91. The notion, then, of any exceptional merit in these two MSS. above their contemporaries can only be maintained by a general degradation of the MSS. of that age below those of an earlier or a later date. In fact, the phenomena they present agree with the conclusion we have deduced from other facts, that A. D. 300 answers to a decline of purity, never exceeded till we descend as low as the middle of the eighth century. It follows that their

weight as evidence is slightly less, instead of vastly greater, than that of the later uncials, and surpasses that of an average MS. of the 12th century only in about the proportion of four to three.

92. All those alterations, then, of the Received Text, which have been based on the erroneous assumption that each of these two MSS. is equal in evidential value to fifty or a hundred cursive MSS., I agree with Dean Burgon and Mr MacClellan, must be renounced and reversed, whenever the Text of the New Testament comes to be settled on clear and definite principles with regard to the just estimation of the weight of manuscript evidence.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON THE LATERAL INDEPENDENCE OF MSS.

93. THE subject, thus far, has been the relative weight of MSS. of different ages, on the whole, or on the average through their whole extent. The oldest, it has been shewn, does not exceed the weight of two of the latest, and those of the date A. D. 300 or 350 do not rank higher than 10 or $9\frac{1}{2}$ centuries of degradation, when referred to a uniform scale.

94. The true principle, however, of sound criticism, is not the grouping of MSS., as if each were a mere unit, by their collective agreements or differences. This would render the whole problem hopeless of solution from the entire absence of the historical materials, which are essential for a complete genealogy of the extant MSS. We ought, on the contrary, to resolve them into their different parts, and to collect the total evidence for the rival readings in each disputed passage, almost as if it stood alone. Critics have done this to a great extent from sheer necessity. But the reasons for this course, which is diametrically opposite to the principle of deciding by a grouping and classification of entire MSS., has never received a direct discussion.

95. Each Gospel or Epistle itself is one organic whole; and its parts are linked together by an essential and

organic unity. But the errors which enter into the several copies, and distinguish them from each other, have no such unity. They arise either from carelessness, intentional corruption, or faulty attempts to correct and remove previous errors, on the part of successive copyists. Totals of error thus produced are bound together by no organic law, and have scarcely any dependence on each other in passing from one part of a MS. to another.

Thus the errors in different parts of the same MS. have no lateral union. The only real links of connection are in the lines of vertical descent, by which every verse or clause is derived from the answering verse or clause of the original. At whatever step of descent an error creeps in, it will be transmitted to later copies in the same series, until the care and better judgment of some later scribe reverses the fault of his predecessor, and thus restores the true and original reading.

96. The balance, then, of testimony for and against any reading does not depend on the total amount of error in the MSS. which contain or reject it, in other books, chapters, or verses. It depends on the number and age, the purity or corruption, of the rival witnesses in that passage alone. The errors of a MS. are not spread evenly over its whole extent. Some parts may have been copied from a very good, others from a very inferior and imperfect copy. Whatever the steps of the change, a large part remains still free from error. The rest has not merely a certain risk or chance of error, but is actually wrong. Each clause or word is either the same with the original, or differs from it, and is actually more or less erroneous.

The ratio of the true and unaltered part to the altered throughout the whole, is no sufficient guide in dealing

with any particular verse. If we set aside a certain number of disputed texts, the proportion of the true to the altered texts in the rest, or for each text, that of the sound to the altered MSS., is certainly much higher than two to one. If only as high as four to one, it will answer to the mean likelihood of truth after nine centuries at the rate of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., or be slightly higher than the average value of the Vatican and Sinaitic through their whole extent, as proved by their differences from each other alone.

97. Let us now consider the exceptional cases, where, for some cause or other, the centurial rate of error has been double, or 5 per cent. Then after 14 centuries the derived copies will lose all weight as evidence for the truth of their offered reading. One taken at hazard will be as likely to be false as true. This index, in our modified or approximate scale, answers to A.D. 1250, or the middle of the 13th century. In all such cases the 117 MSS. of the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries will cease to have any weight at all as evidence.

98. How, then, may we distinguish the cases in which the rate of error has been high and exceptional? In a direct and simple way. The total amount of centuries of transcription, for the 18 or 16 uncial MSS. and the 456 cursives, is about 6200. Suppose the true reading, usually, to be that which is found in the greatest number of copies, then if more than $62 \times 2\frac{1}{2} = 155$ deviate from this predominant reading, there is proof, in that verse or clause, of a rate of error above the average. If, however, we assume the reading of a small minority to be the true, there must be, on that hypothesis, a high and excessive rate of error. But then this conclusion depends on that hypothesis alone, and ceases when it is set aside. Again, if the MSS. are

nearly equally parted between three readings, then, whichever we adopt, the percentage of error will be not less than $316 \div 62$, or rather more than five per cent.

99. When numbers are on one side, and the consent of a smaller number of ancient authorities on the other, we may reckon the rate of error which must have prevailed, if the less numerously attested reading is preferred. And we must then inquire whether any reason can be given why this higher rate, 4, 5, 6 or 7 per cent., should have prevailed in this particular passage with copyists in general through successive ages, and through the whole extent of the Church or of the Roman Empire. The frequent adoption of such an hypothesis, with no special presumptions in its favour, must tend to undermine the very foundations of our faith in the secure transmission of the Divine oracles from one age to another. It degrades written revelation nearly to the same level of uncertainty with loose, floating, unwritten tradition.

100. The main doctrine here advanced, when once we reflect upon it, seems to be certain and clear beyond a reasonable doubt. Mistakes in one part of a MS. have no causal power to induce mistakes in another and wholly distinct portion. The causal connection is in the vertical lines alone; and these lines, for the 8000 verses, or 24000 clauses of the New Testament, are almost entirely distinct. There are a few exceptional cases, as in the last twelve verses of St Mark. In others, two or three streams of descent may be mingled, where a copyist uses more MSS. than one. But even then the connection, though more complex, is vertical, and not lateral. The idea of a local or Western text, in which a common character of total, collective deviation from the truth prevails and propagates itself within definite geographical limits, seems to

me a mere illusion, and its existence in the very nature of things impossible. The MSS. of a given district, at a given date, will of course have a certain number which exhibit particular false readings in this or that passage. The proportion will alter slowly as new copies are made, or imported into the district, and as the error is repeated in them or else removed. But these proportions formed in this way have no causal or organic character. A mistake in one or two Codices has no influence to induce the same error in others of the same date, but only in those of a later generation. Also an error or false reading in one chapter or verse has no power to create or prevent similar, but distinct errors, in other verses or chapters of the same manuscript.

101. Sound Criticism, then, in the choice between rival lections, does not depend on conjectural groupings of hundreds and thousands of perished MSS. from the second to the sixth century, nor on guesses at the filiation of the dozen or score of early authorities which still survive. The attempt to distribute these into families by the totality of their various readings, and then to substitute these recensions or conjectural families for their individual components must fail for two reasons. First, we have really no materials for executing such a task. Five or six MSS. between A.D. 300 and 600 are all that are now extant out of two or three thousand. To restore the readings of those thousands of MSS. in 8000 verses or 24000 clauses from these five or six alone, with the help of the loose quotations in the Fathers, or the imperfect evidence of the Versions, is plainly quite hopeless. The data are either wholly wanting, or exist only in those 400 or 500 later MSS. and Lectionaries, which the theory now examined flings aside as worthless.

102. But even if the materials were ample instead of being almost wholly wanting, the method itself is radically and demonstrably unsound. It overlooks and sets aside a connection that really exists, and invents one which is purely imaginary and non-existent. Its direct tendency is to multiply the weight of documents in proportion as they abound in error, and to reduce witnesses, however numerous, to reckon as only one, if they are exceptionally good and pure, and therefore agree.

103. The Gospels and Epistles themselves have each of them its own organic unity. But no such unity belongs to the totals of error introduced into the separate later copies by the neglect or fraud of successive scribes. These are not living organisms, which can be ranked in families, sub-families, and species. They are only aggregates of specks of dust. The worst MS., in two-thirds of its clauses, is as good as the best, because it equally retains and exhibits the true original text. The best MS., again, in a certain number, say one-sixth or seventh of the whole, is as faulty as the worst, because in those clauses it offers a wrong and not the true reading. And hence the Lateral Independence of MSS., and the rejection of any artificial estimate of their value by some imaginary group to which the individual is fancied to belong, is one of the main principles to be kept ever in view, if we would form a right estimate of the collective evidence on either side, in every case of disputed readings where the witnesses diverge and disagree.

CHAPTER IX.

THE EARLIER AND THE LATER EVIDENCE.

104. THE evidence to be combined is of four kinds; Uncial MSS., Versions, and Fathers or Patristic Quotations, and the Cursive MSS. from the tenth century onward, of which about 456 have their dates assigned in Scrivener's Introduction. The three first make up what is called distinctively the Ancient, and the fourth, the Modern evidence. The latter is treated by most modern critics, almost as if it had no existence whatever. Dean Alford ventures to affirm that all the cursives, except four or five of the oldest, may, for aught we know, be in many cases no more worthy to be heard in the matter than so many printed copies of our day. If this be true in many cases it must be true in all cases whatever. We may not make our witnesses rise or fall in value by mere caprice. If hundreds of later MSS. agree with four or five uncials in some cases, and differ in others, it is ridiculous to assign them no weight at all in the latter case, and then to pretend that we give them greater weight in the rest. We really treat them as mere ciphers in both, and our judgment will be always decided by the few early MSS. alone.

Is it true that, for aught we know, 450 extant MSS. from century XI. downward, have no more worth, as evi-

dence of the readings of the original text, than as many printed copies of our day? If this were true, we might as well destroy at once all our books of history, which rest on an amount of testimony, ten or twenty times less than what is here pronounced probably, or at least possibly, quite worthless, and cast ignominiously aside.

105. The uncials to be combined are **Σ** and B of the fourth century, A, C, D of the fifth, E, L, V of the eighth, F, H, K, M, Γ, Δ, Λ, Π, X of the ninth, and G, S, U of the tenth, or twenty in all, besides fragments I, N, Q, T of the 5th, I, N, P, R, T, Z, Θ of the 6th, T, Θ of the 7th and O, W, Y of the 8th century. These in quantity amount to about 3983 verses, and the lacuna in the other uncials to 4467, so that the amount is rather less than 20 complete MSS.

106. The collective weight in the 2, 2½, 3, 4, 5 scales are 13·53, 11·40, 9·625, 6·745, 4·413, or an average of ·677, ·570, ·4812, ·3372, ·2206 for each uncial. Thus A, C, D, E, L, V would be slightly above the mean value, and B, **Σ**, F, H, K, M, Γ, Δ, Λ, Π, X, G, S, U slightly below it. In the mean 2½ scale, each of the 20 uncials may be reckoned to weigh ·57, or $\frac{4}{7}$ of a unit ratio, without sensible error.

107. The versions are eleven,

A.D. 150, Peschito and Old Latin, index 4,

A.D. 200, Curetonian-Syriac, Coptic, Sahidic, index 6,

A.D. 350, Gothic, index 9½; 400 Vulgate, index 9,

A.D. 450, Armenian, Jerusalem Syriac, index 8½,

A.D. 500, Philox. Syriac, index 8; 550 Aethiopic, 8.

The totals in the five scales are 9·29, 8·12, 7·18, 5·66, and 4·45, or an average for each version ·845, ·74, ·65, ·515, and ·405, or $\frac{3}{4}$ of a unit ratio, in the mean scale.

108. Of the Fathers we may select 44, with their approximate dates:

- A.D. 100. Clemens, Ignatius.
 150. Justin.
 175. Irenæus, Theophilus, Athenagoras.
 200. Tertullian.
 225. Clemens, Hippolytus, Africanus.
 250. Cyprian, Origen, Dionysius.
 300. Arnobius, Lactantius.
 325. Eusebius, Juvencus.
 350. Athanasius, Ephrem, Hilary.
 375. Basil, Cyril-Jer., the Gregories, Caesarius, Optatus.
 400. Ambrose, August., Chrysostom, Jerome, Gaudentius, Epiphanius, Victor of Antioch, Isidore, Prudentius.
 425. Prosper, Cyril Alex.
 450. Leo, Salvian, Theodoret.
 500. Fulgentius, Gelasius, Caesarius of Arles.
 600. Gregory of Rome.

Their total amounts in the five scales are 33·1, 28·7, 25·1, 19·2 and 14·4, and the averages ·75, ·652, ·570, ·4364, ·328, or for the $2\frac{1}{2}$ scale, nearly $\frac{2}{3}$ of a unit. Thus summing for the total amounts of the three classes, and taking for the Fathers one-seventh, or an average of rather more than six authorities, we find

Versions,	9·29	8·12	7·18	5·66	4·45
Fathers,	4·73	4·10	3·58	2·74	2·06
Uncials,	13·53	11·40	9·62	6·74	4·41
Total,	<u>27·55</u>	<u>23·62</u>	<u>20·38</u>	<u>15·14</u>	<u>10·92</u>

109. Each unit, in the above totals, denotes a ratio of 10 to 1, in favour of the reading in which the witnesses agree. Hence the weight of the ancient authorities alone, *if unanimous*, is scarcely overrated, even by modern critics. In the five different scales it is 10^{11} , 10^{15} , 10^{20} , $10^{23·6}$, and

$10^{27\frac{1}{2}}$, or in the $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. scale little less than as a billion of billions to one. But with a partial dissent it decreases rapidly, both because it then depends on the excess, and not the whole number, and the rate of error in that passage is proved to be high. This rate is approximately one-half of the deficit from 37 of the consenting authorities, or with the consent of 27 it answers to the 5 per cent. scale and is an excess of 17 authorities, or only a hundred thousand to one.

110. The later or cursive MSS. have their weight lessened by two causes, their lower place, individually, in the scale of values, from the larger number of transcriptions which have gone before, and the risk of mutual dependence, which increases with each fresh transcription. The former has less effect than is often assumed. In the mean or most probable scale and rate a MS. of cent. IV. is barely equal in weight to two of the 11th, and with a double rate, or 5 per cent., and the index resulting from their divergencies alone, to four of the 11th. But in estimating the collective weight a large abatement has to be made in the latest centuries.

111. The following approximation seems to give full weight to the diminution from this cause.

Since 676 MSS. of the Gospels survive even now, and 346 Lectionaries, three centuries after copying has ceased through the use of printed editions, one thousand seems a lower limit for the coexisting MSS. of the Gospels at any time from the fourth century downward, even exclusive of the mere handful that still remain of centuries before the tenth. Taking, then, from Dr Scrivener's work, 20, 124, 116, 78, 56, 32, 28 for the dated MSS. from Cent. X. to Cent. XVI., a total of 454, we may calculate on the two hypotheses of a transcription once, on the average, in each century or half century. The chance of inde-

pendence or of junction with a prior line of descent in each transcription, will be $1000 - n : 1000$ when n is the number of the MSS. of the previous centuries, plus the mean, or one-half, of those of the current century. Thus the reducing factors will be cent. X. 990, cent. XI. 918, cent. XII. 798, cent. XIII. 701, cent. XIV. 634, cent. XV. 590, cent. XVI. 560, and the continued product of these into the number of the MSS. of each century will give the equivalent number of independent witnesses. The results are cent. XI. 112·7; XII. 84·1; XIII. 39·67; XIV. 18·0; XV. 6·1; XVI. 3·0. But the multipliers for the half-centuries are XI. 949, 887; XII. 827, 769; XIII. 721, 682; XIV. 648, 620; XV. 598, 582; XVI. 567, 551. The results are for cent. XI. $57·3 + 50·8 = 108·1$; XII. $40·0 + 30·7 = 70·7$; XIII. $14·9 + 10·1 = 25$; XIV. $4·7 + 2·9 = 7·6$; XV. $1 + ·58 = 1·6$; XVI. $·29 + ·16 = ·45$. We may thus take cent. X. 20; XI. 110; XII. 70; XIII. 25; XIV. 7·5; XV. 1·5; XVI. ·5 as approximate equivalents for the collective weight in evidence of the 20, 124, 116, 78, 56, 32 and 28 dated MSS. of the centuries from cent. X. to cent. XVI.

112. The final result will then be as follows :

Cursives.	Rate 2 per cent.	Rate 2½ per cent.	Rate 3 per cent.	Rate 4 per cent.	Rate 5 per cent.
Cent. IX. 2 MSS.	1·32	1·11	·93	·64	·40
Cent. X. 20 MSS.	12·27	10·11	8·31	5·63	2·97
Cent. XI. 124=110	62·86	50·86	40·79	24·32	10·91
Cent. XII. 116= 70	37·26	29·53	23·05	12·31	3·69
Cent. XIII. 78= 25	12·39	9·60	7·26	3·39	2·20
Cent. XIV. 56= 7½	1·73	1·31	·95	·36	
Cent. XV. 32= 1½	·64	·47	·33	·09	
Modern.	128·47	102·99	81·62	46·74	20·17
Ancient.	27·55	23·62	20·38	15·14	10·92
Total.	156·02	126·61	102·00	61·88	31·09

113. It results, from this inquiry, in which several assumptions have been made, unduly favouring the elder authorities, that with a mean or probable rate of error, of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. a century, the Cursives exceed the collective weight of the Fathers, Versions and Uncials, rather more than in the proportion of four to one. With the 4 per cent. rate, their excess is just three to one, and even with the double or highly exceptional rate of 5 per cent., their excess is still almost exactly as two to one. Nor can this be thought surprising, when we remember that these cursives are 456 in number, and the earlier witnesses $11 + 6 + 20 = 37$ only, so that the later outnumber them in the proportion of more than twelve to one. And even when we have reduced them to the independent lines, out of a thousand, which they probably represent, the number is about 230, or an excess above the earlier of more than six to one.

CHAPTER X.

THE VARIOUS READINGS IN MATT. I—VII.

114. THE way is now open for an application of the principles established in the previous chapters to the details of New Testament criticism, and for a more exact estimate of the relative weight of the evidence, by which the Received Text is either sustained or set aside.

In Dr Scrivener's Manual Greek Testament the divergent readings of Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles are noted for the whole New Testament, and the minor differences of Stephens, Beza, and the Elzevir editions. Of these there are 1124 in St Matthew alone, and about 630 in which the three modern editors mainly agree, and most of these changes are also adopted by Drs Westcott and Hort in their printed text of the Gospels. Of these 630, 40 consist only in a different spelling of some proper name, and about 90 more in a slight inversion of the order of one or two words, or other changes so slight as to disappear in any version. There remain, then, 500, great or small, which deserve some notice. I propose to examine the more important in the first seven chapters, and a selection of those in the rest of the Gospel. The same principles will apply, of course, to the rest of the New Testament.

115. The principles from which I start are these, and are almost the exact reverse of those which have been in vogue from the time of Griesbach until now. But their truth, I believe, rests on a foundation which cannot be readily overthrown.

First, the 456 cursive MSS., instead of being an insignificant part of the evidence, which, in Dean Alford's view, it is a merit to pass by in silence and without notice, really constitute four-fifths of the whole in weight, as well as eleven-twelfths in mere number. In exceptional cases, less favourable to them, their weight may be two-thirds only. But the entire neglect of them, in any case, must be a fatal and fundamental defect.

Next, the twenty uncials, on the average, have less weight apiece than two MSS. of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. In fact the two earliest, of the fourth century, B and **Σ**, which are commonly ranked high above the rest, have each of them a weight, as proved by their differences alone, not greater than two MSS. of the thirteenth century.

116. Thirdly, the uncials are not very unequal in value. Supposing a gradual and constant decline, the earliest would be to the latest as 3 to 2, or three of the latest of equal weight with the two earliest. But a more reasonable scale makes the error to have reached a maximum about A.D. 300, and to have been followed by a partial recovery, so that a MS. of A.D. 350 and A.D. 700 would have nearly the same value, the recovery, in that interval, balancing the decline. Thus simple enumeration will give a near approach to the relative weight of the uncial evidence, and B and **Σ** are rather below, and not immensely above, the average.

Fourthly, the earliest versions, as the Peschito and the

Old Latin, may equal in weight three of the latest cursives, being in the most probable scale as 98 to 31, while three others are as 80 to 31, or together equal to eight cursives, and the six later versions equal each to two of the later cursives only.

117. Fifthly, all these conclusions will be modified in those cases where there is a special amount of diversity, proving a higher rate of error to have prevailed. This may be determined by a full collation of the differences in that particular clause or verse alone, and a summing up of the witnesses on each side. With a double rate of error, the collective weight of the cursives is twice that of the ancient evidence, instead of fourfold. The MSS. after the 13th century then cease to have any evidential weight, while the oldest versions, the Peschito and the Old Latin, will then each be equal in weight to eight MSS. of the 11th century.

Lastly, the total centuries of error for the ancient witnesses alone, eleven versions, twenty uncials, and six Fathers, are about 240, so that a deviation of six authorities from the adopted reading answers to the mean or $2\frac{1}{2}$ rate, and a deviation of 12, or of 10, excluding the Fathers, answers to the rate 5 per cent. per century. But for the ancient and modern together, the witnesses are 490 and the centuries nearly 6200, so that there must be an erroneous reading in 155, or a consent of 335, to answer to the $2\frac{1}{2}$ scale. Only when this amount of error is exceeded, have we the right to vary the relative estimates by resorting to the higher scales of MS. deterioration.

118. The first divergence is in Matt. i. 6, "And David the king begat, &c." Here *Om.* ὁ βασιλεὺς, B and 8, Copt. and Arm. verss., Augustine, and most of the modern editors, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford, Drs

Westcott and Hort. *Retain*, CEKLSUVΔ, and all the cursives, so far as known, even 33, most of the Latin MSS., the later Syriac and the Æthiopic versions.

Thus the weight of the authorities for omission is unc. 1·2, verss. 2·4, F. ·6, total 4·2. For the Received Text, unc. 5·0, verss. 3·5, total 8·5. Thus the ancient evidence alone is two to one in its favour. But all the modern MSS. are on the same side, at least none is quoted by the patrons of the change, and their weight, 104, is more than eight times that of the total ancient evidence. The preponderance in its favour, then, is nearly thirty to one.

119. Matt. i. 12, R. ἐγέννησε twice, Alf. γέννη twice, with no authority but B alone. Thus one witness, abounding with faults of mere carelessness, is made to outweigh five hundred consenting witnesses. Its weight is ·56 to 130 or less than one-half per cent. With such vagaries of criticism, what safety can there be for avoiding any amount of arbitrary change? Dean Alford has here outstripped even Lachmann, and stands alone in the race of innovation.

120. Matt. i. 18, R. "Jesus Christ." B transposes, and reads "Christ Jesus," D "Christ" alone. So Drs Tregelles, Westcott and Hort, and Mr McClellan. The MS. evidence for change, if B and D both omitted "Jesus," which B retains transposed, is just one per cent. of the whole. I cannot, then, conceive why the omission should have been pronounced "morally certain."

The Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, Æthiopic Versions, Origen, and Eusebius, agree with the Received Text. The Latin Version, the Curetonian-Syriac, and Irenæus, are quoted for the omission. Giving these their full weight, the authority both of Versions and Fathers is in excess for the Received Text, while the MS. evidence in its

favour is in number as 250 or 300 to one, and in weight as 100 to one.

I believe, also, that the testimony of Irenæus is claimed without cause for the omission. For his Greek text gives the verse expressly "The birth of Jesus Christ was in this wise," x. 11. And when he refers to it again xvii. 1, his argument plainly rests on the presence of the name, Christ, not on the absence of the other, so that it would be quite possible that he read both, and quoted here only that which was essential to his argument. "The Holy Spirit, foreseeing deceivers, and guarding against their fraud, says by Matthew, 'The birth of the Christ was thus'...lest we should suspect that Jesus was one and Christ was another, but might know them to be one and the same." Now this end is most completely secured by the usual reading.

The internal evidence, I think, in contrast to Mr McClellan, is hardly less decisive in its favour than the external. For *v.* 17 is a parenthetical comment on the genealogy at its close. But "Jesus Christ" in *v.* 1, "Jesus which is called Christ" in *v.* 16, and "Jesus Christ," *v.* 18, refer to each other, and thus the article before the double name, instead of being an objection, is natural and emphatic. The Book is that of the generation of "Jesus Christ," and next, of this "Jesus who is called Christ" the birth was in this way. The external evidence for the omission is almost none, for the two main witnesses for any change disprove each other. Dr Scrivener well observes that the mass of evidence forms a body of proof not to be shaken by subjective notions, which are in truth quite unsubstantial.

In the same verse, R. *γέννησις* with EKLMUV, 33; *γένεσις* BCPSZΔ, 1, Syr., Ath., Eus., Max. There is here a nearly equal balance of ancient authorities, but all the

modern, with very rare exceptions, give the Received Text.

121. Matt. i. 25, R. "her firstborn son." There are here four various readings:

υἶόν, **SBZ**, 1,33, abcgk, Curet.-Syr., Ambrose, Hilary, Greg. Naz. and the Editors **LTr**, Alf. **WH**, and Green.

τὸν υἶόν, Coptic; *τὸν υἶόν αὐτῆς*, Sahidic.

τὸν υἶόν τὸν πρωτότοκον, **D²L**, d.

Bp. Wordsworth and Mr McClellan both adhere to the usual text. As Mr McClellan justly remarks, "the verse limps," when the change is made.

The collective weight of evidence, in the most probable scale, is 130. The authorities for change are shared among four lections; their conjoint weight is about 8·7 and that of the best supported 5·8, or less than one-twentieth of the whole.

122. The internal evidence against the omission is just as complete and decisive as the external. The text as it stands, though not a disproof of the dogma of Mary's perpetual virginity, seems rather to point the other way. In the third century and later, when this tenet was ready to be advanced as an article of the faith, there would be a strong and natural impulse to get rid in some way of a perplexing statement. But if the text were maimed for that purpose, it was not easy to give it a consistent and natural form. Two methods were possible, to omit only *τὸν πρωτότοκον*, or further to omit the article and pronoun. The Sahidic takes the first course, but **BSZ** and one or two other MSS. and three Fathers the second. But the lameness and unnaturalness of this lection, even if it had ten times as many witnesses in its favour, is decisive against it. If so much is omitted, it is essential that *υἶόν* too should be omitted. For that the birth was

that of a son, and not of a daughter, is plain already from the whole context. Thus either $\epsilon\omega\varsigma\ \omicron\upsilon\ \epsilon\tau\epsilon\kappa\epsilon\nu$, or $\epsilon\omega\varsigma\ \omicron\upsilon\ \epsilon\tau\epsilon\kappa\epsilon\ \tau\omicron\nu\ \upsilon\iota\omicron\nu\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\eta\varsigma$, is a reading credible in itself, but $\epsilon\omega\varsigma\ \omicron\upsilon\ \epsilon\tau\epsilon\kappa\epsilon\nu\ \upsilon\iota\omicron\nu$ is unmeaning and intolerable.

On the contrary the Received Text, besides combining nineteen-twentieths of the whole evidence, is consistent and natural, and links itself with a whole series of types in the Old Testament and several texts in the New, where our Lord is styled the firstborn from the dead, and the first-born among many brethren.

123. This is the first passage noted in Mr Green's "Developed Criticism." But his remarks seem to me a complete inversion of all the rules of sound reasoning. The chief ground for preferring the reading of B^NZ against hundreds of authorities is an hypothesis of the proneness of scribes to add glosses, rather than make omissions; but especially the fact that the shorter reading, if original, could hardly escape the application of supplementary glosses. This is certainly true, just as it is true that a clerical misprint or faulty copy, in which the last letter or syllable of a word was accidentally omitted, would be almost sure to be corrected in all later copies. The preferred reading carries falsehood on its face, and is the only one of the four which contradicts common sense, which is not the case with the Coptic, Sahidic or Bezan varieties.

But this variety itself multiplies the evidence a thousand-fold against every deviation from the usual text. The chances against the same reading being found in all the existing copies, if their number is n , are increased in the ratio of 4^n to one. In the case of 300 MSS., this is a million self-multiplied thirty times.

124. Matt. ii. 11. $\epsilon\iota\delta\omicron\nu$ for $\epsilon\upsilon\rho\omicron\nu$ is confirmed by nearly

all the MSS. The transpositions in *vv.* 3, 8, 19, 22 are of slight importance, though as usual the evidence against the change in each case is greater than in its favour.

125. Matt. ii. 18. *θρηῆνος καὶ* is omitted by **NBZ**, 1, Syr., Syr. Jer., Copt., Latt., Æthiop., Justin, Ambrose, Jerome, Hilary, Optatus. The fuller reading is in CDE KLMSUVA, 33, Curet.-Syr., Philox. and Armenian versions. So far as appears, it is found in all the cursives, except the one cited for the omission.

The ancient authorities for the omission are 14 in number, with a collective weight = 10. Those for the retention twelve in number, and in weight about 8. But on the same scale the weight of the cursives, if unanimous, would be 105, and only one of them is alleged for the omission. Thus the total evidence against the omission is more than eleven to one.

126. Matt. ii. 21. For *ἦλθε* of Received Text, the compound *εἰσῆλθεν* is found in **BNC** and the Coptic Version, and adopted by the Editors LTr, Alf., and WH. The ancient authorities for the change are four only, three MSS. and one version. For the Received Text are the MSS. DEKLMSUVA, and the Old Lat., Syrr., and Sahidic versions. The uncials in its favour are nine to three, and the versions six to one. Thus all the modern evidence, four-fifths of the whole, is in its favour, and three parts in four of the remaining fifth. The evidence for the change is just one-twentieth part of the whole.

127. Matt. iii. 2. Omit *καὶ*, **NB_g**, Copt., Sahid., Æthiop., Hilary. And so Edd. LTr, Alf., WH. There are only five ancient witnesses for the omission, and against it CDEKLMSUVA, Latt., Syr., Arm., fourteen authorities, ten uncials, and four versions. That is, nearly three to one, and all the cursives, as before.

128. Matt. iii. 6. Add *ποταμῶ*, \aleph BC¹ΜΔ, 1, 33, Syrr., Copt., Sahidic, Æthiop., Arm., Basil, and so LTrWH but not Alf.

Received Text, C³DEKLSUV, Lat. and Vulg., Chrysost. and Hilary, and Mn and Wd.

Here the ancient witnesses for the insertion are 14 to 12, a slight excess in its favour, and their values 10 and 7. To the latter adding the cursives, the total is 112 against and 10 in favour. Or with a doubled rate of error the values are 4·7, 2·6 and 19·2, or 4·7 for the addition and 21·8 against, that is, an excess of near four to one for the usual text.

The internal evidence is equally decisive.

The two reasons, which explain the presence of the word in Mark i. 5, here are both reversed. The river has been already named before, and this first Gospel was specially written for Jewish Christians in Palestine, to whom Jordan was a most familiar name, and could need no explanation. On both grounds the insertion is superfluous and unnatural. Its presence, in six MSS. only out of five hundred, is thus one of the clearest cases of faulty assimilation.

129. Matt. iii. 11. *ὑμᾶς βαπτίζω*, LTrWH, not Alf., with \aleph B, 1, 33, Justin, Orig., Basil, Chrys., Cypr., Cyril. The MSS. evidence for the change of order is not one-fortieth of the whole in weight, and in number not one-hundredth. And on a point of such minuteness, the order of the two words in a patristic quotation can have little weight, especially when *ὑμᾶς βαπτίσει* follows immediately in the same verse.

130. Matt. iv. 4. + *ὁ*, \aleph BCDELPUVZΔ, 1, 33. *Om.* KMS and Euseb. The uncials are eleven to three for the insertion. In Luke iv. 4 they are nearly equally

divided; F²HKMSUTAΔ, 69 or eight for the omission, AB~~S~~DEGLVA, or nine, including the four oldest, for insertion. In the two together there are 20 uncials for insertion and 11 for omission. The insertion is justified by the ancient evidence. But even here the preponderance is not decisive.

131. Matt. iv. 12. *Om.* ὁ Ἰησοῦς, ~~S~~BC¹DZ, 33, am,for,k, Copt., Æthiop., Orig., Eus., August. *Retain* with R., C²EKLMP^SUVΔ, 1. Old Lat., Vulg., Syrr.₄ Armen., Hilary, Gaudentius.

The MS. evidence, even of the uncials alone, is in its favour, nine to four, seven versions to two, including the three oldest, and all the cursives but one or two. The internal evidence is the same. The fuller pause thus made between the Temptation and the Public Ministry agrees best with the structure of the Gospel.

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

THE changes in the text advocated here by modern critics are very important, as they affect both the fundamental code of Christianity and its one authoritative pattern of worship.

132. Matt. v. 11. *Om.* ψευδόμενοι, D, Orig., Tert., Hil., and so LWH and Green. *Retain*, TTr, Alf., Str., Wdw., Mn.

The omission is thus supported by one MS. only out of near five hundred; three Syriac versions, six Latin MSS. out of twenty, and perhaps three Fathers. Thus the whole ancient evidence is one uncial out of ten, three versions out of eleven, and three Fathers, their total weight about $6 + 2.4 + 2.0 = 5$ out of 21, while the consent of all the cursives, 105 is in the same scale with the

residue. Thus the total evidence is as 5 to 121, or an excess of twenty-four to one for the Received Text.

Mr Green boldly rejects it, in the teeth of this immense preponderance of testimony, on internal grounds alone. He calls it an instance "of the effects of an illtimed officiousness, engaged in stocking the margin with superfluous expressions, and furnishing the first step to an incumbrance of the text with feeble and impertinent accretions."

Now this word, by the consenting evidence of five hundred witnesses, all agreeing, is one of those spoken by the Divine Lawgiver, who said "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." The criticism which, endorsing the neglect or oscitancy of one solitary copyist, applies to this word of the Son of God the title of a feeble and impertinent accretion I prefer to leave without any description of my own.

But the word is said to be "altogether a redundance as regards the sense." Reproach against true servants of Christ in enmity to their Master cannot rest on truth, and thus the declaration need not be guarded by a formal hypothesis of falsehood in the charges alleged.

This, however, is plainly and notoriously untrue. True charges, as well as false, may be brought, and often have been brought, against disciples of Christ, and yet in enmity to Him whose name they bear, and whose disciples they profess to be. Few things have been more frequent than this union of substantial truth in the matter of the charge, and of malice in its motive. The word thus fulfils a double purpose. It is both emphatic and cautionary. It places in clearer light the guilt of the malicious persecutors, whose malice prompts them, not only to taunt Christians with their real faults, but to add

others of their own invention. And it gives the caution, more fully expressed in 1 Pet. iv. 15, 16, that Christians may expose themselves to reproaches really deserved, and that in that case they have no claim to a part in this blessing, however malicious their accusers may be.

The word, then, is no "impertinent accretion," but an integral part of one of the weightiest messages of Him who is the Supreme Lawgiver, the Word and Wisdom of God.

133. Matt. v. 22. *Om.* εἰκῆ, $\Sigma\text{B}\Delta^2$, Vulg., Æthiop., Justin? Origen, Pseud.-Basil, Pseud.-Ath., Aug., Jerome, Juvencus, Salvian, Chronicon? And so most recent Edd., LTr (Alf.?) WH, Green.

Retain, DEKLMSUV Δ^1 , 1, 33, abcfffg_{1,2}hlm, Syrr., Copt., Goth., Arm., Irenæus, Greg. Nyss., Chrys., Cyril, Isidore, Theodoret, Theoph., Euthymius, Cyprian, Hilary, Optatus, Lucifer. Thus the ancient authorities are 11 uncials, 11 versions, and 20 Fathers. Of these one uncial has both readings, and two uncials, two versions and eight Fathers are for the omission, but 8 uncials, 8 versions, and 12 Fathers for the Received Text, or 2S witnesses to 12. Thus the ancient evidence is more than two to one in its favour, and the whole weight of the cursives, with a few exceptions, perhaps three or four at most, is in the same scale. The adverse evidence is about 8, the favourable about 19 + 105 or 124, more than fifteen to one.

But St Jerome "describes the evidence of copies in his time as strongly adverse, and decides accordingly," and Mr Green says that "his information respecting contemporary evidence could not be otherwise than correct." Surely a startling assertion, when Chrysostom, Cyril, Theodoret, Hilary, Optatus, Lucifer, of the same age, all recognize the presence of εἰκῆ in the text. The Fathers

are notoriously and habitually inexact in statements of this kind. The words of Jerome may prove that the word was wanting in a good number of copies in his day, but that is the utmost they can prove in the face of such counter evidence. The ancient witnesses in its favour are more than two to one, while in the later MSS. there is scarcely an instance of its omission.

134. Alford, who retains it doubtfully, says that the internal evidence is equally indecisive with the external. In fact it is equally decisive in its favour. To justify the omission Mr Green offers a modified interpretation of the phrase, ἔνοχος τῇ κρίσει. "Judicial responsibility as to whether each particular act is justifiable is the utmost that is signified by the words. It is a limiting proviso added to the summary command, Thou shalt not kill" (*Dev. Crit.* p. 5). The meaning, on this view, is that every one who is angry, whether his anger be right or wrong, will be liable to a judicial inquiry, whether it has had a sufficient cause, and not exceeded due bounds. "This simple view of the passage does not require any saving term." But how then must we explain the two other clauses, "shall be in danger of the council," "shall be in danger of hell fire"? Do these two mean only a judicial inquiry, of which the result may be either condemnation or acquittal? Is it not plain that the three terms, by a figure taken from human tribunals, express three degrees of guiltiness, and answerable degrees in the severity of the Divine judgment? The offered gloss, then, is forced and intolerable. It does not merely dilute the meaning, but destroys it altogether. Ἐνοχος τῇ κρίσει must mean guilty before God in the first of three degrees of guiltiness, each with its answering meed of punishment.

135. Here, then, we have a distinct issue. Retain

the word, and we have a Divine law and sentence, exactly worded, and worthy of the Great Lawgiver both for its solemnity and its precision. One word marks the precise line between an anger which is morally blameable in his sight, and an anger which is free from blame, or may even be a positive duty. Remove the word, and the sentence becomes a condemnation of the Divine Lawgiver by his own lips, when "he looked round with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their heart," Mark iii. 5. It can only be kept from contradicting the true law of duty, and the whole teaching of the word of God, by supplying in thought the very limitation which has been rashly expunged from the text in defiance of nine-tenths of the direct evidence. And even then we only free the sentence from the charge of direct falsehood by fastening on it one of the worst faults in a legislative enactment, that it says one thing and means another, and needs to have its meaning explained away, and even reversed, by an important limitation, which, on this view, has no place in the legal record itself. Thus not only is the external evidence more than fifteen to one in favour of the text as it stands, but the internal is still more decisive. Its rejection is the result of a false reliance on two MSS., which have been rated more than twenty times above their true relative value, and on a statement of Jerome, disproved by the testimony of six Fathers of his own age, and in which his ascetic rigorism seems to have been compensated by an equal looseness in his induction of the MS. testimony in his own days.

136. Matt. v. 44. *Om. εὐλογεῖτε...καί.* **N**, B, 1, k, Curet.-Syr., Copt., and the Fathers Irenæus, Orig., Eus., Tert., Cypr., Hil., Ambr., Jerome, Fulgentius, and so the Editors LTr, Alf, WH and Green.

Ret. DEKLMSUVA, 33, cdfhm, Syr., Philox., Goth., Arm., Æthiop.

Retain first clause, Athenag., Clem., Euseb., Theophylact.

Retain second clause, Vulg., abffgl, Aug., Juvencus, Epiph., Optatus.

Both are present in the cursive MSS. almost without exception.

The preponderance of MS. evidence for both clauses is immense, in number 200 to one, in weight as sixty to one. The testimony of Versions also is in their favour, almost in the ratio of three to one.

Thus the only serious ground of doubt is the omission of both clauses in nine Fathers, of the first alone in three others, and of the second alone in three others. But the verses are exactly of that kind which it would be natural and easy to quote in an abbreviated form. Thus while nine in quoting omit both clauses, eight retain either the first or the second, and therefore are evidence in favour of their presence in the text.

Alford says, indeed, that the omission of these clauses, if genuine, "would be perfectly unaccountable." On the contrary, it has the most easy and usual explanation possible. For here four successive clauses end in *ὑμᾶς*, after one ending in *ὑμῶν*, and the principle of Homoteleuton applies in fourfold measure to account for partial omissions. The order, also, is different from that in St Luke, so as to exclude the harmonistic explanation, that a gloss has been added from the other Gospel.

137. Matt. vi. 1. *δικαιοσύνην*, **NBD**, 1, Latt., Jer. Syr., Orig. int. Jerome, Isid., Hilary: *ἐλεημοσύνην*, EKLMSUVZA, 33, Curet., Philox., Copt., Goth., Arm., Æthiop., f^k, Chrysost. Three uncials are in favour

of the change, nine against it, three versions favourable, six adverse, three Fathers favourable, one adverse, the total nine authorities in favour, and sixteen adverse. The cursives seem to be all but unanimous for the text as it stands, and the total weight is nearly as 6 to 114, or as nineteen to one.

Mr Green says that this instance is most instructive, because it presents a scanty amount of testimony, but including ancient witnesses, combined with strong internal reasons, to ask the judgment of an unbiassed and unfettered criticism against the array of numbers. The only internal reason alleged is that if *δικαιοσύνην* were the original word it would be an Aramaism, and the other would readily be introduced as an explanatory comment, while there could be no such reason for introducing *δικαιοσύνην*, unless that were the original word. But Alford and Wordsworth, who adopt the change, do not accept the premise of this argument, that *δικ.* is a mere synonym for *ἐλεημοσύνην*, and suppose it to be generic, and to include alike alms, prayer, and fasting. On the other hand *δικαιοσύνη*, is so familiar in the Sept. as a synonym for almsgiving, that there can be nothing surprising if a few scribes, familiar with this Old Testament usage, substituted it in this place. There can be no such contrast in the likelihood of the two opposite changes as to outweigh the immense superiority of external evidence.

138. Matt. vi. 13. The Doxology is omitted in **NBDZ**, 1, Old Lat., Vulg., Copt., and Orig., Cyr.-Jer., Maximus, Tertull., Cyprian, Ambrose, Sedulius, Fulgentius, Jerome. And so the Complutⁿ, Erasmus, Grotius, Mill, Wetstein, Bengel, Griesbach, Scholz, and the later Editors, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alf., WH and Green, and even Words. and McCln.

Dr Scrivener says that "he no longer regards it as *certainly* an integral part of the Gospel, but is not adequately convinced of its spuriousness. It is wanting in the oldest uncials extant, **ⲚBDZ**, and since **ACP** are here deficient, the burden of its defence is thrown on the later ones, **EGKLM**SUVΔΠ, (*hiat* Γ), of which **L** is conspicuous for usually siding with **B**. Of the cursives *only five are known to omit the clause*, 1, 17, 18, 130, 209; even **33** contains it, 69 being defective, while 157, 225, 418 add τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος.

It is found in all the four Syriac versions, the Thebaic, the Æthiopic, the Armenian, Gothic, Slavonian, Georgian, and the Old Lat. MSS. kfg¹q. It is not found in most Memphitic and Arabic MSS., or the Old Lat. abcff¹hl, or in the Vulgate and its satellites; whence the Complutensian Editors passed it over, though present in their Greek copies. The earliest Latin Fathers did not cite what their Latin Codd. did not contain."

139. "Among the Greeks it is found in the Constt., probably of the fourth century, and Isidore, A.D. 412. Chrysostom comments on it without any hint that its authenticity was disputed. The silence of Origen and Cyril of Jerusalem, when expounding the Lord's Prayer, may partly be accounted for on the supposition that it was regarded not so much as part of the prayer as a hymn of praise attached. Yet the fact is so far unfavourable to its genuineness as to be fatal to it, unless we knew the precariousness of any argument derived from such silence. The Fathers are constantly found overlooking the most obvious citations from Scripture even where we should expect them most, although we learn from other passages that they were quite familiar with them. Internal evidence is not unevenly balanced. It is probable

that it was interpolated from the Liturgies, and the variations render this more likely. It is just as probable that it was left out of St Matthew's Gospel to bring it into harmony with St Luke." *Intro.* p. 496.

140. On the other hand Dean Alford observes confidently, "The Doxology must on every ground of sound criticism be omitted. Had it formed part of the original text, it is absolutely inconceivable that all the ancient authorities should with one consent have omitted it. They could have had no reason for doing so; whereas the habit of terminating liturgical prayers with ascriptions of praise would naturally suggest some such ending, and make its insertion almost certain in course of time. We find absolutely no trace of it in early times in any family of MSS., or any exposition. The Peschito has it, *but whether it always had it is another question!* Stier eloquently defends its insertion (retention?) but solely on subjective grounds, maintaining that the prayer is incomplete without it. In dealing with the sacred text we must not allow any *à priori* considerations, of which we are such poor judges, to outweigh the almost unanimous testimony of antiquity."

141. Here, then, let us first meet this challenge on the critic's own ground, of the ancient evidence alone. The adverse evidence, on the most usual and natural scale for degradation with time, modified by the most probable conditions, will be found to be: uncials 2·4, cursives 2·3, against; uncials 5·6, cursives 102, favourable. Thus the uncial evidence is five to two in its favour, and the total MS. evidence more than 22 to 1. By what critical process this can be transmuted into certain proof of spuriousness it is not easy for simple minds to understand.

But perhaps the indirect evidence of versions and Fathers will turn the scale. The versions which omit are the Old Latin, Vulgate, and Coptic; their joint weight about 2·4. Those which retain are all the Syriac, the Thebaic, Gothic, Armenian and Æthiopic, or eight to three; their joint weight 5·7, or more than two to one in its favour. The Fathers alleged against it are Tert., Origen, Cyprian, Cyril-Jer., Max., Ambrose, Jerome, Sedulius, Fulgentius, their weight about 6 or 7. And this is only negative or constructive evidence, from their silence. Those which recognize its presence are the Apost. Constt., Isidore, Chrysostom, and Gregory of Nyssa, their weight about 2·5. Thus the total of ancient evidence against it is about 12, and 13·8 in its favour. The entire amount, ancient and modern, 14·3 against and 115·8 in favour, or an excess in its favour of more than eight to one.

142. The rejection is thus in full opposition to the external evidence, and is not justified by the ancient witnesses alone, which are in its favour as seven to six in weight, and in number as 23 to 17. It can only be justified by assuming, in this place, an exceptional proneness to falsify and interpolate the sacred words of Christ, extending over all the Church, and through the whole course of a thousand years. And this must have been so extreme, as to make the purely negative presumption from the silence of each of six or seven Latin Fathers outweigh the consenting evidence of sixty or seventy Greek MSS. of the Gospel. A view so utterly opposed to every reasonable rule in the estimate of comparative weight of evidence must leave the sacred text at the mercy of the merest caprices of criticism.

143. The testimony of Chrysostom is very strong.

He reasons on the clause as an essential part of the prayer, and brings out a direct relation of contrast with the petition just before. Our Lord, he says, having prepared us for conflict by mention of the great enemy, raises our courage by reminding us of the greatness and power of the Eternal King.

Gregory of Nyssa, again, is cited by Dean Alford as an adverse witness, but really he is the reverse. His language, by its indirectness, doubles the force of the testimony that he regarded the Doxology as part of the sacred text, for he writes thus:—"And deliver us from the wicked one, who has acquired the power in this world, from whom may we be rescued by the grace of Christ, for of Him is the power and the glory, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, now and always, and for ever and ever. Amen." Thus Origen and Cyril of Jerusalem alone are left, of the Greek Fathers, whose silent pretermission of the clause is to be reckoned enough to outweigh its presence, with scarcely a variation, in more than four hundred MSS. of the Gospel.

144. The hypothesis which rejects the clause as spurious labours under two immense and insuperable difficulties. It cannot in the least explain why there should be no trace of the same or a like addition in St Luke. Clearly one passage is just as open to the risk of interpolation as the other. Yet the Doxology is found in all the MSS. of St Matthew, with only nine exceptions out of five hundred, and we do not find it, or anything of the kind, in a single MS. of St Luke's Gospel. How can this total contrast be reasonably explained, but by the same contrast in the original text?

Again, why should the addition take this one form, and no other? Mr Green, it is true, speaks of the "strange

variety of the readings" as a warrant for the omission. The only instances, however, to which he can refer, are the omission of "and the power" in the Curetonian Syriac, some difference in one copy k of the Old Latin, and slight differences, not specified, in patristic passages, or the loose quotations of the text by one or two Fathers. This is all the evidence to prove its fluctuation of form and shifting shape. We may safely reverse the statement, and say that this "strange variety" is strangely small for five hundred Greek MSS., and all the MSS. of eight different versions, and the quotations of a dozen Fathers.

A spurious Doxology might have taken, and probably would have taken, half a dozen or a dozen different forms. But supposing only three such alternatives possible, which is the smallest number conceivable, the chances against the adoption of the same spurious addition in five hundred documents are 3^{500} to one, that is, a million multiplied into itself thirty-nine times. It is the rejection of the Doxology in the face of this tremendous improbability, amounting in fact to an impossibility, which Dean Alford affirms to be required by every ground of sound criticism.

145. This form of prayer, given expressly by our Lord for the use of his disciples, is the passage, above every other, where interpolation would be most unlikely to be attempted, and where the attempt would be most presumptuous and unaccountable, if ever made. But that it should both be made, and succeed perfectly, so that a mere human addition should have found its way into five hundred copies of the Gospel, with hardly a variation, and thence have passed current in the whole Church for ages, as the authentic voice and command of Christ himself, and that this should be believed mainly on no better evidence

than its absence in four uncials out of twelve, and two and a half versions out of eleven, and six or seven cursives out of five hundred, seems to me a wonderful instance of the power of recondite and laborious scholarship to disguise a palpable inversion of all natural rules and laws for the reasonable estimate of historical evidence.

CHAPTER XI.

VARIOUS READINGS IN MATT. VIII—XXI.

IN the rest of the Gospel I shall select some of the most important passages, where a change of the received text is strongly maintained.

146. Matt. ix. 13, Mark ii. 17, Luke v. 32. Οὐ γὰρ ἦλθον, (L. ἐλήλυθα) καλέσαι δικαίους, ἀλλ' ἁμαρτωλοὺς εἰς μετάνοιαν. Most recent Editors, from Lachmann onward, expunge the two last words, not in St Luke, but from the two first Gospels only.

The maxims, expressed or implied, on which their decision rests, seem to be these: (1) The text in the three Gospels should be viewed as independent, and just as likely to have been quite different originally as to have agreed. (2) The five hundred cursive MSS. of each Gospel, from their later date, are insignificant and nearly worthless as evidence, and may be left out of sight altogether. (3) Of the twenty uncials the four earliest, being a little more ancient, have three or four times the weight of the others, and their consent should outweigh all the rest. (4) If by these assumptions, or the indirect evidence of Fathers and versions, the evidence in any one Gospel is brought to a near balance, there is then a strong presumption in favour of that reading which sets the three

Gospels widest apart, and makes them partially contradict each other.

In St Luke's Gospel there is an almost unanimous agreement. But in St Matthew and St Mark, setting the cursives wholly aside, and reckoning the early authorities by the above rule, there is nearly a balance of witnesses for the retention or omission of the words *εἰς μετάνοιαν*. And hence, acting on rule (4) we are told with authority that in "both these places they must be discarded." We are thus taught, as the ripest conclusion of modern criticism, to hold that either two evangelists have maimed the words of Christ by an omission which quite alters their sense, or that the third has corrupted them by a spurious addition.

147. All these maxims need to be reversed, before we can come to a just and sound decision as to the original text.

First, these three verses are simply three reports of one and the same saying of Christ, of a very brief and definite kind, consisting only of nine or seven words, and defining the main object of his earthly ministry. If the three are true witnesses, their record will agree. If the suggested criticism is valid, either the third is a false witness and has added to the words of Christ a supplement which limits and weakens them, or the first and second are defective witnesses, and have left out an essential part of the Divine message.

The first question is, What did our Lord really say? and for this we must use the evidence of all the copies of the three Gospels. The next is, Have we evidence enough to prove that St Matthew and St Mark have really given a wrong version of his words, and one which makes them directly contradict the facts of the Gospel history?

148. The witnesses that the words *εἰς μετάνοιαν* were

actually used by Christ, and form one part of the brief definition of his work, are more than a thousand in number. First all the cursives of St Luke, without exception, or nearly five hundred. Secondly, all the cursives of St Matthew and St Mark, with only three specified exceptions. Thirdly, all the uncials of St Luke, sixteen in number. Fourthly, ten uncials in St Matthew, and as many in St Mark. Fifthly, eleven versions in St Luke, three in St Matthew, and one in St Mark, a total of fifteen witnesses. There is thus a total of 1500 witnesses to the truth and accuracy of the record in St Luke and in the received text of the two other Gospels.

149. Next, is there evidence enough to prove that either St Matthew or St Mark really offered the words to the Church in a defective and altered form? Reserving the question whether insertion was more easy and natural than omission, what is the actual amount of evidence on each side?

Matthew. *Ins.* CEGKLSUV²Xcg₂, Coptt., Philox., and four patristic testimonies, Chrys., Cyril, Hilary, Victor-Tun. The conjoint weight, U. = 5·6, V. = 2·4, F. = 2·4, or a total of 10·4. *Om.* \aleph BDV¹ Δ , Vulg., Syr., Syr., Goth., \mathcal{A} eth., Arm.; Clem. Rom., Origen, Basil, Jerome, Augustine, Ambrose, or seventeen authorities as before, and a total of about 10·2, an almost exact balance.

Mark. *Ins.* CEFHGHSUV Γ acffg, or a total of about 7·3. *Om.* \aleph BDKL Δ , Vulg., Syr., Syr., Copt., Goth., \mathcal{A} eth., Arm.; and August., Euthym., or fifteen authorities, a total of about 10.

150. Thus the weight even of ancient evidence is almost exactly even in the case of St Matthew, and in St. Mark is as 4 to 3 for the change. But the cursive evidence, in each, weighs about 105 for the text as it stands.

So that the excess in its favour, in Matthew, is 115 to 10·2, or eleven and a half to one, and in Mark 112 to 10, or an excess of eleven to one

Thus in St Luke the whole evidence is unanimous for the presence of the words, and in St Matthew and St Mark the excess of weight in their favour answers to a hundred unit ratios, or million multiplied into itself sixteen times.

151. Let us now consider the assimilation hypothesis. First, we have to get over the improbability that two Gospels out of three would originally give a faulty and not a true account of a short and most weighty saying of Christ, consisting of nine words at most. But admitting this hypothesis as credible, why is it more reasonable to think that two Gospels should be enlarged to agree with a third, than that one might be shortened to agree with the others? Clearly the latter. If assimilation were the key, surely it was just twice as easy to secure it by altering St Luke alone. But of this, the easier change, we have no trace whatever.

152. But why should there here be a tendency to assimilate, when so many differences are still found in the common text of almost every page of the three Gospels? Surely on this ground, that they are three reports of the very same speech of Christ on the same day, and that He could not both have used the words, and also have omitted them. Our sense of unlikelihood, then, of an original difference will be in exact proportion to our sense of the preciousness of the sayings of our Lord, and of the fidelity and competence of the three evangelists to give an exact and faithful record.

153. But further, the presence or absence of the words is not a matter of indifference. They are essential

to make the saying in strict agreement with the facts of the history. The contrast of righteous and sinners is a real, not an ideal contrast. The first refers to those who, like Zacharias, or Joseph the husband of Mary, or Simeon or Anna, or Joseph of Arimathea, Matt. i. 19; Luke i. 6, ii. 25, 36, xxiii. 50, were already righteous, fearing God, when our Saviour's ministry began. The second refers to all who were then careless, unbelieving, or profane. In the case of the Apostles our Lord did call "righteous men," but it was a call to apostleship, not to repentance. The call of the Twelve and of the Seventy, and of Mary, John xi. 28, was of one kind; but the general call to sinners was distinct, and uttered in those words that begin his ministry, "Repent and believe the gospel." There was a call of our Lord to those who were already righteous. But his chief and wider message was the call to repentance, with which his preaching began. And this could only apply to those who were impenitent, and not to those who had repented before. Comp. Luke xv. 7. The omission, then, of the words in some early copies of Matthew and Mark can only have been a faulty simplification by some copyists who did not attend to, or did not perceive, the exact force and meaning of the whole message. The external and internal evidence agree, and are decisive in favour of the truth and correctness of the Received Text.

154. Matt. x. 8. *Om. νεκρὸς ἐγείρετε* EFGKLMsUVXf, Syr., Sahid., Æth. some MSS., Arm.; Euseb., Ath., Basil, Chrys., Euthym., Jer., Ambr., Juv. *Ret.* **▮**BCD, 1, 33, Latt., Copt., Æth., Cyr., Chrys., Hilary, and most of the cursives. Thus the external evidence on the whole, especially the modern and also the most ancient MSS., favour the Received Text. The peculiarity is that those uncials which usually range against the cursives, here

are allied with them, and their usual allies are on the other side. The different place of the words in those copies which exhibit them is the chief ground for some doubt whether they are not a later addition.

155. Matt. xi. 2. *Διά* for *δύο*, LTrAlfWH, Green, &c., with the authorities *NBCDPZΔ*, 33, Syr., Syr., Goth., Arm.

δύο, C⁹EFGKLSUVX, Vulg. MSS., Syr. marg., Copt., Æth.; Orig., Chrys., Cyril, and the main body of the cursives. *Discipulos* Latt., Cureton., Dialog. Cyprian, Juvenus.

The weight of the authorities for *διά*, apart from the cursives, is 8·6 and for *δύο* 10·7. But these later MSS. are almost wholly for the Received Text, or the collective weight in its favour is fourteen to one. And this is strongly confirmed by the internal evidence. The doctrine of assimilation has here been employed in a very strange way, to turn the real evidence upside down, and read it backward. For St Luke, whose reading is undisputed, shews that two disciples were actually the messengers. Now it is conceivable that St Matthew might record the message itself without specifying the number, and that this might afterwards have been added by assimilation. But in this case the natural phrase must have been, *μαθητὰς*, or *τοὺς μαθητὰς*, or possibly *διὰ μαθητῶν*. But the least likely or natural form is *διὰ τῶν μαθητῶν* with the article. On the other hand, the change of *δύο* to *διὰ* is the easiest possible, the latter word being five times as frequent in the New Testament and other writings. At the same time *δύο* occurs so often in St Matthew as to be almost a characteristic of this Gospel. The numbers are: Matt., 41; Mark, 16; Luke, 27; John, 16. There is thus more antecedent probability of his mentioning the number of the messengers than even St Luke.

156. Matt. xvi. 2, 3. *Om.* Tisch. 8th Ed., and WH double brackets as sign of spuriousness.

Om. NBVX¹Γ, 13, 34, 39, 84, 157, 180, 194, 258, 301, and 2¹, 44¹, 124¹, Syr.₂, Arm.-zoh., Origen. *Ret.* CDEFGH KLMMSUΔ, 1, 33, Old Lat., Vulg., Syr.₁, Syr.₃, Copt., Arm.-usc., Æth.; Eus., Chrys., Theophl., Hil., Euthym., Juvencus. Thus the ancient authorities for omission are eight; three, X, Arm., Orig., doubtful or divided. For the retention, twenty-seven, two divided or doubtful. Of the cursives they are known to be omitted in 13, and in three of these are supplied by a later hand. Thus the weight of the ancient witnesses for omission is about 5, and of the modern about the same; and for retention, the ancient 18, and the cursives about 100; or the preponderance of the ancient alone more than three to one, and of the whole nearly twelve to one. Dr Scrivener remarks that "the internal evidence in their favour being clear and irresistible, the witnesses against the passage are more likely to damage their own authority than to impair our confidence in its genuineness."

157. Matt. xviii. 11. *Om.* NBL¹, 1¹, 13, 33, Old Lat., eff, Copt., Sahid., Syr.₃, Æth. MSS. 3, Orig., Eus.-Can., Jerome, Juv., and so LTrWH, not Alf. *Ret.* DEFGHIKL²MSUVXΔ, 1², Old Lat., Vulg., Syr._{1,2,3,4}, Copt. MSS., Æth., Arm., and nearly all the cursives. The ancient evidence for omission is only the Vatican and Sinaitic MSS. and the Sahidic and Jer.-Syriac verss., and four Fathers, undivided; and L, 1, *pr. m.*, some MSS. of the Old Latin and the Coptic, and three of the Æthiopic, six MSS. or versions, and four Fathers, a total weight of 6 or 7. For the retention, 14 or 13 uncials and seven versions, a total weight of 12 to 14. Thus the ancient evidence alone is two to one for the genuineness, and the modern, or that of the cursives, probably not less than a hundred to one.

158. Matt. xvii. 21. *Om.* **8**B, 33, Syr., Theb., Memph.? Æth.; Eus.-Canon; and so Tisch., WH, Milligan. *Ret.* as A. V., **8**²CDEFGHKLMSUVXΔ, six verss., and Orig., Chrys., Theophl., Euth., Hil., Ambr., Aug., Juv., and so of Editors Griesb., Lachm., Lng., Str., Treg.? Alf., Wordsw., Am. V. Not only all the modern evidence with hardly an exception is favourable, but three-fourths at least of the ancient, fifteen uncials against two, six versions against five, and eight Fathers against one or two only. Or a weight of about 20 against three or four.

159. Matt. xix. 16, 17, Mark x. 17, 18, Luke xviii. 18, 19.

These three passages clearly record one and the same event, a question addressed to Christ by the young Ruler, and our Lord's reply. The report of the question and reply are exactly the same in all the copies of St Mark and St Luke, and far the greater part of those of St Matthew. But a minority of these last give the question without the word *ἀγαθέ*, on which our Lord's answer turns, and replace that answer by one wholly different. The passage there runs as follows: "Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may inherit eternal life?...Why dost thou question me about the good? One is the good."

This variety is adopted as the real text of St Matthew by a large consensus of modern editors, Bengel, Griesbach, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Lange, Alford, Wordsworth, Westcott and Hort, Green, Scrivener, the American Revisers, and Farrar. Mr Hammond calls it a test passage, to prove the high value of the two oldest MSS. It seems to me a test passage for exactly the opposite reason, to shew how completely modern critics have turned upside down the real laws of evidence by their excessive trust in the Vatican and Sinaitic MSS. Stier and MacClellan alone hold to the Received Text, and the latter in so

doing retracts his earlier judgment, so that the variation stands in his text of St Matthew, though rejected in his notes after a clear, full, and forcible discussion.

160. This general consent of Editors makes it necessary to examine the question with care. I believe it can be shewn that the evidence is millions of millions to one in favour of the Received Text, and absolutely excludes the gloss which has been accepted with such surprising facility. The first question is of the fact itself; the second of the three reports in the three Gospels, whether they were originally the same, and in perfect agreement, or whether St Matthew, in his genuine text, contradicted the two other Gospels, and gave an inconsistent and garbled account of the same occurrence.

161. First, the event recorded, beyond all question, is one and the same. If the Received Text is true, the three accounts perfectly agree, and confirm each other. The record is confirmed, in two of the three, by the unanimous consent of the MSS., and in the third it is equally confirmed, so far as known, by all the MSS., 474 in number, except six alone. One of the six adds the varied reading, and does not substitute it, like the other five.

Now if we hold that these five, and not the other five hundred, give the true original text of St Matthew, one of three alternatives must be chosen. First, that our Lord gave both answers, or replied by two distinct questions. In this case no one of the Evangelists has given a thoroughly correct account of the conversation. Two have omitted one half, and not the least important, and the other half has been omitted by the third. But for this view of the event we have only one witness out of fifteen hundred, namely 251 of St Matthew. The second question is there given after *ποίας*, and prefaced by the words, "And Jesus said

to him." The whole then reads thus: "Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which? And Jesus said unto him, Why dost thou question me about the good? One is the good, that is, God. And Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder &c. &c." Now surely it is self-evident that this is a false and incredible account of the dialogue, produced by an awkward attempt to combine into one two different and opposite versions. In whatever other way it may be striven to mix them into one, it is impossible to make them cohere.

162. The second alternative, then, is that the question of the Ruler was as we read in Mark and Luke, and also the answer of our Lord, and this the sole answer. We have then a further alternative. Either a false account somehow has replaced the true in five or six copies of St Matthew alone, or the Evangelist himself gave that false account, which has survived in a few copies, but has been renounced in all the rest, so that these now give the more correct account, as well as the two other Gospels.

163. A third alternative remains. St Matthew at first gave this different account, and the account so given is true. In this case two Gospels have given a wholly false account of the conversation, and the error has been faithfully retained in all their copies, and the same error has also replaced the true account in ninety-nine hundredths of the copies of St Matthew, while the true record survives in five or six copies alone.

It is hard to say which of these two last-named alternatives is the more incredible, that St Matthew gave a false account, which has since been replaced by the true in

all but a few copies, or that Mark and Luke gave a false account, which has spread from them into nearly all the copies of the only Gospel which had a true account at the first. Perhaps the second is one degree more monstrous than the other.

164. The MSS. which plunge the critics into these perplexities, involving inevitably a charge of false testimony against either the first Gospel alone, or the second and third together, are these five only, B⁸DL and 1. These are further reinforced by several versions, the Curetonian and Jerusalem Syriac, some MSS. of the Old Latin, the Vulgate, Memphitic, and Armenian. To these witnesses are added Origen, twice, and Jerome and Augustine, only for the first clause.

165. The authorities for the reading of the Received Text are the uncials CEF¹GHKMSUV^Δ, several MSS. of the Old Latin, the Peschito and Philoxenian Syriac, the Sahidic or Memphitic, and the Arabic. Of the Fathers Justin, Hilary, Optatus, Ambrose, Chrysostom; for the second clause, Eusebius and the main body of later Fathers.

Thus there are 11 uncials against 4, and $3\frac{1}{2}$ versions against $5\frac{1}{2}$, and five or six Fathers against three only. There is therefore a clear excess of ancient authorities for the Received Text, which makes St Matthew give a true report, in full agreement with the other Gospels, instead of a false one which directly contradicts them both. Even if we held the Vatican and Sinaitic to be each of double or triple the weight of one of the later uncials, there would remain a great excess of ancient MS. authority, even in St Matthew, for the reading which accords with the two other Gospels, in the ratio of 11 to seven. But such a relative weight is wholly inconsistent with any probable scale of deterioration.

166. The only pretext, then, for preferring a reading, with less external evidence than the other, must be what is strangely called the internal evidence, or the greater likelihood of those readings which make the Gospels contradict each other, which give a less natural sense, and of which the entrance into the text, if they were not there at first, is the most inconceivable. Accordingly it is on this inverted ground of preference that the decision is really based, even by so calm and careful a critic as Dr Scrivener, who is less submissive than most others in his deference to the two leading MSS. \aleph and B. He says that the selfsame words occurring in the parallel places with no variation worth speaking of, *certainly lends support to the supposition that St Matthew's autograph contained the other reading*, p. 48. In other words our certain assurance, on full and decisive evidence, that our Lord said one thing, is held a decided weight in the scale of the few witnesses which make St Matthew affirm him to have said something quite different and incompatible.

167. The internal evidence in favour of the Received Text is in reality overwhelmingly strong. First, it is far more likely that the Evangelist would give the true report of our Lord's discourse, as proved by the two other Gospels, than a false account, irreconcilable with the true. Next, it is certain that, if our Lord censured the Ruler in his reply, He would censure what was really faulty, and not blame him for an inquiry which was not only lawful but even praiseworthy. Thirdly, if He added any words to justify and explain his censure, they would certainly have been appropriate to their professed object. But, in this spurious answer, the truth added as if to account for the censure would rather be a full justification of the inquiry so condemned. For if One is the good, namely

God, then to inquire about the good would be to inquire about God himself, and this would clearly be a ground of approbation, and not of blame.

168. Here, as elsewhere, the improper internal evidence weighs in the opposite scale to that which alone is properly so named. The plainer the superiority of a reading, the harder it is to explain why, in any copies, a worse should be put in its place. And the worse the original text, the easier it is to conceive of its being altered, and a better put in its place. But this partial compensation can never balance the original unlikelihood of a false statement being found in the genuine text of the Gospels, or false reasoning, praise of what is wrong, or blame of what is right, in the words of Christ.

169. The true solution, however, in this place, offers itself at once, and satisfies punctually all the phenomena. The change, as Stier remarks, is plainly a gloss to get rid of what was mistaken for an implied denial, by our Lord himself, of His own Divine nature and dignity. To gain the end, three changes were essential, first, to omit the epithet 'good' in the original question of the Ruler; secondly, to alter the counter-question, and replace it by some other; and thirdly, to remove the negative and exclusive form of the final statement. And these three changes accordingly go together. *Ἀγαθὲ* is omitted in BD L1, al₁, aeff₁, Æth., Orig. and Hilary once. *Τί με ἐρωτᾷς περὶ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ* is read in **Σ**BDL1, al₂, Æth., Orig.₄, and besides these only in some Latin MSS., Curet. and Phil. Syriac, and Arm., Nov., Jer., Aug., Juv. *Εἰς ἐστὶν ὁ ἀγαθός* is read in **Σ**BDL1, Copt., Arm., Orig.₂. Thus the same authorities which make any one change make all the three required to fulfil the object which the falsifiers had in view.

170. Mr Green, indeed, says, that "with regard to the

second clause it is important to remark, that even if the various reading in the first can readily be imagined to be a wilful fabrication, no reason can be assigned for altering the second at the same time, especially into a form less explicit than the other. The less developed form εἰς ἐστὶν ὁ ἀγαθός, has thus an internal mark of genuineness, and in that a plea for the genuineness of the whole."

There is here a strange example of critical illusion. For the exact reverse is plainly true, and forms one of the most convincing proofs of the spuriousness of the whole alteration. The difficulty which it was sought to remove turned clearly on these two points, that our Lord made objection and demur to the epithet 'good' being applied to Him; and that the statement which followed justified his objection on this ground, that God alone was truly good, and no other. The stumbling-block was not simply that our Lord seemed to decline the epithet, but that He did so on this special ground, that it belonged to God alone. To remove the negative and exclusive form of the assertion was thus, of all three changes, the one most essential to secure their common object, and the opposite statement by Mr Green is a strange instance of the blinding effect of a foregone conclusion. The crowning proof of the *mala fides* in which the reading of **Σ** and **B** had its origin is actually mistaken for a sign and pledge of its genuine nature.

171. But the secondary variations, in the few witnesses which uphold the rival lection, are a further sign of its artificial origin. So Mr McClellan. **B** itself originally omitted εἰς, one. **D** omits both ὁ and τοῦ. Origen also omits τοῦ. Eusebius reads οὐδεὶς &c. as in the Received Text. The Italic^{bc}, Vulg., Syr.-Curet. and Memph., all,

like the Received Text, add ἀγαθέ after διδάσκαλε. The Curetonian and Memph. omit ἀγαθόν. The two last convict themselves of error, as their full reading "Good Teacher...Why askest thou me *concerning good?*" is a manifest incongruity. Thus "of all the authorities for the reading so unanimously accepted by modern critical editors, no two MSS. completely agree together; not one single ancient version exactly corresponds to any of them, while half of the versions are self-destructive."

172. The introduction of this lection of five MSS. only into the text of St Matthew, in opposition to the unanimous evidence of all the copies of St Mark and St Luke, and of nearly five hundred MSS. of the first Gospel itself, is not only an inversion of all the real laws of evidence, but involves a serious diminution of our faith in the veracity or the competence of the Evangelists, as witnesses of the words of Christ, and faithful transmitters of his Divine discourses, in their purity and integrity, to all later generations.

173. Matt. xxi. 28—31.

The variations in this passage, Mr Green observes, are too complicated to be expressed by marks. They consist mainly in the substitution for the word "first" in the reply, of terms of an opposite meaning, δεύτερος, ὕστερος, or ἔσχατος, accompanied in most cases by an inverted order of the answers of the sons. He then proceeds, "This passage, if the form here presented be supposed the original one, is just of a kind to escape the growth of various readings, except of the most trifling and accidental sort, because it is one of those where, in the clearness and simplicity of the whole and its several terms, there is nothing to provoke any gloss, emendation, or conjecture. If, on the contrary, it is found to be affected by remark-

able and perplexing variations, there might arise a presumption that this shape is not the original one. To entertain such a presumption, however, would be unfavourable to the free and full investigation of a question of some difficulty. It will be best to dismiss it, and to state at once the variations of the principal authorities."

"For *πρῶτος* B has *ὑστερος* with an inverted order of the answers of the two sons. In the same place 4 has *δευτερος*, and 13, 69 *ἔσχατος*, all with the inverted order, and D has *ἔσχατος* with the common order. This word has also some patristic support, besides that of ancient Latin copies, some still existing, some before the time of Jerome."

"Though mere numbers of authorities are overwhelmingly in favour of the common form of the passage, variations so peculiar and thus supported fairly challenge careful consideration."

174. The internal evidence, it is thus owned by an able opponent, is strongly in favour of the text as it stands. Its perfect consistency, clearness, and simplicity, both as a whole, and in its parts, make it only difficult to explain, if the text were such at first, how any serious variation should arise. The external evidence, it is further owned, is overwhelmingly in its favour in the number of its witnesses. Yet strange to say, that inverse internal evidence, which consists in the difficulty of explaining how a text originally clear, simple, and consistent, should ever have been changed in any copies, is made, by Mr Green and others, an adequate reason for forsaking a text thus sustained by perfect internal, and overwhelming external evidence, and adopting the reading of two or three MSS. apparently on the very ground that it is either unintelligible, harsh, or obscure. The maxim *proclivi lectioni*

praestat ardua is here carried by Lachmann, as Dr Scrivener has observed, to an extreme of even brilliant absurdity.

The critics who renounce the common text are Lachmann and Tregelles, who have one variety, Mr McClellan, who has a second, Mr Green, who has a third, and Drs Westcott and Hort, who have a fourth. Not only Stier, Wordsworth, and Scrivener, but Griesbach, Tischendorf, and Alford, with whom this is more rare, here abide by the usual text.

175. Let us first compare the direct evidence, ancient and modern, for the Received Text, or some change.

The uncials that contain the passage are **ABCDEFGHIJKLMSUVXZΔ**, or 17, but **Z** only for the second part from *ἐγὼ* v. 30.

All of these agree in the Received Text but **B** and **D**, and these two have two different varieties.

176. The versions alleged are the four Syriac, the Peschito, Curetonian, Jerusalem and Philoxⁿ, the Coptic and the Armenian. Three others are divided, some MSS. agreeing with the Received Text, and others differing. But by a preponderance the Æthiopic is for, and the Old Latin and Vulgate against, the usual text. Of the first named the three first, which have the greatest weight, are in favour of the same text.

Of the Fathers, Origen, Chrysostom, Eusebius are distinctly for the text as it stands, and perhaps Irenæus; but Hippolytus, Pseud.-Athanasius and in part Hilary and Jerome, for some change.

Thus, on the whole, there may be reckoned 2 **U.**, 3 **V.**, and 3 **F.** dissentient, or eight authorities out of thirty-two, one in four. This would answer to a 4 per cent. rate. The weight, in that scale, of 15 **U.**, 4 **V.**, 3 **F.**, is, roughly reckoned,

8·8, and of the dissentients 3·2, or an excess of not quite three to one for the Received Text.

177. The modern evidence is all the MSS. from the tenth century onward, or the 454 cursives. A deviation of 62 would answer to a rate of error for a single century of one per cent., and 155 to the mean rate $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. But the deviation, in this case, is plainly less than even the first. For the critics who displace the Received Text allege only 4, 33, 69 by name, and perhaps six others as on their side. Hence the weight for the Received Text is ninety-nine per cent. of the whole, in a lower scale of error than 2 per cent., or more than 127·2. Thus the weight of the cursives is really more than ten times the whole weight of the ancient evidence, and is nearly all in favour of the Received Text, while of that ancient evidence just three-fourths are added to the same scale. The comparison is 3·2 against, and 136 for the common text, a proportion of more than forty to one.

178. But it remains to account for the few variations which actually exist in six or seven MSS. out of five hundred, in three versions, and as many Fathers. Bp. Wordsworth gives the probable key in a few words. "It probably arose from a transposition of the paragraphs vv. 29, 30 \acute{o} $\delta\acute{\epsilon}$ $\acute{\alpha}$ *ποκριθεῖς*...*ἀπῆλθεν*, and \acute{o} $\delta\acute{\epsilon}$ $\acute{\alpha}$ *ποκριθεῖς*...*οὐκ ἀπῆλθεν*, which was very likely to occur, because both clauses begin and end with the same words. Besides, it might be thought reasonable by some that the invitation should be *first* made to those who represented the *Pharisees*. Hence another occasion for transposition." And the more closely we examine, the more complete this explication is found to be. The deviations are few in total amount, but diverse, and all are just such as would result from an accidental exchange of the order of the two answers,

ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπε, Οὐ θέλω, ὕστερον δὲ μεταμεληθεὶς ἀπήλθε.

ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν, Ἐγὼ, κύριε, καὶ οὐκ ἀπήλθε.

In this case the scribe would go on easily, till he came to the word in the answer of the Jews, ὁ πρῶτος, and, not to cancel three or four lines of MS., would need only to change the word for some one of opposite meaning, δεύτερος, ὕστερος, or ἔσχατος. All would then seem to fit without further trouble, or the need of an extensive erasure.

179. The actual diversities are these :

1. δεύτερος with inverse order of the clauses, MS. 4.
2. ὕστερος with reverse order, B. So WH.
3. ἔσχατος with inverse order, 13, 69. So Mr McClellan.
4. ἔσχατος with common order, D. So Mr Green in *Dev. Crit.*

To these may be added a fifth, an invention of modern critics, with no single authority.

5. ὕστερος with the common order, Lachmann and Tregelles!

Now if the transposition were accidentally made, which would not be unlikely once in twenty times, and then were remedied, not in the best, but the shortest and easiest way, the three alternatives would naturally appear.

Δεύτερος would be substituted, from *v.* 30, when the reading there was δεύτερος and not ἕτερος. But when it was ἕτερος, the term might be borrowed from the clause itself, to which it would then belong, ὕστερον δὲ μεταμεληθεὶς ἀπήλθεν. This would at once suggest ὕστερος, whether as meaning the *last-mentioned*, or the one who went *afterward*. But again ἔσχατος as the natural contrast to πρῶτος, when such a word was needed, would suggest

itself at once from the repeated statements in the Gospel just before, xix. 30, xx. 16. In setting right the first mistake by a second, each word would have nearly an equal chance of adoption, which is exactly what has occurred. But in D, the third, *ἄσχατος*, being borrowed from such an altered MS., the changed order has been reversed, and the original order restored, leaving a helpless contradiction of the true meaning of the whole parable.

180. The reading of Lachmann and Tregelles, *ὑστερος* with the common order of the clauses, has no single MS., version, or Father in its favour, besides turning the parable into a palpable inversion of truth, or else an incredible solecism, *ὑστερος* being put for *ὑστερον* or *τὸ ὑστερον*. The reading in WH. *ὑστερος* with the clauses reversed, escapes this worst fault, and follows B and three versions. But besides being opposed to the consent of all MSS. but four or five, and sustained by one only, it is the worst of the other three alternatives, nos. 1, 2, 3. For the two versions, "the second mentioned," and "he who went afterwards," are both intolerable, and the one correct meaning, "he who was the more backward or behind-hand," would be exactly the reverse of the truth. For this son would answer to the *πρόαγοντες* of the later verse.

181. The reverse order, with *ἔσχατος*, which Mr McClellan adopts, escapes this defect, but has little more direct authority, indeed less in the reckoning of most modern critics, the two cursives 13 and 69, while B is commonly rated equal to fifty at least. Also the evidence of Origen against a reversal of the usual order is very clear and full, and that of Z, which breaks off between the two halves of the parable.

The last variety is that of Mr Green, *ἔσχατος* with the usual order, following D alone, and leaving the meaning

of the word doubtful and obscure. He applies it to the son first mentioned, because he was so much behind his brother in point of mere profession. I can only say that the preference of a reading which rests only on one inferior MS., plainly guilty of two other serious interpolations in this very parable, and which turns the clear, pellucid beauty of the parable as it stands into an enigma which its own advocate cannot himself explain, is a development of criticism much to be deprecated and deplored, since it reverses the simplest laws of evidence, and tends to confuse and resolve into mist and confusion one of the most sacred and solemn messages of the Son of God.

It would be easy to continue the inquiry, and extend it to the rest of the Gospels. If the principles I have laid down are true, and the reasonings based on them are correct—and I see no way by which their truth can be disproved—they confirm the judgment of Dean Burgon in his masterly discussion on the last verses of St Mark, that all recent decisions will have to be reviewed, and many of them reversed, when the Textual Criticism of the New Testament once comes to be based on an impartial and inductive review of the whole evidence.

TABLE A.

DATED MANUSCRIPTS

FROM DR SCRIVENER'S INTRODUCTION, &c. 1874.

- CENT. IV. B, Vatican, A.D. 330? \aleph , Sinaitic, A.D. 370?
- CENT. V. A, Alex^a -₁₀₀₆, A.D. 430? C, Ephrem -₁₅₂₃, A.D. 430? D, Bezae -₁₅₈₁,
A.D. 480? Frag. I₃₅N₁₆₀Q₂₃₅T₁₇₇.
- CENT. VI. Frag. I₁₅₅N₉₀P₄₈₆R₅₁₆T₂₁Z₂₉₀Θ.
- CENT. VII. Frag. TΘ.
- CENT. VIII. E, Basil -₁₉. L, Cod. Reg. -₆₉. V, Mosq. def. Frag. GWY.
- CENT. IX. F -₆₂₅, H -₆₇₉, KMGΔA (Lu & Jn), II -₇₇, X part. 256, 461.
- CENT. X. G -₃₇₂, SU. 1, 15, 21, 25, 63, 91; 100, 4, 6, 25, 61; 200, 37,
62, 65, 66, 67, 74, 371. =22.
- CENT. XI. 6, 7, 8, 12, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28? 33, 34, 35, 36, 39, 40, 41, 43,
44, 46, 49, 50, 67, 72, 73, 75—7, 80, 83, 89; 103, 8, 12, 13, 23, 26, 27,
28, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 42—44, 47, 50, 51, 58, 59, 60, 64, 69, 74, 77,
80, 81, 86, 88, 93—95, 97; 213, 15, 21, 26, 30, 38, 39, 41, 49, 51—54,
59, 69, 70, 72, 75—7, 92, 99; 300, 1, 3, 7, 10, 20, 29, 30, 32, 40, 45,
48, 50, 51, 54, 55, 57, 60, 76, 89, 91; 401, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 22, 30, 37,
38, 50, 64, 67. =123.
- CENT. XII. 3, 4, 5, 9, 11, 13, 19, 20, 29, 32, 37, 48, 57, 59, 66, 68, 71, 78,
84, 86, 87, 95, 98; 105, 11, 15, 16, 19, 22, 29, 31, 40, 42, 44, 45, 47,
60, 68, 71, 73, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 91, 97, 98; 202, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12,
25, 29, 31, 40, 42, 44, 45, 47, 60, 68, 71, 73, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 91, 97,
98; 306, 8, 9, 11, 14, 16, 17, 19, 31, 37, 38, 43, 44, 46, 47, 52, 66, 69,
74, 75, 87, 88, 92, 95, 96; 403, 9, 17, 21, 27, 31, 33, 39, 43, 51, 59,
60, 68. =116.
- CENT. XIII. 10, 14, 31, 38, 45, 51, 52, 55, 60, 65, 74, 85; 114, 18, 20, 30,
36, 41, 45, 48, 52, 53, 66, 68, 70, 73, 76, 84, 90, 91, 92, 98; 204, 17,
18, 19, 27, 32, 33, 34, 48, 50, 55, 56, 58, 63, 64, 84, 90, 94, 95; 304,
5, 15, 21, 24, 25, 33, 39, 41, 42, 49, 53, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 82, 90;
428, 29, 49, 56, 57, 58, 65, 66. =78.
- CENT. XIV. 16, 18, 53, 54, 69, 92; 107, 9, 49, 55, 67, 71, 83; 201, 14, 20,
22, 23, 24, 28, 35, 43, 46, 61, 83, 85, 93; 312, 13, 18, 26, 34, 58, 59,
67, 70, 78, 81, 94; 408, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 20, 34, 36, 52, 53, 54,
55, 62, 63, 69. =57.
- CENT. XV. 2, 47, 56, 58, 61, 62, 70, 96; 117, 54; 203, 5, 6, 86, 87; 327, 63,
72, 73, 77, 79, 80, 86, 97; 400, 2, 18, 44, 46, 47, 48. =32.
- CENT. XVI. 17, 30, 90, 94, 97, 99; 101, 10; 288, 89, 96; 302, 23, 28, 35,
36, 56, 83—5, 93, 98, 99; 423—25, 32, 45. =28.

TABLE B.

VERSIONS AND FATHERS.

Versions.

A.D.

- 150. Peschito, Old Latin. (4.)
- 200. Coptic, Sahidic or Thebaic, Curet. Syriac. (6.)
- 350. Gothic. ($9\frac{1}{2}$.)
- 400. Vulgate. (9.)
- 450. Armenian, Jerus. Syriac. ($8\frac{1}{2}$.)
- 500. Philoxenian. (8.)
- 550. Æthiopic. (8.)

Fathers.

A.D.

- 100. Clemens Romanus, Ignatius. (2.)
- 150. Justin, Hegesippus. (4.)
- 175. Athenagoras, Theophilus, Irenæus. (5.)
- 200. Clemens Alex., Tertullian. (6.)
- 225. Africanus, Hippolytus, Origen. (7.)
- 250. Cyprian, Dionysius. (8.)
- 300. Lactantius, Arnobius. (10.)
- 325. Eusebius, Juvencus. (10.)
- 350. Athanasius, Ephrem, Hilary; 375, Basil, Cyril Jer., Gregory Naz., Greg. Nyss., Caesarius, Optatus. ($9\frac{1}{2}$.)
- 400. Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome, Chrysostom, Gaudentius, Epiphanius, Vict.-Ant., Isidore, Prudentius. (9.)
- 425. Theodoret, Cyril Alex. ($8\frac{3}{4}$.)
- 450. Leo, Salvian, Prosper. ($8\frac{1}{2}$.)
- 500. Fulgentius, Gelasius, Caesarius. (8.)

The number in the parenthesis is the index of decline, inferred from the date alone, in the corrected scale.

TABLE C.

TOTAL PROPORTIONS OF ERROR
FOR n CENTURIES, OR STEPS OF DECLINE.

Values of $(1+r)^n - 1$.

n	Rate.							
	1	2	$2\frac{1}{2}$	3	$3\frac{1}{2}$	4	$4\frac{1}{2}$	5
2	020100	040400	050625	060900	071225	081600	092025	010250
3	030301	061208	076891	092727	108718	124864	141166	157625
4	040604	082432	103813	125509	147523	169859	192519	215506
5	051010	104081	131408	159274	187686	216653	246182	276282
6	061520	126162	159693	194052	229255	265319	302260	340096
7	072135	148686	188686	229874	272279	315932	360862	407100
8	082857	171659	218403	266770	316809	368569	422101	477455
$8\frac{1}{2}$	088258	183317	233538	285729	339665	395667	453746	513930
9	093685	195093	248863	304773	362897	423312	486095	551328
$9\frac{1}{2}$	099140	206984	264376	324198	386543	448932	519164	589626
10	104622	218994	280085	343916	410599	480244	552969	628895
11	115668	243374	312087	384234	459970	539454	622853	710339
12	126825	268242	344889	425761	511069	601032	695881	795856
13	138093	293607	378511	468534	563956	665074	772196	885649
14	149474	319479	412974	512590	618695	731676	851945	<u>979932</u>
15	160969	345868	448298	557967	675349	800944	<u>935282</u>	539464
16	172579	372786	484506	604706	733986	872981	511185	591437
17	184304	400241	521618	652848	794676	<u>947900</u>	556688	646009
18	196147	428246	559659	702433	857489	<u>512908</u>	604240	703309
19	208109	456841	598650	753506	922501	553424	653930	763475
20	220190	485947	638616	806111	989789	595561	705857	826649

N.B. The numbers below the black lines are the total error halved, when it exceeds the pure or unaltered part.

TABLE D.

LOGARITHMS OF RECIPROCAL, OR EVIDENTIAL VALUES.

$\log 1 \div (1+r)^n - 1$, rates 1 to 5 per cent.

n	Rate.							
	1	2	2½	3	3½	4	4½	5
2	696804	393619	295635	215383	<u>147368</u>	088310	<u>036094</u>	989276
3	518543	213192	<u>114125</u>	<u>032794</u>	<u>963699</u>	903563	850424	802375
4	391431	<u>083904</u>	983748	901325	831140	770911	715526	666541
5	292345	982628	881378	798855	726568	664235	608744	558647
6	210984	899071	796714	712082	639681	576232	519619	468398
7	141854	827730	724260	638510	564986	500406	442659	390299
8	081671	765333	660741	573863	499202	433481	374584	321068
8½	054246	736798	631641	544045	468962	402670	343187	289096
9	028330	709758	604040	516023	440217	373339	313279	258590
9½	<u>003751</u>	683749	577778	489190	412802	347820	284695	229403
10	980377	659568	552710	463548	386582	318538	257299	201422
11	936862	613726	505724	415404	337270	268046	205614	148504
12	896795	571473	462321	370834	291520	221102	157465	099166
13	860828	532234	421921	329259	248755	177130	112272	052738
14	825434	495558	384077	290230	208523	135681	069588	<u>008804</u>
15	793258	461090	348433	253391	170472	096398	<u>029058</u>	291422
16	763012	428540	314701	218456	134312	059995	291422	268038
17	734465	397678	282647	185198	099810	<u>023238</u>	254388	228089
18	707418	368307	252077	153395	066771	289961	218791	189761
19	681709	340235	222827	122913	035033	256942	184469	152854
20	657202	313411	194760	093605	004457	225073	151283	082679

N.B. $\log 10=1$ must be added to the decimals above the upper black lines. Those at the right corner below are \log^2 of $2 \div (1+r)^n - 1$.



