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On the Comparative Antiquity  
of the  
Sinaitic and Vatican Manuscripts  
of the Greek Bible

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ARTICLE VIII.

ON THE COMPARATIVE ANTIQUITY  
OF THE SINAITIC AND VATICAN MANUSCRIPTS  
OF THE GREEK BIBLE.

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THE present essay was suggested by a recent work of the Rev. J. W. Burgon, Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford, entitled "The Last Twelve Verses of the Gospel according to S. Mark Vindicated against recent Critical Objectors and Established" (London, 1871). In one of the Appendixes to this volume (pp. 291-294) Mr. Burgon has a dissertation "On the Relative Antiquity of the Codex Vaticanus (B) and the Codex Sinaiticus (s)," in which he maintains that certain "notes of superior antiquity," which he specifies, "infallibly set Cod. B before Cod. s, though it may be impossible to determine whether by 50, by 75, or by 100 years" (p. 293). He does not doubt that they are "the two oldest copies of the Gospels in existence;" but "if the first belongs to the beginning, the second may be referred to the middle or latter part of the IVth century" (p. 70). Tischendorf, on the other hand, now assigns both manuscripts to the middle of the fourth century; and even maintains that one of the scribes of the Sinaitic manuscript, whom he designates by the letter D, wrote the New Testament part of the Codex Vaticanus. Mr. Burgon's arguments are for the most part new, and have not, so far as I am aware, been subjected to any critical examination. Few scholars, in this country at least, have the means of testing the correctness of his statements. His book in general, and his discussion of the present subject in particular, have been highly praised; and he writes throughout in the tone of one who teaches with authority. It has seemed to me, therefore, that a review of the arguments put forth with such confidence might be of interest.

In the present investigation, I have relied chiefly on the original edition of the Sinaitic MS. published by Tischendorf

in 1862 in four volumes folio, printed in facsimile type, with 19 plates of actual facsimiles of different parts of the manuscript, and on the similar edition of the Codex Vaticanus now publishing at Rome, of which three volumes have thus far appeared, two of them containing the Old Testament as far as the end of Nehemiah, and the other the New Testament part of the manuscript. I have also used Tischendorf's facsimile edition of the Codex Friderico-Augustanus (another name for 43 leaves of the Sinaitic MS.), published in 1846; his "Novum Testamentum Vaticanum" (1867), with the "Appendix" (1869); and his "Appendix Codicum celeberrimorum Sinaitici Vaticani Alexandrini," with facsimiles (1867).

Mr. Burgon's arguments are as follows:—(1.) "The (all but unique) sectional division of Codex B, confessedly the oldest scheme of chapters extant, is in itself a striking note of primitiveness. The author of the Codex knew nothing, apparently, of the Eusebian method."

The Vatican MS. has in the Gospels a division of the text into chapters, which differs from that found in most MSS. from the fifth century onward, and appears, so far as is known, in only one other manuscript, the Codex Zacynthius ( $\Xi$ ), of the *eighth* century. It has also a peculiar division into chapters in the Acts and Epistles. Mr. Burgon finds in its scheme of chapters "a striking note of primitiveness." But the Sinaitic has *no* division into chapters at all, *à prima manu*. Is not that quite as primitive? Further, Mr. Burgon's argument appears to be of a circular character. The only proof of the high antiquity of the "scheme of chapters" referred to is its existence in the Vatican manuscript.

It may be worth while, perhaps, to remark that the Roman edition of the Vatican MS. seems to afford evidence (p. 1272, col. 1, and 1299, col. 3) that the division into chapters, noted by numbers in red in the margin, was not made by the original scribe, but by one who preferred in some places a different division into paragraphs. It may have been made, however, by a contemporary hand.

Mr. Scrivener thinks it "very credible that Codex Sinaiticus was one of the fifty volumes of Holy Scripture, written 'on skins in ternions and quaternions,' which Eusebius prepared A. D. 331 by Constantine's direction for the use of the new capital" (Collation of the Cod. Sinaiticus, p. xxxvii. f.; comp. Euseb. Vita Const. iv.36,37). This is possible, though there is no proof of it. Mr. Burgon's argument, that, because the Eusebian sections do not correspond with the paragraphs in the Codex Sinaiticus, Eusebius could have known nothing of the MS. (p. 294), is utterly futile. The object of those sections is

totally different from that of a division into paragraphs. The Eusebian sections are not chapters or paragraphs, but merely serve for a comparison of parallel or similar passages in the Gospels. In not less than 25 instances, there are two of them (in one case *three*) in a single verse; see, e. g., Matt. xi.27; Mark xiii.14; Luke vi.21; John xix.6,15,16.

The Eusebian sections are not in the Sinaitic MS. *à prima manu*, though they may, as Tischendorf supposes, have been added by a contemporary scribe. In that case, the MS. may still be older than the middle of the fourth century; for Eusebius died about A. D. 340. It is curious to see how Scrivener contradicts himself on this matter in a single page (Collation, etc. p. xxxvii.).

(2.) "Cod.  $\kappa$  (like C, and other later MSS.)," says Mr. Burgon, "is broken up into short paragraphs throughout. The Vatican Codex, on the contrary, has very few breaks indeed: e. g. it is without break of any sort from S. Matth. xvii.24 to xx.17: whereas, within the same limits, there are in Cod.  $\kappa$  as many as *thirty* interruptions of the context. From S. Mark xiii.1 to the end of the Gospel the text is absolutely continuous in Cod. B, except in *one* place: but in Cod.  $\kappa$  it is interrupted upwards of *fifty* times. Again: from S. Luke xvii.11, to the end of the Gospel, there is but *one* break in Cod. B. But it is broken into well nigh *an hundred and fifty* short paragraphs in Cod.  $\kappa$ ."

"There can be no doubt that the unbroken text of Codex B (resembling the style of the papyrus of *Hyperides* published by Mr. Babington) is the more ancient. The only places where it approximates to the method of Cod.  $\kappa$ , are where the Commandments are briefly recited (S. Matth. xix.18, &c.), and where our Lord proclaims the eight Beatitudes (S. Matth. v.)."

Here, apparently, the stress of Mr. Burgon's argument rests on the rarity of paragraphs, indicated by "breaks," in the Vatican MS. as compared with the Sinaitic. If this is so, he has strangely misrepresented the facts in the case. In the first passage referred to, Matt. xvii.24–xx.17, there are certainly no less than 32 "breaks" in the Vatican MS., designed to mark a division into paragraphs. In 2 instances (Matt. xvii.24, xix.1) the division is made by the projection of the initial letter into the left-hand margin, in the manner usual in the Sinaitic MS.; in 30, by a space between the words, and a dash (—) below the line where the break occurs, projecting into the left-hand margin, after the fashion common in the Herculanean and early Egyptian papyri, and also found, though more rarely, in the Sinaitic MS. Besides these 32 cases, there are 7 in which a paragraph is indicated by a dash simply, the preceding sentence happening to fill the whole line above it. There are also in the passage referred to about 10 places in which the end of a sentence or a

paragraph is indicated by a space simply. (In respect to the representation of these spaces there is a little difference, in two or three places, between the Roman edition and that of Tischendorf.) But dismissing the simple spaces from the account altogether (though they are certainly *breaks*), we have in the first passage selected by Mr. Burgon a division into paragraphs in the Vatican MS. even more minute than in the Sinaitic. In Mark xiii.1-xvi.8, there are 39 paragraphs in the Vatican MS. marked by the dash and space—or by the dash alone, when the preceding line is full; and in Luke xvii.11-xxiv.53, 129 paragraphs are thus marked, besides 2 in which the initial letter projects into the margin. There are also places in which divisions are marked by spaces alone.

Such being the state of the case, it may perhaps be thought that Mr. Burgon does not mean to argue the superior date of the Vatican MS. from the comparative rarity of its divisions into paragraphs, but merely from the *manner* in which they are made; and that he intends by “break,” the projection of the initial letter of a paragraph into the left-hand margin, which we find in the Vatican MS. in the Beatitudes (Matt. v.), though not in Matt. xix.18, the only other place, according to Mr. Burgon, in which B “approximates to the method of Cod. s.” This, however, can hardly be his meaning, for he makes a separate point of that feature of the Sinaitic MS. in his *fourth* argument, which will be considered in its proper place.

As to the frequency of the division into paragraphs, we find a great difference in different parts of both the Sinaitic and the Vatican manuscripts. For example, in the Sinaitic MS. (vol. ii.) from 1 Macc. v.55 to x.18, 249 verses, there is but *one* indication of a paragraph besides that with which the passage begins. For 21 entire columns of 48 lines each, viz. from fol. 21\*, col. 4, to fol. 26, col. 4, inclusive, there is no break and no sign of a paragraph whatever. In the First Book of Maccabees, which contains 36 pages in the Codex Sinaiticus, there are 16 pages in which there is no indication of a paragraph, and 10 more in each of which but one paragraph is marked. In the Fourth Book of Maccabees the paragraphs are still rarer in proportion to its length. In the Vatican MS., on the other hand, to anticipate a little the answer to Mr. Burgon's fourth argument, there are many pages in each of which from 10 to 20 paragraphs are marked by the projection of the first letter of a word into the left-hand margin; see, e. g., pp. 41, 44, 48, 53, 71, 73-75, 123, 186, 187, 226, 291-294 (vol. i. of the Roman ed.); and a page of the Vatican MS. contains considerably less than a page of the Sinaitic. In respect both to the frequency of the paragraphs, and to the manner of indicating them, much



appears to have depended upon the fancy of the copyist. The books most read would naturally be divided the most.

(3.) "Again," says Mr. Burgon, "Cod.  $\kappa$  is prone to exhibit, on extraordinary occasions, a *single word* in a line, as at—

S. MATTH. xv.30.

χωλουσ  
τυφλουσ  
κυλλουσ  
κωφουσ

S. MARK x.29.

η αδελφασ  
η πατερα  
η μητερα  
η τεκνα  
η αγρουσ

S. LUKE xiv.13.

πτωχουσ  
αναπηρουσ  
χωλουσ  
τυφλουσ

"This became a prevailing fashion in the VIth century; e. g. when the Codex Laudianus of the Acts (E) was written. The only trace of anything of the kind in Cod. B is at the Genealogy of our Lord."

Here, again, Mr. Burgon mistakes the facts in the case. We find this stichometric mode of giving greater distinctness to particulars exemplified in repeated instances in the Vatican MS., besides the striking one of the genealogy in Luke. For example, in p. 211, col. 3 of the MS., the names of the 22 unclean birds in Deut. xiv.12-18 appear each in a separate line. On p. 247, col. 3, there is a similar stichometry of 6 lines; on p. 254, col. 1, one of at least 25 lines (Josh. xii.10-22, the list of kings), with another example in the same column, and still another in the next; and in p. 485, col. 2, there is one of 11 lines (the "dukes" in 1 Chron. i.51-54). For other instances see p. 71, col. 3; 76, col. 1; 274, col. 2; and 316, col. 3.

We find, moreover, in the Vatican MS., the different branches of the genealogy in Matthew presented in 38 distinct paragraphs; and the beatitudes in Matt. v. and the salutations in Rom. xvi. are similarly treated. This may be regarded as a kind of stichometry, of which we have also examples in the Old Testament: e. g. p. 138, col. 1, 2: 264, col. 1; 272, col. 1; 309, col. 1. All that can be said in respect to the first form of *stichi* is, that it is much more common in the Sinaitic MS. than in the Vatican, especially in the New Testament. Both MSS. have also another mode of making distinct the items of an enumeration: namely, by spaces between the words, with or without dots (the Roman edition of B does not agree with Tischendorf's about the dots); e. g. Rom. i.29-31, both MSS.; and in the Vatican, 1 Cor. vi.9,10; xiii.13; xiv.26; Gal. v.19-23; Phil. iv.8; Col. iii.8. The choice between the modes seems to have been determined by the taste of the scribe; compare, for example, in the Vatican MS., Lev. xi.13-19 with Deut. xiv.12-18 (pp. 111 and 211). It cannot be made a criterion of date.

(4.) Mr. Burgon's fourth argument is this:—"At the commencement of every fresh paragraph, the initial letter in Cod.  $\kappa$

*slightly projects into the margin*, beyond the left-hand edge of the column; as usual in all later MSS. This characteristic is only not undiscoverable in Cod. B. Instances of it there *are* in the earlier Codex; but they are of exceedingly rare occurrence."

The expression "as usual in all later MSS." is likely to mislead. There is a great difference between the style of the Sinaitic MS. and that of the Alexandrine, the Ephrem, and later MSS. generally, in respect to the mode of indicating the beginning of paragraphs. In the Sinaitic, the initial letter, which slightly projects, and often does not project at all, is no larger than the rest, a peculiarity found in but a very few existing MSS., and those the oldest known to us. In the other MSS. referred to, the initial letter, or, when the new paragraph begins in the middle of a line, the first letter of the line following, is very much larger than the others, and stands out wholly in the margin, giving these MSS. a strikingly different appearance from that of the Sinaitic and the Vatican. But the characteristic which Mr. Burgon says is "exceedingly rare," "only not undiscoverable," in the Vatican MS., occurs 10 times on the very first page of that MS.; and in the first 294 pages, viz. from Gen. xlvi.28 (*πολιτι*) to 1 Sam. xix.11 (*αγγελουσ*), there are 1441 examples of it. Though less common in the New Testament part of the MS., in the first 8 pages it occurs 31 times. When Codex B was written, the choice between this mode of indicating the beginning of a paragraph and the other, described under Mr. Burgon's second argument, was evidently a matter depending on the taste of the copyist. In the 290 pages *following* the word *αγγελουσ* in 1 Sam. xix.11, extending to the end of Nehemiah, there are but *two* clear examples of it, viz. on pp. 343, 484. (The projecting letter, pp. 578 and 606, is not the first letter of a paragraph or even of a word.) In the two Books of Chronicles, the First Book of Esdras, and the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah together, there is *no* example of that mode of indicating paragraphs which is usual in the Sinaitic, and so common in the first 294 pages of the Vatican (pp. 41-334). The natural inference is, that we have in the part of the MS. beginning with page 335 the hand of a different scribe; and this inference is confirmed by the striking difference between these pages of the MS. and those which precede in respect to the use of > to fill up a space at the end of a line, and by other peculiarities. Even Mr. Burgon will hardly contend that the scribe who wrote page 334 of the Codex Vaticanus lived 50 or 100 years after the writer of page 335.

Both of these modes of indicating paragraphs are of an antiquity greatly exceeding that of the Sinaitic and Vatican MSS. The use of the space between words and the dash or some other mark to attract attention in the left-hand margin of the column

(*παραγραφή*) or *παράγραφος*, something written *at the side*, in the old Herculean and Egyptian papyri, has already been mentioned. See, for a specimen, the beautiful papyrus of a Greek treatise on Rhetoric, written *before* 160 B. C., published in facsimile in “Papyrus grecs du Musée du Louvre” etc., edited after Letronne by Brunet de Presle (tom. xviii. 2<sup>e</sup> ptie of “Notices et extraits des manuscrits” etc., published by the French Institute, Paris, 1865), pl. xi., pap. No. 2. (Also in Silvestre, *Paléogr. univ.*, pl. 55.) In the same volume, pl. xxxiv., pap. 49, in a letter of a certain Dionysius to Ptolemy, about 160 B. C., we have perhaps the earliest known example of the use of *two dots* like our colon for separating paragraphs, in conjunction with the marginal dash, precisely like the style which frequently occurs in both the Vatican and the Sinaitic MSS., though the Vatican more commonly omits the dots. Finally, in the curious Nativity or *Thema genethiacum*, dated in the first year of the Emperor Antonius (A. D. 138), of which a facsimile is given in pl. xxii., pap. 19, and also in Silvestre, pl. 58, we have numerous paragraphs indicated by the projection of the first letter, or the first two or three letters, into the left-hand margin; and for the most part, this initial is of considerably larger size than the rest of the letters. This, however, is not a *book* manuscript.

(5.) “Further,” says Mr. Burgon, “Cod.  $\kappa$  abounds in such contractions as *ανοσ*, *ουνοσ* (with all their cases), for *ανθρωποσ*, *ουρανοσ* &c. Not only *πνα*, *πηρ*, *περ*, *πρα*, *μρα* (for *πνευμα*, *πατηρ-τερ-τερα*, *μητερα*), but also *στση*, *ηλ*, *ηλημι*, for *συναρωση*, *ισραηλ*, *ιερουσαλημ*.

“But Cod. B, though familiar with  $\overline{\iota\sigma}$ , and a few other of the most ordinary abbreviations, knows nothing of these compendia: which certainly *cannot* have existed in the earliest copies of all. Once more it seems reasonable to suppose that their constant occurrence in Cod.  $\kappa$  indicates for that Codex a date subsequent to Cod. B.”

Here Mr. Burgon, as usual, misstates the facts. The contraction for *ανθρωποσ* is found in the Vatican MS., p. 137, col. 1; 146, col. 2; 160, col. 1;—that for *πνευμα* occurs twice on the first page of the New Testament (Matt. i. 18, 20), also Matt. iii. 11, 16, iv. 1, and often elsewhere, particularly in the Old Testament (five times, for example, p. 331, col. 1, and again twice in col. 2);— $\overline{\pi\rho\sigma}$  for *πατεροσ* occurs p. 69, col. 1; 190, col. 3 (marg. note); 226, col. 2;— $\overline{\iota\sigma\lambda}$  for *ισραηλ* occurs *hundreds* of times: for instance, in Exod. xiv. it is contracted sixteen times out of seventeen in which it occurs, and in Josh. xi., eighteen times out of twenty. It will be hard to find “ $\overline{\iota\eta\lambda\eta\mu}$ ” as the contraction for *ιερουσαλημ* in the Vatican MS. or in any other, but  $\overline{\iota\lambda\eta\mu}$

occurs Josh. xii.10, and  $\overline{\lambda\mu}$ , Josh. x.1,3, xv.5.  $\Sigma\tau\alpha\nu\rho\omega\varsigma\eta$  is contracted but *once* in the Sinaitic MS., where we also have once (in Rev. xi.8) a unique contraction of  $\epsilon\sigma\tau\alpha\nu\rho\omega\varsigma\eta$ , which Tischendorf has neglected to express in the text of his quarto edition, though he has spoken of it in the Prolegomena (p. xx.; compare the larger edition, vol. i., col. 8 of Prol.).

In this matter of contractions, much appears to have depended on the fancy of the scribe; and as a criterion of antiquity it must be used with caution. We find in the Vatican MSS. contractions for several words, as  $\kappa\alpha\iota$ ,  $\mu\omicron\nu$ ,  $\alpha\mu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\varsigma$ ,  $\delta\alpha\nu\epsilon\iota\delta$ ,  $\iota\sigma\rho\alpha\eta\lambda$ ,  $\iota\epsilon\rho\upsilon\sigma\alpha\lambda\eta\mu$ , which are never contracted in Cod. D (the Cambridge MS.), written two centuries later. In the papyrus MS. of Philodemus "De Deorum vivendi Ratione," published in vol. vi. of the Herculaneus Volumina, and consequently written as early as A. D. 79, we find a number of remarkable contractions not known to exist in any other Greek MS., or certainly in any of similar antiquity. In different parts of the Vatican MS. there is a marked diversity in this respect; for example, in the part of the MS. extending from 1 Kings xix. 11 to the end of Nehemiah, as compared with the preceding portion.\* The same is true of the Sinaitic MS., particularly in the six leaves of the New Testament which Tischendorf attributes to the scribe D, whom he now supposes to be *identical* with one of the scribes of the Vatican MS. For example, in fol. 15 of the Sinaitic MS., written by D,  $\nu\omicron\sigma$  (sing.) occurs five times, and is always written in full. In the contiguous leaves (14 and 16), written by A, it occurs nine times, and is always contracted. On fol. 15,  $\alpha\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\varsigma$  is written six times in full, once only contracted. In the contiguous leaves it occurs eleven times, and is always contracted. In fol. 10, written by D,  $\sigma\upsilon\rho\alpha\nu\omicron\varsigma$  occurs nine times, and is always written in full, as it seems to be in the Vatican MS. On the next leaf, written by A, it occurs ten times, and in six of them is contracted. (The statement in Tischendorf's Nov. Test. Vat., Prolegom. p. xxii., differs from the above in four particulars, in consequence, apparently, of oversights in counting.)

(6.) Mr. Burgon's sixth argument is founded on the following facts. The Gospel of Mark in the Vatican MS. as well as the Sinaitic ends with verse 8 of the sixteenth chapter. But in the Vatican MS., where the ending occurs near the bottom of the second column, the third column is left blank, and the Gospel of Luke begins on the next page. "This," says Mr. Burgon, "is *the only vacant column* in the whole manuscript" (p. 87).

\* In the first 294 pages of the Vatican MS. (pp. 41-334 of the edition),  $\pi\nu\epsilon\nu\mu\alpha$  occurs forty-two times, in forty of which it is contracted; in the next 290 pages it occurs forty-one times, in forty of which it is *not* contracted. There is a similar difference of usage in respect to the contraction of the word  $\iota\sigma\rho\alpha\eta\lambda$ .

In the Sinaitic MS., in which there are four columns to a page, the Gospel of Mark ends on the second, and that of Luke begins on the third. The Vatican MS. has at the end of verse 8 the usual arabesque which is placed at the end of a book, and the subscription *κατα Μαρκον*. But the phenomenon of the blank column is to Mr. Burgon "in the highest degree significant, and admits of only one interpretation. *The older MS.* from which Cod. B was copied must have infallibly contained the twelve verses in dispute. The copyist was instructed to leave them out—and he obeyed: but he prudently left a blank space *in memoriam rei*" (p. 87). The Sinaitic, on the other hand, "was copied from a Codex which had been already mutilated" (p. 88). This difference between the MSS. seems to Mr. Burgon "a very striking indication that Cod. B is the older of the two. Cod.  $\alpha$  is evidently *familiar* with the phenomenon which *astonishes* Cod. B by its novelty and strangeness" (p. 292).

Eusebius, in the first quarter of the fourth century, expressly testifies that the last twelve verses of the Gospel of Mark were wanting "in the accurate copies," and "in almost all the copies," of that Gospel, but were found "in some copies." (Quæst. ad Marinum, c. 1. Opp. iv.937, in Migne's Patrol. Gr. tom. xxii.) Suppose, then, that the Vatican MS. was transcribed in the age of Eusebius from a copy which contained the passage, why may not the Sinaitic have been transcribed at the same time from one which did not contain it?

With Mr. Burgon, a conjecture seems to be a demonstration. There is to him but one possible explanation of that blank column. But considering the well-known tendency of copyists and possessors of manuscripts to add rather than to omit, a tendency which would be very strong in the present case in consequence of the abruptness of verse 8 as an ending, and of which the existence of two other endings, besides the disputed verses, is a proof, another conjecture may be proposed. Why may we not suppose that the exemplar from which the Vatican MS. was copied did *not* contain the last twelve verses, but the copyist, or owner of the MS., having at some time seen or heard of them, left on that account the blank column in question? We have a similar phenomenon in the case of Codd. L and  $\Delta$  at John vii.52, and in Cod. G at Rom. xiv.23.

Mr. Burgon is not strictly correct in saying that the case to which he refers is "the only vacant column" in the Vatican MS. Two columns are left blank at the end of Nehemiah; but this may be accounted for by the different style (stichometric) in which the next following book, the Psalms, is written.

(7.) Mr. Burgon's last argument is as follows. "The most striking feature of difference, after all, is only to be recognized by one who surveys the Codices themselves with attention. It

is *that* general air of primitiveness in Cod. B which makes itself at once *felt*. The even symmetry of the unbroken columns;—the work of the *prima manus* everywhere vanishing through sheer antiquity;—the small, even, *square* writing, which partly reveals the style of the Herculanean rolls; partly, the papyrus fragments of the *Oration against Demosthenes* (published by Harris in 1848):—all these notes of superior antiquity infallibly set Cod. B before Cod.  $\kappa$ ; though it may be impossible to determine whether by 50, by 75, or by 100 years.”

On this we may remark (*a*) that “the even symmetry of the unbroken columns” has been shown to exist, so far as a large part of the MS. is concerned, only in Mr. Burgon’s imagination; and that, where it does exist, it has a parallel in parts of the Sinaitic. (*b*) The work of the *prima manus* is rarely to be seen in the Vatican MS., a scribe of the tenth or eleventh century having retraced all the letters with fresh ink, adding accents and breathings, except in those places where he wished to indicate that something should be omitted (e. g. the accidental repetition of a word or sentence). In the passages where the work of the first hand remains untouched, of which we have facsimiles (e. g. John xiii.14, Rom. iv.4, 2 Cor. iii.15,16), the original writing appears to have been well preserved. We may add that a scribe of the eighth or ninth century has retouched with fresh ink many pages of the Sinaitic MS.; and this had already been done to a considerable extent by a still earlier scribe (Tischendorf, N. T. ex Sin. Cod., p. xxxviii. f.). As to the appearance of the Sinaitic MS., we have the testimony of Dr. Tregelles that, “though the general semblance of the whole work is somewhat less worn than that of Cod. Vaticanus (whose extensive hiatus prove how carelessly it has been kept), when it comes to be contrasted with such a manuscript as the illustrated Dioscorides at Vienna (whose age is fixed by internal evidence at about A. D. 500), that interesting and valuable manuscript looks comparatively quite fresh and modern” (Scrivener’s Coll. of Cod. Sin., p. xxxi.). (*c*) The writing in the Sinaitic is just as “even and *square*” as that of the Vatican. In the form of the letters Tischendorf expressly says that there is not the least difference, *ne minimum quidem discrepantiam* (Nov. Test. Vat., p. xix.). Mr. Burgon’s argument, then, must rest wholly on the difference in *size*, the letters in the Vatican MS. being perhaps one-third smaller than those in the Sinaitic. (There is a difference in size in different parts of the two MSS. themselves, as is shown by the facsimiles, and by Tischendorf’s express testimony.) It is difficult to deal seriously with such an argument. But if any explanation is needed, it may be suggested that the extraordinary size of the skins on which the Sinaitic MS. is written, allowing four columns to a page, of 48

lines each (the Vatican has three columns of 42 lines), would naturally lead a calligrapher to make letters somewhat larger than usual. And if Mr. Burgon will look again at a few of the Herculaniensia Volumina, say the one last published (vol. v. of the second series), he will find that in some of the papyri there represented we have letters of the size of those in the Codex Sinaiticus, while in others they are less than half that size.

Such are "the notes of superior antiquity" which "infallibly" prove that the Vatican MS. is 50 or 100 years older than the Sinaitic.

A few words may be added in respect to Mr. Burgon's treatment of the principal subject of his work. The specimen which has been given illustrates some of his prominent characteristics as a writer; but judging from this alone, we might do him injustice. His book is not entirely worthless, or merely serviceable as showing how a critical question ought *not* to be treated; though it is often instructive in this respect. It is really to be welcomed as giving the results of earnest original research on the subject to which it relates. It brings to light some interesting facts, and corrects some errors of preceding scholars. It is written, however, with great warmth of feeling, in the spirit of a passionate advocate rather than that of a calm inquirer. The author appears to have been especially stimulated to the defense of the last twelve verses of the Gospel of Mark by his zeal for the damnatory part of the Athanasian Creed, which he not only regards as justified by Mark xvi.16, but actually *identifies* with that verse. He says: "The precious *warning clause*, . . . (miscalled 'damnatory'), which an impertinent officiousness is for glossing with a rubric, and weakening with an apology, proceeded from Divine lips—at least if these concluding verses be genuine" (p. 3). This is only one of many examples which might be cited of the tendency of Mr. Burgon to confound the certainty of a fact with the certainty of a very dubious or even preposterous inference from it. For the new critical material which he has amassed every student will thank him, and also for the clear and satisfactory discussion of some special topics, as the so-called Ammonian sections; but there is much in his book which cannot fail to mislead an unwary or ill-informed reader. His conclusions are often strangely remote from his premises, but his confidence in them is boundless. He not only claims to have shown that the genuineness of the disputed passage "must needs be reckoned among the things that are absolutely certain," but appears to expect that in consequence of his labors "it will become necessary for Editors of the Text of the New Testament to reconsider their

conclusions in countless other places, . . . to review their method, and to remodel their text throughout" (p. 254). This seems indeed a sad prospect for Tischendorf and Tregelles and Westcott and Hort, who have so utterly mistaken the true principles of textual criticism; but a careful examination of Mr. Burgon's book will greatly relieve the anxiety of their friends.







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