

ART. V.—THE ROMANCE OF CODEX BEZÆ, WITH SOME COLLATERAL REFLECTIONS.

PART II.

IN further proof of the dependence of the Greek text on the Latin comes the interesting section on the balancing of the two texts. Even the most casual observer of the Codex will notice that the two texts correspond *line for line* and almost *word for word*, and some of the changes in the Greek are due to the omission or insertion of words (not changing the meaning) in order to preserve a lineal equality, without which one text might soon have outrun the other.

And in connection with this comes in the discussion of the whole question of the colometry, as throwing light upon disputed readings. Let one instance suffice. Professor Harris is contending that the colometry is primitive, and affords a clue in many instances to the true division into sentences. I wish I had had time to check some of the readings of the Revised Version, and especially the marginal readings, by this means. But one will do. The scribe of D "has done his best to help us by means of interpunction in cases where his lines do not agree with the primitive model. And in almost every case where there is a dividing point in the middle of the line in the Bezan text, it is because two cola have been run together, or because in some other way the regular colometry has been deserted." Thus in St. John i. 3, 4 (found only in the Greek), we read :

πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδέν.
ὃ γέγονεν
ἐν αὐτῷ ζῶῃ ἐστιν.

"Here it is clear that ὃ γέγονεν, which is marked by dividing points before and after, is a primitive line, (and) evidently the remaining part of the preceding sentence ; but, unfortunately, the second point became lost in the tradition of the text, and, as a result, the words became attached to the following line, so producing :

ὃ γέγονεν ἐν αὐτῷ ζῶῃ ἐστιν,"

the marginal reading in the Revised Version. "The text of Codex Bezae shows that this cannot have been the primitive colometry. Yet the new arrangement of the text has been made the basis of a good deal of exegetical subtlety."

Another instance at once of the knowledge and critical insight of the writer, and of the value of his method is seen on page 149, where he shows how a quotation in the Acts of St. Perpetua was made from D, and how the line-divisions are ancient. In the Acta Perpetuæ, "the angels are made to cry

of the elect brought from the four winds of heaven, 'Ecce sunt, ecce sunt; cum admiratione.'" This peculiar exclamation arose from the mistake of regarding the end of the line as the end of the sentence. The Latin of D reads :

Et venient ab oriente et occidentem
 Et ab aquilone et Austro et recumbunt
 In regno Dei et ecce sunt
 Novissimi qui erunt primi et sunt
 Primi qui erunt novissimi.

Before passing on to questions of doctrinal import arising out of D, I must quote Professor Harris's summary of the results of his inquiry into the relation of the Greek and Latin texts, as this is one of the points in which he so powerfully traverses the conclusions of Westcott and Hort. He says, p. 177 : "The conclusion to which we have been led is an astonishing one : the hydra-headed Western text has been resolved into a single form—that form is the Western bilingual ; its apparently Eastern character is a delusion, for the old Syriac texts lean on a Græco-Latin, and perhaps simply on a Latin, base. . . . The Western text is now no longer the 'conceivably apostolic' edition which Dr. Hort suggests, but it represents the successive translations and retranslations of actual Occidental tradition. This text was translated into Latin before the time of Tatian, and the primitive bilingual in which the translation stood is a document of a patriarchal dignity, and largely capable of restoration." It is sufficient to add to this simply that, to those who know the conditions of the problem, it will be evident that the history of Codices Aleph and B will require re-investigation and rewriting.

But we have not come to the end of the surprises of the "Study of Codex Bezae," which are rapidly justifying my title of "The Romance."

Not only does D Latinize its Greek text ; it also, in some cases, bears traces of Syriac influence. One of these is too striking to be omitted.

In St. Mark viii. 10, Cod. D. reads :

Greek: *Και ηλθεν εις τα ορια Μελεγαλα.*
 Latin: *Et venit in partes Magidan.*

The other texts read :

ηλθεν εις τα μέρη Δαλμανουθα.

But the letters *λμανουθα* are an almost exact transcript of the Syriac for *εις τα μέρη*, so that we have in Syriac the double equivalent for *εις τα μέρη*—*λμανουθα λμανουθα*, once translated back into the Greek of the other texts, and once transliterated into the unknown name of an unknown place, the real name having dropped out under the influence of this

"dittograph," as Professor Harris calls it, and Codex Bezae, the most corrupt of all the Codices, *alone* preserving the true reading in St. Mark, as may be seen by a comparison of the parallel passage in St. Matt. xv. 39.

It is quite possible that the influence of the Syriac upon the Greek has been considerably understated, as suggested by the *Guardian* reviewer, and that many of the supposed Latinizations are really originally Syriac, but this point will require very minute investigation. Meanwhile the existence of Syriac influence *in Aleph and B is proved*, and that for the time is the main critical point.

Many of the glosses Professor Harris ascribes to Montanist influence, especially in the Acts, where he ascribes more than forty to this influence. The history of Montanism has yet to be written, and nothing has really been done since Mr. De Soyres' Hulsean prize essay. Professor Harris says: "When once we realize the fundamental spiritual aims of Montanism (instead of merely treating it as an outward division of the Church), however much such aims may be liable to fanatical extravagance, a number of difficulties become clear to us in the history and discipline of the Church, to say nothing of the illumination thrown upon the text of the Codex Bezae. Every verse of the Old Testament or of the New, which treats of the descent of the spirit of prophecy, is a hinge in the Montanist system" (p. 194). This, it must be remembered, applies only to the Acts. Professor Harris (p. 227), with one possible obscure instance, "does not know of any definite Montanistic touches in the Gospels."

Marcion is also indicated as a possible source of some of the glosses, and the pre-Tatian Passion harmony of others, for the details of which I must refer to Professor Harris's own treatment. The polemical bearing, I take it, of his investigations is this: that if the primitive Latin text, of which D is the best extant representative, originating in North Africa, is thus manifestly charged with glosses—Homeric, Syriac, Montanist, Marcionite, Tatian, and pre-Tatian Harmonistic—and if, as he has shown, even Aleph itself is not wanting in traces of Syriac textual (not doctrinal) influences, then it follows that ere we can accept the almost supreme authority of Aleph and B as against what we call the Textus Receptus—erroneously so-called beyond question, but still representing a tradition preserved by a vast number of MSS., and by such a version as the Vulgate—many steps must be traversed in addition to those already gone over, and many preliminary questions decided, if possible, of the solutions of which we are at present only learning the elements.

I have not exhausted one per cent. of the many interesting

problems suggested by this romantic piece of writing, but I have not time further to specialize.

The questions it raises are not of a character to be decided off-hand. They will not be reached in our time, nor possibly in that of our children; but it is well that we should know of their existence, and, if possible, add our contribution, however small, to their settlement, at least endeavour to comprehend their nature, and certainly to learn their lessons. Briefly, then, the problems opened up are the following, and the mere statement of them will be sufficient. I give them in Professor Harris's own words.

Is the old Latin earlier than Marcion?

Is the Curetonian Syriac earlier than Tatian?

Does the Homerizer antedate the Curetonian text?

Then will follow the whole question of the origin and value of Aleph and B, and already it will appear that Westcott and Hort's second volume has now mainly a purely historical interest, and can no longer be taken as a final solution. It is only eleven years since it was given to the world, though used in this venerable chamber¹ all through the revision work, but eleven years is a long time in these days of ours. This surely should "give us pause," and make us more careful in the judgments we form. A single study by one brilliant man of a single MS. of the New Testament has undone a good deal of the carefully elaborated work of three generations, and takes us back at one step to the days of Mill and Wetstein and Middleton. And this because of the method much more than because of the actual results achieved. Some of those results may be traversed. Professor Harris himself has, within two years, reversed some of his own judgments with regard to the text of the Greek version of the Acts of Sts. Perpetua and Felicitas, and to the question of the pre-Tatian Passion Harmony being the ultimate base of the Western text. But the method—that of proceeding by slow and minute criticism of individual documents, and not by the wider generalizations, in the first instance, concerning whole families of MSS.—is the only sure and safe one. It has proved so in physical science, in general literature, in historical studies, and it is justifying itself in the science of Biblical criticism. It is the inductive method, the splendid discovery of Lord Bacon, upon which all our modern knowledge rests. Do not understand me to speak slightly of the work of Westcott and Hort, and other pioneers. Their work is indispensable as a step in the process. Its finality is the only point to be criticised, and this *they*

¹ This paper was read in the Jerusalem Chamber in May, 1892.

would not claim, though some less judicial minds have claimed it for them. What, for instance, can we say of a work like Dr. Weymouth's "Resultant Greek Testament," which substitutes for the older form of notes (*viz.*, the readings of the various codices), which were of immense value, that of giving us the names of modern scholars who prefer such and such readings? The information is interesting, but not of sufficient value to be the sole substance of a Greek text with notes. We want to get back to the original authorities and to deal with them, and not to deal only with the results of any modern scholar in their place, however valuable they may be. Thus Weymouth in his edition gives no hint, in the passage quoted just now, that D reads Magidan and *Μελεγαλα*, and thus, as we now know, preserves the true reading. His method is a wrong one, and in these matters method is of prime importance.

It may be said, indeed, with perfect truth, that we are only just at the beginning of our studies in the New Testament. How many questions of supreme interest are now being keenly debated by reverent scholars, keenly critical and thoroughly imbued with the inductive spirit of which I have just spoken. Some of these problems may be new to some of my readers, and I know they will pardon my naming them in brief review, as their mere mention may often turn aside the hostile weapon of the ignorant assailant, and convince him that there is some value to be attached to the opinion of experts in the science of theology as in other sciences.

To confine our problems within narrow limits, take those surrounding the Gospels only. Was the original of St. Matthew Greek or Aramaic? Aramaic, said Papias. Greek, say most modern critics. Who is to decide? *The scholars*, surely, Professor Marshall in England, Resch in Germany, who are slowly, cautiously, independently, but apparently surely, reconstructing the older Aramaic Gospel by a process of retranslation based upon similarities and differences in the Synoptic narrative. This work is intensely interesting, involving great masses of detail, but its partial success so far may at least cause us to wonder whether after all the much abused, careless, slovenly Papias was not right, and most of our modern critics wrong.

Or, again, take the question of the relation of the Synoptic narrative to the Johannine. The recent works of Mr. J. J. Halcombe, based upon a dictum of Tertullian, and of that most luminous and penetrating genius, H. H. Wendt, are re-opening the whole series of problems that we thought were closed by Westcott on St. John. Marvellous and spiritually permanent as that exposition always must remain, yet Wendt's treatment

of the Logia of our Lord, as recorded in St. John, throws a new light on many parts hitherto obscure. And may I here be allowed a grumble at the omission of the important critical volume from the translation published lately of Wendt? Perhaps, if the chorus of English disapproval be made loud enough, the defect may be remedied, as it is evident from Wendt's preface to the translation that he himself is by no means pleased at it, and calmly refers the English reader (knowing no German, or else, why a translation at all?) to the German first volume for a justification of his critical conclusions. Let anyone read and study Professor Sanday's recent articles in the *Expositor* on the Synoptic problem and the Johannine problem, and Professor Marshall's series in the same volume on the Aramaic Gospel, articles which Professor Harris's work will supplement and illuminate, and he will see at once that so far from the last word, or if I may use the expression, the last *kind* of word, having been said on the question of the Gospels, their origin, their relations to one another, their early history (their subsequent editing, possibly from early and contemporaneous collections of Logia), their after collection and unification, leading to the expunging of such parts as are preserved in the so-called interpolations of Codex Bezae—we are only on the very threshold of such inquiries. With this very important consideration never now to be forgotten: When the study began (speaking roughly), with Strauss, 120 A.D. was the starting-point, and *circa* 160 the close, of the period to which they were assigned. Now 120 is the closing point of the most extreme modern school. The result of the former study has been to vindicate the orthodox position almost up to the hilt. A slight doubt still hangs round the Pastoral Epistles, but even that seems to be passing away. The newer criticism is different in spirit from the old. It is represented best, perhaps, by Wendt, who starts with the acceptance of the spiritual element, and seeks only to account for the mere historical and external phenomena. There is no sense of insecurity, no feeling of adverseness to the supernatural, no half-concealed scepticism of the deity of Jesus Christ our Lord. So that the prospect is full of hope and promise, and one that may well cheer and encourage those who from circumstances and training and inclination only stand and look on at the protagonists in the encounter, at the pioneers in the new enterprise.

And if so, then the Romance of Codex Bezae will some day have another volume added to it, dealing with another and different set of characters, and written by some profound and brilliant Oriental scholar, for there is a very close parallel to be drawn between the recent history of the criticism of the New

Testament and that of the Old. We have heard the warning "Remember Tübingen!" quoted only to be scouted, as by Mr. Gore in "Lux Mundi." Here is another warning, "Remember Codex Bezae!" For let me state simply for the Old Testament the problems that require to be solved before a judgment can be pronounced worth the uttering upon the questions that are now so loudly and so freely discussed. There is no harm in the discussion; but there is harm in the claim to finality, or approximate finality, made—*e.g.*, over and over again by Canon Cheyne in his *Expositor* review of Canon Driver's extremely able and scientific book, one great merit of which is its refusal to state conclusions where conclusions cannot safely be stated. Canon Driver gives the evidence. He often declines, tacitly or overtly, to draw the inference. Why? He knows the evidence is not complete, and he deserves great credit for his method.

The questions are these :

The history of the Samaritan Pentateuch, known to have been in existence before the exile, and therefore before the last recension, according to the modern critics, of the Hebrew Pentateuch.

The history of the Hebrew text, which even the Old Testament revisers did not dare to tackle critically.

The history of the LXX. text, to say nothing of the texts of Aquila, Theodotion and Symmachus and the rest, the materials for which are only now in process of being published in the great Concordance, to which I made allusion early in my paper.

The history of the Coptic text. Was it made from the LXX., or are there evidences of its being independent, and possibly influencing the LXX. itself?

The bearing of these questions on the critical issues arising out of the study of the Old Testament is evident, and it is manifest that no final results, or even results approximating to finality, can be ascertained till these questions are answered, and especially till that one about the Samaritan Pentateuch has received attention. At present it has not been touched, or my information thereon is marvellously at fault.

You may think I have wandered far from my original text in these latter observations, but it is not so. What I have been all along anxious to bring before you is the value of the critical method, of which Professor Rendel Harris's Study in Codex Bezae is so masterly and signal an illustration.

FREDERIC RELTON.

