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A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

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THE  
CHURCHMAN

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SEPTEMBER, 1884.

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ART. I.—RECENT THEORIES CONCERNING THE TEXT  
OF THE NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES.

THE subject of Textual Criticism has been lifted into a position of great immediate importance by the Revision of the English Version of the New Testament. As long as accurate scholars pursued laborious investigations with patience and modesty, waiting till a natural conclusion was reached in the ordinary course of events before the results of their study were introduced into the reading of the Sacred Text in general use, Churchmen might commonly be excused if they failed to enter into such an abstruse subject. But the period of pure research has now ceased; and since the form which the Version of the Holy Scriptures in the hands of all must assume depends largely upon the character in which the Greek Text is cast, and the moulding of that character must be decided by the issue of the contest between rival schools, it behoves all intelligent people to make themselves acquainted with the chief points in the contention that is being maintained.

There can be no doubt that when the Revision of the Authorized Translation was projected, too little was made of the prior necessity of settling the exact form of the Greek Text which must be the standard of Revision. The Company of Revisers found themselves face to face with one of the most difficult problems that they could possibly have encountered. And the difficulty was further enhanced by the fact that two of their leading members had, during many years, been elaborating a new and ingenious theory which, if accepted, must, at the least, modify most considerably conclusions all over the New Testament. This theory had not been communicated to the world, and had received, therefore, no independent criticism. Must the Company of Revisers wait, or must they decide with their present knowledge, and by their own judg-

ment, all intricate questions as they might arise? It is well known that they determined to admit no delay; and that Drs. Westcott and Hort's edition was not published till the Revised Version was out. The result has been a serious controversy between opposed schools of teaching, which has revealed important differences, and has certainly, whatever may be the ultimate issue, not left things even now where it found them. And so wide and deep is the division of opinion, and so strongly is it supported on both sides, that it is impossible that a satisfactory termination can be reached till the various elements of discussion are more thoroughly threshed out by the learned students themselves, as well as by other Churchmen who are either spectators, or who enter more or less into the involved topics of inquiry. A survey of the points of dispute may perhaps be not inopportune at the present moment. Juxtaposition and contrast are often instructive.

But it may be as well first to note the general situation before it was affected by the rise of Textual Criticism. The Authorized Version was made from the Received Text as given in the editions of Beza, Stephen, Erasmus, and the Complutensian Polyglott. The translators appear to have had all these editions in their hands, and where they differed to have made their own selection, paying some attention also to the Vulgate, but resting mainly upon the later editions of Beza, particularly his fourth, published in 1589, which "was somewhat more highly esteemed than his fifth (1598), the production of his extreme old age."<sup>1</sup> The Received Text, or *Textus Receptus*, is generally said to have derived its name from the second Elzevir edition in 1633, in which it was announced to the reader that he now had "the text received by all."<sup>2</sup> But more meaning appears to have lurked beneath the ready acceptance of this title. There seems to be no doubt that one main form of text has been dominant in the Universal Church as the received reading of the Greek ever since the time of St. Chrysostom till now. When, therefore, Erasmus made up his rendering from the copies within his reach, Stunica from all that Cardinal Ximenes could collect, Stephen from his sixteen authorities, and Beza added what additional

<sup>1</sup> "The Authorized Edition of the English Bible," etc., by F. H. S. Scrivener, M.A., D.C.L., LL.D., Cambridge, 1884, p. 60.

Dr. Scrivener has collected 252 passages (Appendix E), of which the translators follow Beza against Stephen in 113, Stephen against Beza in 59, the Complutensian, Erasmus, or the Vulgate against both Stephen and Beza in 80.

<sup>2</sup> "Textum ergo habes nunc ab omnibus receptum, in quo nihil immutatum aut corruptum damus," referring to the 1st edition in 1624.

ones he could find, they must each have met with representative copies, since a comparison with the unbroken line of manuscripts for several centuries does not reveal any considerable deflection from the path generally followed.

But when several older manuscripts than those which these editors used came into the hands of scholars, they naturally questioned many of the readings of the *Textus Receptus*. It has been calculated that about one-eighth of the words in the New Testament exhibit variation; all the manuscripts coincide in the case of seven-eighths; and the latter proportion is far above all controversy and doubt.<sup>1</sup> Some of the oldest greatly differed from the others; and many of the editors who have pursued the deepest inquiries, such as Lachmann, Tregelles, and Tischendorf, have followed in their direction. But such has been the uncertainty, that Tischendorf, who has the highest reputation of all, so varied in his judgment at different stages of his career, that his seventh edition disagreed with his third in no less than 1,296 places, in 595 of which he returned to the *Textus Receptus*; and the number of changes from his seventh edition in his eighth actually amounted to 3,369, "to the scandal," as Dr. Scrivener justly adds, "of the science of Comparative Criticism, as well as to his own grave discredit for discernment and consistency."<sup>2</sup>

It is evident, therefore, that when such a tortuous course has recently been possible in the case of the "First Biblical Critic" of the day, the science of Textual Criticism has not reached maturity. And, indeed, the *Apparatus Criticus* is not yet complete, so far as we can judge. During the last year the Dean of Chichester has added no less than three hundred and seventy-four to the number of known copies. Who can say that others as ancient as any that we now possess, or even of still greater antiquity, may not yet be discovered? It is within the bounds of possibility that Tischendorf's lucky rescue of **N** from the waste-paper basket may be repeated, or, at least, that an unexpected treasure may be found in some closet or storehouse.

Nor have the sources of knowledge within reach been thoroughly examined. Much remains to be done in the case of the Uncial Manuscripts. Only a portion of the Cursives has been regularly collated. A great deal of work is still in arrear upon the Ancient Versions.<sup>3</sup> Very few of the

<sup>1</sup> Westcott and Hort's *Introduction*, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> "Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament," 4th edition, p. 529. Tischendorf retraced his steps in his 8th edition. Dr. Scrivener's book ought to be in the library of every clergyman.

<sup>3</sup> The series of "Old Latin Biblical Texts," which is being issued from the Clarendon Press, at Oxford, under the superintendence of the Rev.

Lectionaries have met with due collation. The wide field of Patristic citations has had no part thoroughly cultivated with the exception of the works of Origen by Griesbach.<sup>1</sup> So that there is here a course of campaigns for an army of scholars to undertake, before changes, except of the most cautious nature and the most limited and harmless extent, can with any safety be introduced into the books intended for universal use. Theories ought at present to remain as theories, however subtly devised, acutely represented, learnedly maintained, and ardently advocated.

Meanwhile it is the duty of Churchmen to receive gratefully, and examine patiently, deferentially, and candidly whatever is presented with due care and research to the general judgment of the Church.

The theory of Drs. Westcott and Hort is eminently one which demands such respectful and dispassionate consideration. Not only the distinction of those scholars, but the fact that their conclusions came forth from a nearly thirty years' study, and the ingenuity, learning, and detailed investigation with which their theory is tracked in Dr. Hort's introduction into all the branches of its expansion, cannot but secure for it all attention from those who have the time and opportunity of expending the care needful for mastering it. But its very abstruseness stands in its own way; and it is not known so much as it should be. The leading parts of it may therefore be now well described.

In dealing with the divergent evidence which is constantly presented in different passages—so Dr. Hort commences his exposition—two main considerations present themselves, viz., Which in itself is the most probable reading? and, What is the character of the documents by which it is supported? Now, a reading may be recommended by its own likelihood (as for instance *ἀστέρι* for *ἀστεράν* the reading of the first hand of *N* and *C*), or by the probability that the scribe may have been led into a natural mistake in the case of opposing readings, or may have chosen the one in question only for some strong and good reason.

But the most powerful arguments for selection are supplied

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John Wordsworth, M.A., Oriel Professor of the Interpretation of Holy Scripture, and of which the first number has just come out under Professor Wordsworth's own sedulous care, is an excellent step in this direction. The title is "Old Latin Biblical Texts. No. I. The Gospel according to St. Matthew, from the St. Germain MS. (G)," etc., edited by John Wordsworth, M.A., etc., Oxford, at the Clarendon Press, 1883."

<sup>1</sup> "Symbolæ Criticæ." Griesbach included also the works of Clement of Alexandria, but from Indexes only.

by the character of the attesting documents. And the leading considerations are, How close do any of them come to the Apostolic autographs?<sup>1</sup> and whether they are the genuine and unadulterated successors of those primal authorities? The main principles in deciding these questions are the history of the documents so far as we know them, and the nature of their genealogy—

Fortes creantur fortibus et bonis :  
\* \* \* \* \*  
Utcunque defecere mores,  
Dedecorant bene nata culpæ.

“The importance of genealogy in Textual Criticism is at once shown by the considerations that no multiplication of copies, or of copies of copies, can give their joint testimony any higher authority than that of the single document from whence they sprang, and that one early document may have left a single descendant, another a hundred or a thousand.”<sup>2</sup> So that the number of witnesses is not to be considered, the sole questions being what, and of what character, is the ancestor, and how near does it approach to the original autograph? Conclusion upon this point may be reached by careful investigation of documentary evidence, and especially of genealogical relations.

Now, the chief documentary evidence consists of Greek MSS. dating from the fourth century as far as the sixteenth, of which the chief part consists of Uncial MSS., which reach as far as the end of the tenth century, and of Cursives, which are found from the ninth century upwards. At the head of all come “the four great Uncial Bibles,” viz., B and Κ, dating about the middle of the fourth century; A, either towards the end of the same century,<sup>3</sup> or the beginning of the next; C, somewhere in the earlier part of the fifth.

History shows that one mainly uniform text has prevailed from the present time as far back as the second half of the

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Hort usually employs the expression “the autograph” in the singular. Is it quite so certain that there was only one authorized autograph? Do not the unimportant variations in the Gospels from one another rather point to several editions from the same apostolic hand not altogether the same in minor points?

<sup>2</sup> “The New Testament in the Original Greek, the Text revised by Brooke Foss Westcott, D.D., and Fenton John Anthony Hort, D.D., p. 544.

<sup>3</sup> Westcott and Hort place A as it appears at the beginning of the fourth century, but say (p. 152) that, with exception of some readings in which it shows an “individual affinity” with Western MSS., it “may serve as a fair example of the MSS. that, to judge by Patristic quotations, were commonest in the fourth century.” Canon Cooke (Revised Version, p. 185) argues that the date of A was between A.D. 380 and A.D. 410, “and that the earlier date is more nearly exact.”

fourth century. This may be denominated (i.) the "Syrian" Text, which appears to have had its origin in a recension at Antioch, whence it came to Constantinople, as was natural, since Antioch was the "true ecclesiastical parent of Constantinople."<sup>1</sup> Enthroned thus in the Eastern capital, it became dominant in the Christian world. But there were three other types of text "which can be identified through numerous readings distinctively attested by characteristic groups of extant documents." These were, (ii.) the Western, which was found in Italy, Africa, and other parts of the West, and dealt largely in paraphrase and interpolation, as may be seen in the Cambridge Codex Beza (D), its chief existing representative; (iii.) the Alexandrian, of which but little evidence remains; and (iv.) the Neutral, which is free from the peculiarities of either, and of which there are traces, "indubitable and significant," "in the remains of Clement and Origen, together with the fragment of Dionysius and Peter of Alexandria," and "in a certain measure in the works of Eusebius of Caesarea, who was deeply versed in the theological literature of Alexandria."<sup>2</sup>

Now, the Syrian Text can be shown—so Drs. Hort and Westcott maintain—to be posterior to the other three by three arguments:

1. The analysis of certain passages, of which eight are given, proves that the Syrian Text was made up by an eclectic combination of the renderings of other texts into one "conflate" reading. For instance, in St. Mark vi. 33, at the end of the verse, the Neutral reading is *καὶ προῆλθον αὐτοὺς*, the Western is *συνῆλθον αὐτοῦ*, both of which are combined in the Syrian into *καὶ προῆλθον αὐτοὺς, καὶ συνῆλθον πρὸς αὐτὸν*. Dr. Hort argues at greater length than admits of introduction here that the last phrase spoils St. Mark's diction. And from this and similar instances he draws the conclusion that at some authoritative revision the other texts were blended into a "form lucid and complete, smooth and attractive, but appreciably impoverished in sense and force, more fitted for cursory perusal or recitation, than for repeated and diligent study."<sup>3</sup>

2. The same conclusion is reached by the evidence of the Ante-Nicene Fathers, none of whom exhibit a Syrian Text. The Latin Fathers, of course, quote the Western, and they are followed by Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Hippolytus, Methodius, and Eusebius. In the works of Clement of Alexandria, non-Western as well as Western quotations are discoverable, but no Syrian; and in those of Origen all the other kinds of texts can be found, but none of a distinctively Syrian character.

<sup>1</sup> Westcott and Hort, *Introduction*, p. 143.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 127.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 135.

3. This is confirmed by the internal evidence of various passages, though the authors of the Syrian Text "may have copied from some other equally ancient and perhaps purer text now otherwise lost."<sup>1</sup> But examination shows that this text was made up from the rest, sometimes by following one or other, sometimes by modification, or by combination, or pruning, or by introducing changes of their own when they found none to follow.<sup>2</sup>

The Syrian Text being thus posterior to the others, and made up from them, and so originating after the middle of the third century, may be set aside as corrupt. It is "only a modified eclectic combination of earlier texts independently attested;" and the documents written according to it have only the value which they may possess in adding attestation to readings otherwise supported. By themselves they have positively no authority.<sup>3</sup>

Since, then, the Syrian Text must thus be set aside, and there is a "prevalence of obvious corruption in the Western Text," whilst the Alexandrian exhibits aberration in the forms of "incipient paraphrase and skilful assimilation," the Neutral remains where it can be verified as alone the pure representation of the unalloyed Scriptures of the New Testament. The leading MSS. which set forth this text, are B and **N**, which are also the oldest Uncials in existence, so far as inquiry has hitherto revealed. These two bear a great resemblance to one another, so that they must have proceeded from some common ancestor. And it appears probable from consideration of their features that the date "of the common original from which the ancestries of the two MSS. have diverged" "cannot be later than the early part of the second century, and may well be yet earlier."<sup>4</sup>

Accordingly, with slight exception, "readings of **N** B should be accepted as the true readings until strong internal evidence is found to the contrary, and no readings of **N** B can safely be rejected absolutely, though it is sometimes right to place them only on an alternative footing, especially where they receive no support from Versions or Fathers." Of the two, B is the purer, which "must be regarded as having preserved not only a very ancient text, but a very pure line of very ancient text,"<sup>5</sup> **N** having fallen on its way upon "at least two early observant texts."<sup>6</sup> When, therefore, B stands with any other leading manuscript alone besides **N**, its readings nearly always "have the ring of genuineness."<sup>7</sup> And "even when B stands quite alone, its readings must never be lightly rejected."<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Introduction, p. 115.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 117.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 118.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 223.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 251.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 249.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 227.

<sup>8</sup> Gr. Test., p. 557.

Such are, as far as I am able to describe them in a brief compass, the leading points in the theory of Drs. Westcott and Hort. If it has been improperly portrayed, this is not due to any want of desire to do all justice to it.

And, indeed, even what has been here said, and still more the elaborate treatises in the Introduction and at the end of the text of the Greek Testament, must impress all persons deeply with the patient ingenuity, the critical acumen, and the mastery of the subject evinced by those distinguished scholars.

But whether this theory has a strong and solid foundation, and will endure the shock of long critical examination, is quite another matter. The solution which it offers in all difficulties is too suspiciously easy. It almost amounts to this:—"Do not trouble yourself about other authorities, but attend to B and **N** which will supply all that you want." It is too clever and too comfortable by half to be true. And on studying it, the first idea that strikes a man of logical mind is, that he sees plenty of clouds massed upon clouds, but that in attempting to follow the authors in their lofty ascent, he can discover no firm treading for the soles of his feet. There is abundance of considerations, surmises, probabilities, generalizations, made by the authors, both from known particulars of history and from details lying in their own memories or in their private note-books; but a strong array of facts establishing satisfactorily each stage in advance is wanting, whilst the leaps made in ardent speculation here and there over wide chasms reveal the insecurity of the country traversed.

Accepting, then, what is advanced about the judgment of probability as to a reading, whether "intrinsic" or "transcriptional," only with the proviso that such decisions must commend themselves to the general sense of textual scholars, not be the mere promptings of individual opinion, we come to the principle of genealogy. Here evidently lurk the pitfalls which are involved in an analogy made the groundwork of an argument. The reasoning is correct, so far as it is impossible that a good copy can be made from a bad exemplar, though external influence, such as the recollection in the copyist of a better guide, may improve the offspring, like good schooling or good companionship or the effects of study; or again, as to the probability that better as well as worse features in the exemplar will be reproduced in the copies made from it. And "so far as genealogical relations are discovered with perfect certainty," "being directly involved in historical facts," "their immediate basis is historical, not speculative."<sup>1</sup> But between the facts and the conclusion often lies a long space, into which speculation in such an abstruse inquiry is but too apt to enter.

<sup>1</sup> Introduction, p. 63.

For instance, when Dr. Hort argues that the similarity to one another in those numerous Uncials of what he terms the Syrian class shows that they came from one ancestor, and that although they largely outnumber **N** and B, they have at the best only the authority of one ancestor set against another ancestor, he entirely disregards the presumption that a larger number of descendants came from a larger number of ancestors, and that the majority may be only thrust back from one generation to a previous one. In truth, the position is so uncertain, that no sound reasoning can be founded upon it.

Again, when it is inferred that the common ancestor of **N** and B came into existence in the early part of the second century, there is, so far as genealogy is concerned, a lofty disregard of the obvious truth that generations might be propagated as fast as the pens of scribes would admit; and that after the wholesale destruction of copies in the persecution of Diocletian and Galerius, it is almost certain that transcription must have proceeded at a rapid rate. As far, therefore, as genealogy is concerned, there is no warrant for any conclusion as to time. If on other grounds this is a speculative inference, the instinct of such experienced scholars as Drs. Westcott and Hort is entitled to respectful consideration. But it cannot be endorsed by other students than themselves until it is proved to have foundation in well-authenticated facts duly represented.

Passing now to what Dr. Hort denominates the Neutral Text, and to B and **N** as the great exponents of it, and his all but exclusive guides, we cannot but be struck with the great argument in their favour. They are the oldest MSS. in existence. They are extremely handsome, and in most respects very complete. Their verdict in the opinion of nearly all judges is entitled to attentive consideration.<sup>1</sup>

But how can we get over the central fact that they have hardly any following in the ages to come, and so have been condemned by Catholic antiquity? They were produced about A.D. 330-350, a short time before the Canon of Holy Scripture was settled, and the general subject of the Holy Scriptures must have come under discussion. They just antedated the most intelligent period of the early Church, when the finest intellects of the world were engaged in ascertaining the exact lineaments of "The Faith once delivered to the saints." How could these men have escaped from spending particular care upon the Sacred Text? We know that St. Jerome did so upon the Latin Versions. And the fact, acknowledged over and over again by Dr. Hort, that one uniform text has prevailed

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<sup>1</sup> The Dean of Chichester does not, however, rate them high.

from that period till now, surely constitutes a decisive condemnation of this so-called "Neutral Text."

The period, too, of the production of these two MSS. is instructive. It was when the Church was all but Semiarian; of this there is no doubt. But it appears also extremely probable that they were made under the direction of Eusebius of Cæsarea, a leader of the Semiarian party. The scribe of the Vatican B is supposed by Tischendorf, and admitted by Dr. Hort, to have written part of the Sinaitic **N**. The period of their execution, as fixed on other grounds, was about the time when Eusebius was commissioned by Constantine to prepare fifty manuscripts of the Holy Scriptures, and send them to Constantinople. These two MSS. stand unrivalled for the beauty of their calligraphy, and of the vellum on which they are written, and in all respects are just what we should expect to have been produced in obedience to an imperial mandate. They are—especially B—conspicuous for omissions "of half a verse, a whole verse, and even of several verses,"<sup>1</sup> and in the case of the latter, of words or phrases, according to Dr. Dobbin's calculations, up to the number of 2,556 as far as Heb. ix. 14, where it terminates.<sup>2</sup> This is exactly what one would expect in the case of so large an order, which would probably necessitate speed in the execution. And Eusebius says that he has forwarded *τρισσαὶ καὶ τετρασσαὶ*, and the Vatican has three columns in a page, and the Sinaitic four. Under these circumstances, Canon Cooke infers with what appears to be great probability that these two MSS. were transcribed under the direction of Eusebius.<sup>3</sup>

It is certain that they agree with the class of text used by Eusebius himself, and that in one important particular, the omission of the concluding twelve verses of St. Mark's Gospel, they are found with him in a contest—mutely confessed by B, in leaving an unique blank space, to be wrong—against all the other witnesses in primitive Christendom. Eusebius was of the school of Origen, whom he defended. And to the same circle, antecedently to him, belonged Lucian and Hesychius, under whom a class of copies was made which was expressly condemned by St. Jerome.<sup>4</sup> So we come within the influence of Origen. And Canon Cooke has shown in his treatise upon

<sup>1</sup> Burges's "Letters from Rome," p. 18, written after examining the MS. So Vercellone, the editor. Tischendorf speaks of "Universa Scripturæ Vaticanæ vitiositas."

<sup>2</sup> *Dublin University Magazine*, 1859, p. 620. Dr. Dobbin calculates 330 in St. Matthew, 365 in St. Mark, 439 in St. Luke, 357 in St. John, 384 in the Acts, and 681 in the Epistles.

<sup>3</sup> Canon Cooke's "Revised Version of the First Three Gospels," pp. 159-183. Vercellone, the editor of B, thought so of that MS.

<sup>4</sup> *Præfatio ad Damasum.*

the rendering of the Lord's Prayer,<sup>1</sup> the mutilation of which formula, universal in Christendom, affords a signal instance of the eccentricity of these two MSS., that the dissemination in the East of a Western interpretation appears to be mainly due to the influence of that eminent but unsafe student of the Holy Scriptures.

But we have still to deal with Dr. Hort's theory about a so-called Syrian Text. Here again we are in the region of pure speculation unsustained by historical facts. What proof is there of any authoritative recension at Antioch or elsewhere? A recension, be it observed, so thorough and so sweeping in its effects, that, according to the theory under consideration, it must have placed the text it produced into such a commanding situation that it has reigned for fifteen centuries almost without a rival. How could this have occurred without a famous achievement? Yet there is positively no record in history of any single fact justifying the assumption that any such authoritative revision ever took place.<sup>2</sup> But besides this, the arguments for the formation of a new form of text in the fourth century thoroughly break down.

1. The evidence in the eight instances given is certainly not enough to establish such a "conflation," or a combination of supposed other texts into one eclectic reading throughout the New Testament. But granting for a moment that these eight are specimens of what constantly occurs, who, from internal evidence alone, can say dogmatically which is posterior —the entire text, or the respective portions of it? Surely the integral whole, which Dr. Hort (p. 134) admits to possess "lucidity and completeness," and to be "entirely blameless on either literary or religious grounds as regards vulgarized or unworthy diction," has the better title to be held as the original form than any of the separate portions. Omission must be a besetting fault of copyists of all ages and countries; and indubitable instances show that the scribes of B and N were habitual offenders in this respect. As to the character of the texts, many scholars would not agree with Drs. Westcott and Hort in the value which they set upon a Thucydidean ruggedness.

2. As to the alleged absence of readings of the Received Text from the writings of Ante-Nicene Fathers, it must be remembered how few of these writings have descended to us. The persecution of Diocletian is here also the parent of much

<sup>1</sup> "Deliver us from Evil;" Second Letter to the Lord Bishop of London, pp. 61-65.

<sup>2</sup> See Burges's "Revision Revised," pp. 271-88; and Cook's "Revised Version," pp. 195-204.

want of information. And some of the Versions—notably the Peshito, which is held by the best critics to be older than the Curetonian—that are more ancient than any MSS., give constant support to the readings of the *Textus Receptus*. If Origen seldom admits them, which is an exaggeration of the real facts, this only confirms the view already taken of that unstable Father.<sup>1</sup>

3. What is said about “Internal Evidence” is much too vague to sustain so strong a conclusion. And it is balanced with the candid admission that, after all, the peculiar readings of the Received Text may perhaps be derived from “some purer copy.” What seems to Dr. Westcott and Dr. Hort to constitute internal evidence in each instance does not seem so to others. As Dr. Scrivener admirably remarks, “What appears to one scholar ‘textual probability’ appears to another a begging of the question.”<sup>2</sup> Where is the rock amidst this perilous sand-drift?

It is therefore impossible to accept the theories of Drs. Westcott and Hort as having any solid foundation in the facts of history. And we must turn at very much shorter length than is due to the position of the rival school.

The chief figure in this is that of one of whose careful scholarship, accurate and deep research, and sound and cautious judgment any nation or age might be proud. It is a cause of great thankfulness that Dr. Scrivener has been spared long enough with faculties undisturbed to form conclusions upon the new theory, and to impart to the world the reasons which have guided him. His mature condemnation is couched in these words: “With all our reverence for his (Dr. Hort’s) genius, and gratitude for much that we have learnt from him in the course of our studies, we are compelled to repeat emphatically as ever our strong conviction that the hypothesis to which he has devoted so many laborious years is destitute not only of historical foundation, but of all probability resulting from the internal evidence of the text which its adoption would force on us.”<sup>3</sup>

He is most ably supported by the Dean of Chichester, who, however, though agreeing mainly in principle, works upon independent lines.<sup>4</sup> Dean Burgon’s diligence is amazing. Be-

<sup>1</sup> The reviewer in the *Guardian*, April 2nd, 1884, quoting from Dr. J. H. A. Michelsen, shows that Dr. Hort speaks much too sweepingly as respects Origen, St. Irenæus, and the other Ante-Nicenes. So too, Dr. Scrivener, “Plain Introduction,” p. 533.

<sup>2</sup> “Plain Introduction,” p. 538.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 542. This passage occurs in a careful examination of Dr. Hort’s theory, pp. 530-552.

<sup>4</sup> For instance, he defends 1 Tim. iii. 16, which Dr. Scrivener had surrendered in deference to the onslaught of most textual critics, with a

sides helping Dr. Scrivener in times past to collect a list of the available authorities, as is duly chronicled in the second edition of Scrivener's "Introduction," what must we think of his finding three hundred and seventy-four other MSS., of many of which he has given account in letters to the *Guardian*? He has probably examined more MSS. of the New Testament than any man living. Besides this, his Patristic knowledge, at least in this respect, is simply marvellous. And here his researches must have gone far in the direction of supplying a want which is greatly felt in the field of Textual Criticism. He has the merit of having been the first to sound the alarm upon the silent endorsement of Drs. Westcott and Hort's dangerous theorizing in the Revised Version. And his book "The Revision Revised," which was recently reviewed in *THE CHURCHMAN*, embodies in a collection of his articles in the *Quarterly Review*, with much additional matter, a masterly examination of this question with vigorous dissertation and a vast command of facts. Here is a very repertory of the most cogent reasons against Drs. Westcott and Hort, which appear irrefragable. They have not been answered; and till they are fairly and candidly met, they cannot but be taken as being supreme upon the field.

Another strong supporter of this school is the Rev. F. C. Cooke, Canon of Exeter, and the editor-in-chief of "The Speaker's Commentary." In his "Letters to the Bishop of London on the Lord's Prayer," and still more in his "Revised Version of the First Three Gospels," he has with great learning, acuteness, and temperate judgment stated the case against the new school, and maintained it by powerful arguments, to which, like Dean Burgon's, there has as yet been no reply. The Bishop of Lincoln also, who, as is well known, stood aloof from the work of revising the Authorized Version, is another redoubtable champion on the same side, and has spoken out in addresses to his diocese, which are marked by his celebrated erudition, vigour, and faithfulness.

The principles of this school are simply these: Use all the authorities which you can find, not as if they were all of equal weight, but assigning the just influence to each. Be not hasty to admit change. Revision is no doubt necessary after the lapse of centuries. But it must be a revision to be undertaken only when all the authorities have received due and careful examination; when all the MSS., Uncial and Cursive too—or at any rate a large proportion of the latter in representative numbers—have been thoroughly collated, all existing copies

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satisfactory completeness which I am surprised to see is not universally acknowledged.

having been first collected ; when the Versions have been all properly edited ; when the quotations of the Fathers have been well indexed and authenticated ; when the Lectionaries have been all gathered and collated, with regard paid also to the quotations in the old Liturgies. Till then, do not touch with a hand that may be profanely stretched out what the providence of Almighty God has preserved in His Church notwithstanding human sin and infirmity. Here is work for a long time, not such as may satisfy those whose ambition is to settle questions, but humble, conscientious, useful work. Meanwhile, discussion will adjust itself, and there will be no danger from a sudden tempest or an unforeseen earthquake. What is done will thus be well done. The impatience of men may chafe, but the blessed gift of the Holy Scriptures will be treated with a loving reverence which will only venture to handle them when preparations have been made with all possible care and completeness.

Who can doubt which teaching Churchmen should follow, or which from the nature of things must ultimately prevail ?

EDWARD MILLER.



## ART. II.—CHURCH WORK IN SOME POOR PARISHES OF "OUTCAST LONDON."

THE purpose of the present writer is to endeavour to place before the readers of *THE CHURCHMAN* a plain, brief statement as to the work of the National Church in certain portions of what has been styled "Outcast London," to show what have been and are the efforts put forth by the clergy in the poorest districts of the Metropolis to reach those for whose pastoral care they are responsible. So much has been written on the physical and moral condition of the London poor and their surroundings, that it is not necessary, and would be wearisome, to repeat afresh what has been so frequently described. Two remarks, however, we take leave to make at the outset, based upon personal investigation and supplemented by general and authoritative testimony. Firstly, the general condition of the lower classes in the Metropolis is not to be gauged by the accounts which have appeared—accurate enough as far as they go—of special localities ; and secondly, the evils which have been so fully described of late have long been known and more or less grappled with by the clergy and their various helpers, and have, both actually and relatively, of late years steadily diminished. It is important to bear these facts in mind in considering this question, for several reasons ; not