

ARTICLE IV.

THE GOLDEN GOSPELS IN LATIN IN THE
LIBRARY OF MR. J. PIERPONT MORGAN.¹

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*"The Fundamental Principles of the Science of Textual Criticism are not yet apprehended. In proof of this assertion, we appeal to the new Greek Text of Drs. Westcott and Hort—which, beyond all controversy, is more hopelessly remote from the inspired Original than any which has yet appeared. Let a generation of Students give themselves entirely up to this neglected branch of sacred Sciences. Let 500 more Copies of the Gospels, Acts, and Epistles be diligently collated. Let at least 100 of the ancient Lectionaries be very exactly collated also. Let the most important of the ancient Versions be edited afresh. . . . Above all, let the Fathers be called upon to give up their precious secrets. . . . Only so will it ever be possible to obtain a Greek Text on which absolute reliance may be placed, and which may serve as the basis for a satisfactory Revision of our Authorized Version."*²

THERE has come about in the last thirty years a new interest in the Latin MSS. of the New Testament. The old answer to Latin and Syriac students was, "Let us have the original Greek"; and with that reply the unreflecting were silenced. But further research has led to the belief that the original Greek is not always preserved in the Greek MSS. that have come down to us, but the true text is in some instances to be found preserved in the Versions, or Translations, that were

¹ The Golden Latin Gospels (Ⲙ) in the Library of J. Pierpont Morgan (formerly known as the "Hamilton Gospels" and sometimes as King Henry the Eighth's Gospels). Now edited for the first time with Critical Introduction and Notes, and accompanied by four full-page fac-similes. By H. C. Hoskier. Privately Printed, 1910.

² Dean Burgon, *The Revision Revised* (John Murray, 1883), p. 125.

made in apostolic and subapostolic times. The most valuable of the Versions from the point of view of antiquity and of influence is the Latin Version. From the fourth century to the sixteenth the only Bible known in Western Europe was the Latin Bible. Wiclif knew only the Latin Bible. The language of Tyndale, although he translated from Erasmus's Greek Testament, is steeped in Latin thought and Latin expressions. Our Authorized Version is in the main Tyndale's translation with a reactionary infusion of Latin words and Latin ecclesiastical terms.

Now the Bible Wiclif translated was Jerome's revision, which appeared first of all in the last decade of the fourth century, and which is known to-day as the Vulgate.

The Vulgate is quite an ancient recension, seeing that it takes us back across fifteen centuries; but it is possible to get behind the Vulgate. We have two almost complete MSS. of the Gospels — *b* and *ff* (or *ff*₂) — which are pre-Vulgate. The copies from which they were copied had not been overwritten with a single one of Jerome's new readings. Other MSS. (such as *a* and *d* and *k*) show signs of having undergone some revision that is traceable to Jerome; but this revision is not paramount, but only one among other influences.

As the centuries advance, the Vulgate text — already supreme in Italy — becomes more and more predominant in the West, in Gaul and in Britain. The Latin MSS. in the larger centers of church influence are the first to conform themselves to the Vulgate text. Gradually the non-Vulgate readings which are found lingering on in MSS. that belong to remote districts are ousted and replaced, until the fact meets us that ninety-nine out of every hundred Latin MSS. copied in the ninth century exhibit purely Vulgate texts. In parts of France and in Ireland an Hispanic form of "mixed"

texts continues even up to the eve of the introduction of printing; but such texts are rare, and owed their preservation solely to their seclusion and remoteness.

Thus much is said in order to explain the character of the text of the Golden Gospels (**JP**), an exact collation of which has now been published in a splendid volume by H. C. Hoskier, with four excellent photographic facsimiles.

The Gospels are, I believe with their editor, of British or Irish origin, and I would date them *circa* 700, which is the date of our most prized Vulgate MS., the Codex Amiatinus, now in the Laurentian Library at Florence. They exhibit in the main a Vulgate text, but have retained some Old-Latin readings found only in the most ancient copies known to us. Every shred of Old-Latin evidence is of immense value, and we thank the editor for his exact collation of all the oldest MSS., the laboriousness and tediousness of which can be estimated only by one who has taken the pains to follow him over part at least of his wide field of research.

Jerome did not make a new translation of the Gospels, nor was he the first to attempt to square the Latin and the Greek texts. He merely revised the current Old-Latin and conformed it here and there to the current Greek.

In the first two centuries after being committed to writing, the Gospels underwent numerous revisings from many hands. These revisings were in the main stylistic; but there were also bold harmonizings, of which Jerome bitterly complains (yet does not attempt to remedy). In this field Tatian, with his "Diatessaron," was perhaps not the first although no doubt he was the chief offender. All our extant MSS. of the Gospels are more or less harmonized, and nothing short of a discovery of a pre-Tatian Evangelium will enable us *entirely* to unravel the mischief done by the harmonizers of

the second and third centuries. Jerome might have helped here, but for some reason he refrained. In fact, Jerome's work shows him to have cared more for spelling and grammar, and agreement with the up-to-date Greek MSS. of his time, than for the recovery of the original readings of the Evangelists. He was essentially a churchman, and was inspired and commissioned by his patron and bishop Damasus, whose object was not to recover the lost autographs, but by recalling the Latin to the Greek of his day to construct a uniform working text fit for ecclesiastical purposes. Hence Jerome's policy was rather to conform to the current Greek text of the fourth century — in a word to let well alone — than to search for those more ancient MSS.— some of which must have been extant in his day — which would have exhibited the very autographs of the Apostles.

Thus while we recognize the antiquity of the Vulgate, we cannot rest in it as a final text. We believe it is on the whole nearer to the original documents of the Gospels than is the Greek text of Westcott and Hort. The rejection by these critics of the end verses of St. Mark and of our Lord's prayer for those who crucified him are two among numerous, sad mutilations of the sacred deposit, and are clearly traceable to the harmonizers who corrupted all early texts, and notably the texts of \aleph and B. Hort, strange to say, was much more ready to believe in the fallibility of the Evangelists than in the fallibility of the scribe of Codex B! To build on the inerrancy of any single MS. is to build on a foundation that later discoveries will be certain to sweep away. Beware of the text founded on one MS. — even though that MS. should happen to be of the fourth or fifth century! ¹ The Latin

¹ Among much that is striking in Hoskier's new book, "Concerning the Genesis of the Versions," which reached me too late

texts of which the purple Evangelium (\mathfrak{P}) is a good example are, beyond question, nearer the *ipsissima verba* of the Evangelists than is the Greek text of Westcott and Hort. A text formed by omitting only what *both* Codex B and the Pierpont Evangelium omitted and by harmonizing only what it and Codex B harmonized, would be a better text still; but would need further correcting from other ancient Latin and Greek copies, and then there would be the Syriac, the Coptic, and other Versions to be taken into consideration.

By his searching analysis, which omits nothing as trivial, Hoskier has shown that \mathfrak{P} has some ancient forms preserved in the Old-Latin MS. *ff* (or *ff*₂). One of these is *pos* for *post*. This is a spelling which is found in *ff* and the Fleury Palimpsest, but disappears after the fifth century. The fact that it is found in \mathfrak{P} suggests that \mathfrak{P} has an ancient base which was not entirely brought into line with the Vulgate by the corrector who corrected its Old-Latin ancestor. Other forms support this suggestion; viz. *seques*, *stas*, *respondēs* (which latter is found twenty-three times in *ff* for *respondens*), and *es* for *est*, which is a common confusion in *ff*. In St. Luke ix. 54 *dae* for *de* is found also in the Fleury Palimpsest, and in xii. 55 and xxi. 27 *e* for *et* is an old form fairly common in *ff*. In St. John vii. 25 *iherosolymis* is the spelling found in *ff* \mathfrak{P} , and is undoubtedly of great antiquity. So in xii. 36 *ff* \mathfrak{P} both have *habiit* for *abiit*. This, too, is a current fourth-century spelling found also in *b* and the Fleury Palimpsest. So likewise *inruerun*, *fuissen*, and *crcuerun* found in \mathfrak{P} are not blunders, but old phonetic

to be used for this review, on p. 86 occurs this sentence: "Our authorities of the IVth century are very important, but their importance has been magnified to the inclusion of much that is false [and omission of much that is true]."

forms; *ff* has *erun* for *erunt* and other similar elisions of final *t*. With *pontifici* (St. John xviii. 22) may be compared *pariseus* in *ff*. Another mark of antiquity is the confusion in \mathfrak{P} of *ad* and *ab* (see St. Mark xiv. 52). The spellings *aput*, *cottidie*, *puplicanus*, *hii*, *moyses*, *magdaleneae*, *scarioht* are all ancient spellings which occur only in the best Old-Latin MSS.

On the other hand, \mathfrak{P} exhibits *euuangelium*, *nichil*, *lux-oriose*, *magestate*, *tercius*, *quatuor*, *fatitis*, *perdicio*, *susspiciens*, *occulis*, *allius*, *isahac*, and other later spellings which first appear in MSS. of the seventh and eighth centuries.

The conclusion from the evidence of the spelling is that \mathfrak{P} is a "mixed" text — in the main Vulgate, but retaining valuable Old-Latin elements.

To turn now to readings. The MS. has been copied with much accuracy, and there are few errors of homoeoteleuton. In St. Matt. xxviii. 13, *ff* reads *nos tenuerunt*, and \mathfrak{P} *uenerunt*, all other MSS. have *nocte uenerunt*. This seems to confirm that in St. Matthew at least the base of \mathfrak{P} had affinities with the Old-Latin text of *ff*.

In St. John vi. 65, \mathfrak{P} *ff* are alone in reading, "No man can come except it were given him of my Father." And in xi. 22, \mathfrak{P} *ff* alone omit *quia*. For the rest they seldom agree in a unique *reading*, though not unseldom in a unique *spelling*.

With *r*, \mathfrak{P} has a common blunder in omitting St. Matt. xx. 31, but there are no ancient text-links between the two MSS., and they agree only where they both follow the Vulgate.

With *b*, \mathfrak{P} has a common blunder in St. Matt. iv. 21 of *precedens* for *procedens*, and another common blunder in xiii. 21 *scandalizantur* for *scandalizatur*.

There is nothing extravagant in any of the readings of

¶. It is a good, carefully copied MS., and keeps to the Vulgate readings more closely than to the Vulgate spellings.

Hoskier has taught us that ¶ must be classed, from its spellings, with the DLQR Vulgate group of Wordsworth; and that with R it shares many "Irishisms."

The DLQR group represents a breaking-up of the Old-Latin text of ff, and its approximation in text (though not in spelling) to the Vulgate.

I have recently copied the Harley MS. of the Epistles No. 1772 in the British Museum, and I have been struck by the many similar spellings between it and ¶. Both MSS. show Irish influence; but as Irish copyists were employed in France it is not impossible that they may have been copied across the channel.

The fact that ¶ is copied on purple vellum in gold letters shows that it was intended for some high ecclesiastic or royal personage. It is a pleasant conjecture that the MS. may have been known to King Alfred, that noble patron of sacred study. The Anglo-Saxon Version of the Gospels was made from a text practically the same as that of ¶.

The fragment M in the Morgan library it would be well to have published in full. It has undoubtedly some highly valuable Old-Latin readings. In St. Luke xi. 2, *Pater qui in caelis es* is perhaps based on the text of ff — *Pater sancte qui in celis est*. *Sancte* would be omitted because not found in St. Matthew.

The comments I have made on select readings from ¶ give the reader no true conception of the immense amount of work Hoskier has done in collating ¶ with all the most ancient authorities and with the chief MSS. of the Old-Latin and the Vulgate. He has amassed a storehouse of exact information for some future investigators to work on. The

Abbot Gasquet and his collaborators owe him a great debt of gratitude.

As to Hoskier's tentative conclusions which are found in the Introduction to the collation, I am entirely at one with him in refusing to believe that we have yet reached finality in the question of the *ipsissima verba* of the New Testament writers.¹ Much ground is still to be possessed. American scholars are beginning to take their share of the work. There must be no rushing in with infallible conclusions until many more copies — not to say five hundred — have been diligently collated. There must be no worship of any one MS. or small group of MSS. *All* variant readings are old, and all MSS. have some weight. The Greek must be corrected and verified by the Latin, and both where possible by the Syriac and other Versions. Latin MSS. alone present a veritable mine for future excavators. The Latin Irish MSS. have not yet been forced to give up their secrets. The inexhaustible treasures of Old-Latin readings in the local MSS. of France — to wit the Perpignan MS. *p* — have as yet scarcely been drawn upon. In the *Journal of Theological Studies* for July I hope to print the Catholic Epistles from the Perpignan MS. with many striking Old-Latin readings hitherto unknown.

English scholars are looking forward to the publication of the recently discovered Freer Gospels. The photograph published of the last page of St. Mark's Gospel has been eagerly scanned. The MS. has marked and striking affinities with Codex Bezae, which has hitherto been our only representative in Greek of the so-called "Western Text." But "West-

¹ May I refer those readers who want more facts (and fewer theories) to my new book, "The Records Unrolled" (John Ouseley, Ltd., 2s. 6d.), in which I endeavor to tell in a popular way the thrilling story of the early MSS., many of which I myself have copied and collated.

ern Text" is a misnomer, as the MSS. that contain that text are found in Egypt and Syria as well as in the West of Europe. The order of the Gospels in the Freer MS. is that of Codex Bezae and of Cureton's Syriac — Matthew, John, Luke, Mark.

Now the Freer Gospels, Codex Bezae, Cureton's Syriac, and *every known Latin MS.* except the Bobbio *κ* (which Lachmann calls *ιδιωτικός* — "hunc igitur propter perversas ac mutilatas sententias inter Italicos merito dicemus idioticum")¹ contains the Received-Text ending of St. Mark's Gospel. If further evidence were needed of its unimpeachable genuineness we have the remark casually let fall by Irenæus in his third book "Against Heresies": "In fine autem Evangelii ait Marcus: Et quidem Dominus Jesus [+ Christus, Freer Gospels] postquam locutus est eis receptus est in caelos et sedet ad dexteram Dei." Irenæus knew of no questioning of the Marcan authorship of these last verses; and on Irenæus' statement alone, considering his age and friendship with Polycarp, and through him his personal knowledge of the Apostles, I should be prepared to accept the verses as St. Mark's in face of any questionings of their authenticity by later *third* or *fourth* century writers. Those who think the ending of St. Mark xvi. 8 with *γὰρ* shows mutilation should compare St. John xiii. 13, which also ends with *γὰρ*. Those who think the diction of St. Mark xvi. 9–20 is different from the rest of the Gospel have by nature a verifying faculty which other men cannot attain even by long and persistent study. The end verses of St. Mark's Gospel lopped from their parent stem by the harmonizers of the third and fourth centuries, and finally by Tischendorf (whose worship of *κ* is notorious) and Hort, will (depend upon it) have to be restored to the rock whence they were hewn.

¹ Nov. Test. Graece et Lat., p. xvii.

The present writer is in agreement with Hoskier in not regarding the Westcott and Hort Greek Text as final, and he is also unconvinced by many of "Hort's shibboleths." Hort's belief that he had attained finality is an almost weird case of self-deception. "It would be an illusion," he says, "to anticipate important changes of Text [i. e. of the Text issued by Drs. Westcott and Hort] from any acquisition of new evidence. . . . The effect of future criticism, as of future discovery, we suspect, will not be to import many fresh readings."¹ But already, in barely thirty years, Hort's despised Western readings have become not only strengthened in attestation but increased vastly in numbers; and as for fresh readings the present writer alone has discovered some hundreds in the Fleury Palimpsest and in the first hand of *b* in St Luke, which Hort knew nothing of, and we doubt not that the publication of the Freer Gospels will add some hundreds more. Every new MS. with Old-Latin or other ancient elements, when accurately collated, yields its quota of fresh readings, and the accumulation from the work of many scholars in many lands is still going on.

When the five hundred more copies which Dean Burgon desiderated have been collated; when the fathers have been critically edited, and the Vulgate readings thrust into them eliminated (which there is reason to believe can now never be *wholly* done); when the Old-Latin Version has been restored by the aid of many yet unpublished MSS. to its primitive unharmonized state (as far as that can be accomplished) — then and not till then, will the material be at hand for a *satisfactory* revision of the Greek text underlying our glorious Authorized English Version. Of this Version, which has now entered on its tercentenary, the Greek Text — although

¹ Introduction, p. 285.

not the final text — has been shown by modern research to be by no means so insecure or untrustworthy as was once everywhere proclaimed by the ardent followers of Hort and the equally ardent worshipers of those twin-brothers from the same workshop, \aleph and B.

It is desirable here to make known without further delay to American readers that the Saviour's words from the cross on behalf of his murderers (St. Luke xxiii. 34) are *not* missing in b^* , as Hort (from Bianchini's edition of the MS. in 1749) was led to suppose. They occur in b^* in the form: *Pater, dimitte illis nesciunt quid faciant*. The second corrector of b in the middle of the fifth century (at which time evidently an edict went forth against the reading) erased these precious words and substituted in their place *Dividentes etiam vestimenta eius miserunt sortem*.¹ The evidence for their excision is thus reduced to B with a and d (which have a large common element), two cursives, one Egyptian Version, and the syncopated *Syr. Sin.* The evidence of b shows clearly that Hort followed not the primitive text, but a later ecclesiastical revision that attempted (but in vain) to expunge words that forever must carry in themselves proof of their divine origin.

How deep-seated is the mischief done by the harmonizer to all our extant Greek MSS. may be seen by placing side by side St. Matt. viii. 20 and St. Luke ix. 58, which are harmonized in all Greek MSS., with their non-harmonized form as found in b^* of the Old Latin:—

ST. MATT. VIII. 20 IN \aleph BAC, ETC.

αἱ ἀλώπεκες φωλεοὺς ἔχουσιν καὶ τὰ πετεινὰ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ κατασκηνώσει, ὁ δὲ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀθρώπου οὐκ ἔχει ποῦ τὴν κεφαλὴν κλίση.

ST. MATT. VIII. 20 IN b .

Vulpes foveas habent et uolucres caeli nidos ubi requiescant filius autem hominis non habet ubi caput suum declinet.

¹Old-Latin Biblical Texts, No. VI. The Codex Veronensis, 1911.

ST. LUKE IX. 58 IN \aleph BAC, ETC.
 [This is word for word as
 found in St. Matt. viii. 20.]

ST. LUKE IX. 58 IN δ .
 Volpes foveas habeant et
 uolucres caeli nidos ubi requi-
 escant nam ego sum homo qui
 non habet domum ubi caput
 suum declinet.

"Let the foxes have their dens and the birds of the sky their nests where they may rest; for I am a Man who hath no home where to lay down his head."

This striking utterance of the Saviour preserved in δ^* comes before the work done by Tatian, and thus takes us back at least to the middle of the second century.

Does not the discovery of such new readings as these support the statement of the late Dr. Salmon: "The authorities [\aleph and B] on which Westcott and Hort rely are still so far from the original autographs, that the careful ascertaining of the verdict of these authorities may be, as I said [p. 107], but an elaborate locking of the stable door after the horse has been stolen?"¹

It is alas! only too true what Hoskier says in his introduction: "Since Bentley much has been done as regards Greek MSS. but little as regards the Latin" (p. v). But the Latin is now having its revenge for its long neglect. Men are awaking to the strength of the internal evidence by which they claim to represent the apostolic autographs. To my mind the expression "The New Testament in the *original* Greek" is not beyond controversy. For the last five years I have inclined to the belief that St. Mark wrote his Gospel *originally in Latin*. I was first led to this belief by the Latin vulgarisms which are found in the oldest MSS. of the Old-Latin Version, and which I concluded a translated Version would not have had. In confirmation of this deduction, some Greek cursives add at the end of the Gospel *εγραφη ρωμιαστι εν ρωμη*;

¹ Some Criticism of the Text of the New Testament, p. 127.

similarly the Jerusalem Syriac adds *finitum est evangelium sanctum praedicationis Marci, qui locutus est ac praedicavit latine romae*; and another Syriac recension states more succinctly *finitum est evangelium sanctum Marci, quod locutus est latine romae*. As to the Latin words imbedded in the Greek text of St. Mark, they are well known to all students.

To discuss the Coptic and Syriac element which Hoskier finds in the Old-Latin I have not the requisite knowledge. His belief that **κ** was copied from a bilingual MS. like D I now regard as highly probable. There is abundant proof of latinization in both **κ** and B. The publication of the Freer Gospels should cast light on this difficult and as yet almost untouched question. It is satisfactory to know that the publication of what may prove the greatest biblical discovery of the century is being diligently pressed forward by American scholars. In these studies of the Gospels — leading to a fuller knowledge of the Gospels — is the only hope for the unity and peace of the world. With these four self-same Gospels is indissolubly bound up the future well-being and happiness not only of the Anglo-Saxon race but of the whole wide world.