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THE LAST TWELVE VERSES OF THE GOSPEL OF MARK

It has become the fashion to speak of the last twelve verses of St. Mark's Gospel as unauthentic. This critical conclusion, if it were valid, would leave the Gospel to end abruptly and rob us of the Great Commission as there recorded.

We are told that "the light thrown on the question by criticism, represented, *e.g.*, by Tischendorf, . . . Zahn¹ . . . Westcott and Hort, . . . approaches certainty" (*Expositor's Greek Testament*, Vol. I, p. 454). Dr. Alexander B. Bruce goes on to say in the work mentioned, that the external evidence strongly favours this conclusion. The section is wanting in two of the oldest manuscripts, \aleph and B. He quotes from Jerome and Eusebius that these verses are wanting in nearly all Greek copies, and then goes on to say: "The internal evidence of style confirms the impression made by the external; characteristic words of Mark are wanting; words not elsewhere found in the Gospel occur; the narrative is a meagre, colourless summary, a composition based on the narratives of the other Gospels, and signs are ascribed to believers, some of which wear an apocryphal aspect. Some, in spite of such considerations, still regard these verses as an integral part of Mark's work, but for many the question of present interest is: what account is to be given of them viewed as an indubitable addendum by another hand." There is no reference whatever to the elaborate vindication of the twelve verses of the Gospel according to Mark by Dean John W. Burgon of Oriel College, Oxford. This devastating reply to all the critical objectors was published in 1871 and takes up in the greatest detail every argument advanced against the authenticity and genuineness of the passage. F. C. Conybeare, the same critic who assailed the genuineness of Matthew xxviii. 19f., also "discovered" the real author of the concluding verses of Mark. He is Aristion, the Presbyter, mentioned in an Armenian codex written about A.D. 986. And to satisfy pious folk who

¹ [Misprinted "Hahn" in *Expositor's Greek Testament*, loc. cit.]

love the Gospels as they are, Dr. Bruce concludes his remarks on the Great Commission in Mark by saying: "Jesus may not have spoken as Matthew reports, but the words put into His mouth by the first evangelist are far more worthy of the Lord than those here ascribed to Him. Here also we find a great lapse from the high level of Matthew's version of the farewell words of Jesus: signs, physical charisms, and thaumaturgic powers, taking the place of the spiritual presence of the exalted Lord." (See also Meyer's *Commentary on Mark*, pp. 241-244.)

Those who use Dr. Moffatt's translation of the New Testament will find the same cavalier dismissal of these verses in Mark. He makes this Gospel end abruptly: "They said nothing to anyone for they were afraid of—"; then in a footnote, states that the reader has a choice of two appendices, second-century attempts to complete what Mark left undone!

Now all this would be very interesting if it were true. But both external and internal evidence *can* be and *has* been brought together to show "*that not a particle of doubt, that not an atom of suspicion, attaches to the last twelve verses of the Gospel according to Mark*". These are the closing words of Dean Burgon's masterly monograph to which we will refer in some detail.

As regards the evidence of the manuscripts, we have much later argument than that so carefully compiled in 1871 by Dean Burgon. Albert C. Clark, Corpus Professor of Latin at Oxford, in his book, *The Primitive Text of the Gospels and Acts* (Oxford, 1914), summarises his argument in a preface from which we quote :

"The method which I have here endeavoured to apply to the criticism of the Gospels and Acts is one which took shape in the course of a previous investigation conducted upon the text of Cicero . . . The test which I propose is arithmetical. It is based upon an empirical observation which I made while working upon the text of Cicero, namely, that short passages, the genuineness of which has been doubted on the ground of omission by a particular manuscript or family of manuscripts, frequently contain the same, or nearly the same, number of letters. I thus found myself in the presence of a unit. When I examined longer passages in the same way, I found multiples of this unit. The natural inference is that the unit corresponds to a line in an ancestor . . . The chief result of my investigation has been to show the falsity of the principle *brevior lectio potior* [the shorter reading has stronger evidence]. This was laid down by Griesbach as a canon of criticism. . . . Unless my method is based upon a delusion, this statement has no foundation in facts. I may also observe that it is not so easy to invent as it is to omit.

"It will be understood that my work has been almost exclusively confined to the text of Cicero. It was only recently, after I had gained confidence in the use of my method, that, in a spirit of curiosity, I happened to apply it to the text of the Gospels. The results were so surprising that I gave up, for the present, my work upon Cicero, which can only interest a small circle, and devoted myself to this more important inquiry.

"I must here state that when I began my investigation, I had not made any study of New Testament criticism. I had been brought up to look on the Revised Text as final, to smile at persons who maintained the authenticity of St. Mark xvi. 9-20, or St. John vii. 53-viii. 11, etc., and to suppose that the 'vagaries' of the 'Western' text were due to wholesale interpolation. The object which I had in view was merely to study the mutual relations of the oldest Greek uncials, notably, the Vaticanus (*B*), the Sinaiticus (*Σ*), and the Alexandrinus (*A*). I was, however, soon dislodged from this arrogant attitude, and irresistibly driven to very different conclusions.

"These I can only briefly indicate here, and must refer the reader to my subsequent discussion for the evidence. Nowhere is the falsity of the maxim *brevior lectio potior* more evident than in the New Testament. The process has been one of contraction, not of expansion. The primitive text is the longest, not the shortest. It is to be found not in *B Σ*, or in the majority of Greek manuscripts, but in the 'Western' family, i.e., in the ancient versions and the Codex Bezae (*D*). If my analysis is sound, we are brought back to an archetype of the four Gospels in book form, which cannot be later than the middle of the second century. This archetype appears to have contained the passages which have been most seriously suspected by recent critics, e.g., the end of St. Mark and St. John vii. 53-viii. 11."¹

The reader will pardon the length of these quotations because they are important and they also bring us to the heart of the problem, namely, the fact that Codex *B* of the Vatican Library and Codex *Σ* brought from Mount Sinai in 1859 *do not contain the last twelve verses of Mark*. This was the principal reason why Tischendorf, Tregelles and Alford denied their genuineness. So when Westcott and Hort issued their revised text of the New Testament, they assured us that "the original text terminated abruptly, from whatever cause . . . the rest was added at another time and probably by another hand". Meyer insists that *vv.* 9-19 are an apocryphal fragment and reproduces the so-called external and internal evidence.

We desire to give a summary of the arguments of Dean John William Burgon (in a book that proved as interesting to us as a detective story), and then to return briefly to the contention of Clark with which we began and later evidence.

¹ From an entirely different angle a Russian New Testament student, Dr. Ivan Panin, comes to a similar conclusion. He spent many years in a meticulous study of the "numerical value and structure of the Old and New Testament text". In his *Numeric Greek New Testament* (Oxford University Press, 514 pp.), he lists twenty-three numeric features beneath the surface of Mark xvi. 9-20, that tend to prove it genuine. His method is by many considered bizarre if not absurd. (See the *S.S. Times*, September 3, 1941, and reply, December 26, 1942.) There is a copy of his rare and privately printed book on *The Last Twelve Verses of Mark: Their Genuineness Established* (Ontario: Aldershort, 1930) in the New York Public Library.

The question is of comparatively recent date, for Griesbach was the first (1796-1806) to insist that the concluding verses were spurious.

I. The early Fathers, to the number of nineteen, including Papias, Justin Martyr and Irenaeus, witness to these verses in their writings. Some of these are quotations, it is true, fragmentary, but others are complete. Ambrose cites verses 16-18 three times. Jerome gives all the twelve verses their place in the Vulgate. And these nineteen witnesses represent every part of the ancient Church, from Antioch to Rome and Carthage. Seven of them are of more ancient date than the oldest codex we possess.¹

II. The early versions are also examined and found to yield unflinching testimony to the genuineness of these verses. The Peshitta, the Vetus Itala, the Vulgate, and the Gothic and the Egyptian Versions *all* contain the passage in question. The main contradictory testimony is the Armenian Version whose codices are of more recent date. "Thus we are in possession of the testimony of at least six independent witnesses of a date considerably anterior to the earliest extant codex of the Gospels. Their testimony to the genuineness of these verses is unflinching."

In Chapter V, Burgon deals with the alleged hostile witness of certain early Fathers, such as, Eusebius, Gregory of Nyssa and Jerome. These are examined one by one in the most painstaking manner and we cannot escape the conclusion of Burgon:

"Six Fathers of the Church have been examined who are commonly represented as bearing hostile testimony to the last twelve verses of St. Mark's Gospel; and they have been easily reduced to *one*. Three of them (Hesychius, Jerome, Victor) prove to be echoes, not voices. The remaining two (Gregory of Nyssa and Severus) are neither voices nor echoes, but merely *names*, Gregory of Nyssa having really no more to do with this discussion than Philip of Macedon and 'Severus' and 'Hesychius' representing one and the same individual.

¹In *The Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels* (London, 1896), a posthumous work of Dean Burgon, edited by Edward Miller, we have the following list of the witnesses for the traditional ending of Mark's Gospel (page 109): Papias (Eus. H. E. 3: 39); Justin Martyr (Tryph. 53; Apol. i. 45); Irenaeus (c. Haer. III. x. 6; iv. 56); Tertullian (De Resurr. Carn. xxxvii; Adv. Praxeam xxx); Clementines (Epit. 141); Hippolytus (c. Haer. Noet, *ad fin*); Vincentius (Second Council of Carthage—Routh, Rell. Sacr. iii. p. 124); Acta Pilati (xiv. 2); Apost. Can. and Const. (can. 1; v. 7; 19; vi. 15; 30; viii. 1); Eusebius (Mai, Script. Vett. Nov. Collect. i. p. 1); Cyril Jerus. (Cat. xiv. 27); Syriac Table of Canons; Macarius Magnes (iii. 16; 24); Aphraates (Dem. i—bis); Didymus (Trin. ii. 12); Syriac Acts of the Apostles; Epiphanius (Adv. Haer. I. xiv. 6); Gregory Nyss. (In Christ. Resurr. ii); Apocryphal Acts of the Gospel—Wright (4; 17; 24); Ambrose (Hexameron vi. 38; De Interpell. ii. 5; Apol. proph. David II. iv. 26; Luc. vii. 81; De Poenit. I. viii. 35; De Spir. S. II. xiii. 151). The *only* contradictory evidence in the Fathers is that of Eusebius (Mai, Script. Vett. Nov. Collect. i. p. 1).

Only by a critic seeking to mislead his reader will any one of these five Fathers be in future cited as witnessing against the genuineness of St. Mark xvi. 9-20. Eusebius is the solitary witness who survives the ordeal of exact inquiry. But Eusebius (as we have seen), instead of proclaiming his distrust of this portion of the Gospel, enters upon an elaborate proof that its contents are not inconsistent with what is found in the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. John. His testimony is reducible to two innocuous and wholly unconnected propositions: the first—that there existed in his day a vast number of copies in which the last chapter of St. Mark's Gospel ended abruptly at verse 8 (the correlative of which, of course, would be that there also existed a vast number which *were* furnished with the present ending); the second—that by putting a comma after the word 'Αναστᾶς, St. Mark xvi. 9 is capable of being reconciled with St. Matthew xxviii. 1" (pp. 65-66).

III. In Chapter VI of Burgon the manuscript testimony is shown to be overwhelmingly in favour of these verses. They are contained in every important manuscript in the world *except two*. However, neither Codex B nor Codex \aleph is infallible but both contain omissions and interpolations. Eighteen uncials and six hundred cursive manuscripts of this Gospel *contain* the verses in question. The superstitious reverence for Codex B is unwarranted. (A. C. Clark comes to the same conclusion on entirely other grounds, based not on the text as such, but on stichometry and the proof of omissions by copyists.) Burgon gives several examples (pp. 73-75) and then he concludes :

"To say that in the Vatican Codex (B), which is unquestionably the oldest we possess, St. Mark's Gospel ends abruptly at the eighth verse of the sixteenth chapter, and that the customary subscription (ΚΑΤΑ ΜΑΡΚΟΝ) follows, is true; but it is far from being *the whole* truth. It requires to be stated in addition that the scribe, whose plan is found to have been to begin every fresh book of the Bible at the top of *the next ensuing column* to that which contained the concluding words of the preceding book, has at the close of St. Mark's Gospel deviated from his else invariable practice. He has left in this place one column entirely vacant. It is *the only vacant column* in the whole manuscript—a blank space *abundantly sufficient to contain the twelve verses which he nevertheless withheld*. Why did he leave that column vacant? What can have induced the scribe on this solitary occasion to depart from his established rule? The phenomenon (I believe I was the first to call distinct attention to it) is in the highest degree significant, and admits of only one interpretation. *The older manuscript from which Codex 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*. Never was blank more intelligible! Never was silence more eloquent! By this simple expedient, strange to relate, the Vatican Codex is made to *refute itself* even while it seems to be bearing testimony against the concluding verses of St. Mark's Gospel, by withholding them; for it forbids the inference which, under ordinary circumstances, must have been drawn from that omission. It does more. By *leaving room* for the verses it omits, it brings into prominent notice at the end of fifteen centuries and a half, *a more ancient witness than itself*" (pp. 86, 87).¹

¹ Dean Burgon's conclusions were corroborated in two posthumous volumes, *The Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels* and *The Causes of the Corruption of the Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels*, by Edward Miller. London, 1895-1896.

After replying to certain other objections based on ancient scholia and notes in manuscripts, Burgon turns to the internal evidence for and against the genuineness of the passage.

IV. The style and phraseology of Mark are absent from the closing paragraphs, so we are told by the critics, and therefore they are not genuine. Here Burgon is at his best and the scores of pages devoted to a devastating reply simply fascinate the reader who has any knowledge whatever of Greek. He turns the tables completely against the critics; and with fairness, but marvellous skill, demonstrates that *all* of the instances given of style and language prove exactly the opposite of what is intended. One critic puts it: "There is a difference so great between the use of language in this passage and its use in the undisputed portion of Mark's Gospel as to furnish strong reasons for believing the passage not genuine." Scrivener, on the other hand, refused to pay any attention whatever "to the argument against these twelve verses, arising from their alleged difference in style" (Intro., pp. 431-432). Professor John A. Broadus of the Southern Baptist Seminary also wrote an able and convincing paper refuting the assertion that the style and language of the passage in question argued for its spuriousness (*The Baptist Quarterly*, July, 1869).

The argument of Burgon is as follows: There are twenty-seven alleged words and phrases listed by the critics as peculiar. These twenty-seven alleged difficulties of style and vocabulary he discusses one by one. They include a variation of the word for Sabbath (v. 9) and the mention of Mary Magdalene (as one from whom demons were cast [v. 9]) whereas in the same chapter she is twice referred to without this statement! The preposition used after "casting out demons" is peculiar. The word for "go" used three times (vv. 10, 12, 15) is not used elsewhere by Mark. But the fact is that compounds of this Greek word *are* used by him frequently—twenty-four times, that is, oftener than in all the other Gospels! The expression "those with him" is peculiar (v. 10). However, Mark here refers not to the eleven but to the larger company of believers as in Acts xx. 18 and Luke xxiv. 9. This expression therefore is rather a proof of an eyewitness and of Mark's peculiarity of giving detail. And so the record goes on of the other words that occur only *once*, or are peculiar in this section. But why

this suspicion of the possibility that an author can use new words or use them in a new sense occasionally ?

Finally, after fifty pages of painstaking patience with this hypercriticism of style, and after showing that in fact there are twenty-seven notes of genuineness, based on style and vocabulary, in this very short passage, Burgon concludes:

“ Something more is certain than that the charges which have been so industriously brought against this portion of the Gospel are without foundation. It has been proved that, scattered up and down these twelve verses, there actually exist twenty-seven other words and phrases which attest with more or less certainty that those verses are nothing else but the work of the Evangelist ” (p. 173).

Professor Broadus tells how it occurred to him to use the *preceding twelve verses* (Mark xv. 44–xvi. 8) for critical study, and he discovered here seventeen peculiar words not found elsewhere in Mark ! A *reductio ad absurdum* (*Baptist Quarterly*, July, 1869). So the whole argument from style is rendered weak and the test breaks down hopelessly under severe analysis. This section of Dean Burgon’s book has special value because he was known as one of the greatest Greek scholars of his day. Born in Smyrna, the son of a Turkey merchant, in 1813, educated in London University and Oxford, he became Professor of Divinity and, later, Dean of Chichester where he died in 1888. He was known in Oxford as “ the champion of lost causes ” and was the author of scores of books and articles on New Testament textual criticism. (See Schaff-Herzog and the British Museum Catalogue.) Conybeare himself expressed his indebtedness to Dean Burgon’s monograph and states his opinion that “ perhaps no one so well sums up the evidence for and against ” these concluding verses of Mark (*The Expositor*, IV. viii [1913], p. 241). As far as I can learn, no adequate reply to Dean Burgon has ever been written. Nor is Dean Burgon the only, although he is the chief, scholar to contend for the genuineness of Mark xvi. 9–20.¹

¹ In Hastings’ *Dictionary of the Bible* we find : “ The longer conclusion is supported by the vast majority of uncials, including A, C, D, E, F, G, H, K, M, S, U, V, X, etc., by the cursives in a body, most of them giving the paragraph xvi. 9–20 without note, twenty or more of them stating that it was found in the best manuscripts, though it was wanting in some; by all the Lectionaries for Easter and Ascension Day, by the Old Latin and Vulgate Versions, the Curetonian, Peshitta, Harcleian and Jerusalem Syriac . . . and by many of the Fathers, including Justin (possibly), Irenaeus, Eusebius, Epiphanius, Didymus, Nestorius, Ambrose, Augustine, and most Latin writers after these, as well as by the Apostolic Constitutions, the Gesta Pilati, the Syrian Aphrates, etc.”

Dr. Henry Barclay Swete, in his commentary on the Gospel of Mark (1905), devotes ten pages to a discussion of the twofold ending of the text. He admits the alleged difficulties of the problem but states: "The documentary testimony for the longer ending is, as we have seen, overwhelming. Nevertheless, there are points at which the chain of evidence is not merely weak but broken." However, he quotes Dr. Salmon as saying: "We must ascribe their authorship to one who lived in the very first age of the Church. And why not to St. Mark?" And in another paragraph, Dr. Swete asserts: "Thus on the whole it seems safe to conclude that at Rome and at Lyons in the second half of the second century the Gospel ended as it does now. If the last twelve verses did not form part of the autograph, there is nothing to show when they were attached to the Gospel. But they must have been very generally accepted as the work of St. Mark soon after the middle of the second century, if not indeed at an earlier time. It is significant that a writer of such wide knowledge as Irenaeus entertained no doubt as to their genuineness."

The strongest argument *for and against* the twelve verses always goes back to the two manuscripts B and \aleph , but *in spite of their age there are reasons for doubting their authority in this instance*. A. C. Clark does so on the ground of their frequent omissions. He bases his argument on stichometry. Reviewing his book, the *London Times* said: "No critic henceforth can refuse to take account of this book; and the worship of the short text had the rudest shock it has met with for years. If with Westcott and Hort and their followers we regard the shorter, neutral text as primitive, we certainly lose much in the Gospels that has had the most tender and sacred associations for countless generations of believers." Professor Clark draws attention to the fact that a large number of the words and phrases absent from Westcott and Hort's text consist of ten to twelve Greek letters, or multiples of that number, and when in the manuscript they were set out in narrow columns, the reason for these omissions is obvious. The same word or syllable occurred just before or just after and so the scribe

The same article, written by one of Scotland's finest scholars, Dr. S. D. F. Salmond, of Aberdeen, says: "The genuineness of the paragraph has been maintained by R. Simon, Mill, Bengel, Wolf, Eichhorn, Storr, Kuinoel, Matthaei, Hug, Scholz, Guericke de Wette, Olshausen, Bleek, Lange, Ebrard, Bisping, McClellan, Scrivener, Canon Cook, Dean Burgon, Morison, Wordsworth, G. Salmon, E. Miller, etc."

skipped one or more lines—but always the same multiple. Clark has no theological prejudice and is no partisan for any particular manuscript but as a brilliant Latin scholar of the text of Cicero applies the same principles to the New Testament text and his verdict is *for* the genuineness of Mark xvi. 9–20.

Finally, Dean Burgon assails the authority of B and \aleph on the ground of their sceptical character. (See Appendix V in *The Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels*.) There seems to be an alliance between them and the school of Origen. In the Gospel text they omit those words and phrases that emphasise the divinity of our Lord. He gives twenty-three examples. 1 Tim. iii. 16 is a typical instance—"O ς for $\theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$; the omission of passages that relate to everlasting punishment, e.g., Mark ix. 44, 46; Mark iii. 29; omission of the strengthening angel in Gethsemane (Luke xxii. 43, 44) and the first word from the Cross (Luke xxiii. 34); mutilation of the Lord's Prayer (Luke xi. 2–4) etc., etc. The reader of this section is convinced that the Western text, so-called, is undoubtedly more conservative than that of B and \aleph .

In addition to all this, Edward Miller, editor of the posthumous work of Burgon, points out that even as in B, so in \aleph , we have proof in the very manuscript itself that the writer was conscious of having made an important omission at the end of Mark. "The scribe manages to conclude Mark not with a blank column such as in B tells its own story, but with a column such as in this manuscript is usual at the end of a book, exhibiting the closing words, followed by an arabesque pattern executed with the pen and the subscription. But by the very pains he has taken to conform this final column to the ordinary usage of the manuscript his purpose of omission is betrayed even more conclusively, though less obviously, than by the blank column of B" (Appendix VII, *The Traditional Text of The Holy Gospel*, pp. 299–300). This observation is due to Dr. Salmon who comments on it in his *Historical Introduction* (5th ed., p. 147). The discussion is most interesting especially in connection with the findings of A. C. Clark to which we have already referred.

But the most astonishing statement of all refers to the alleged twofold witness of B and \aleph . It occurs on page 233 of *The Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels*:

“The last twelve verses of St. Mark’s Gospel, according to Drs. Westcott and Hort, are spurious. But what is their ground of confidence? for we claim to be as competent to judge of testimony as they. It proved to be ‘the unique criterion supplied by the concord of the independent attestations of \aleph and B.’

“‘Independent attestations’! But when two copies of the Gospel are confessedly derived from one and the same original, how can their ‘attestations’ be called ‘independent’? This is however greatly to understate the case. The non-independence of B and \aleph in respect of St. Mark xvi. 9–20 is absolutely unique; for, strange to relate, it so happens that the very leaf on which the end of St. Mark’s Gospel and the beginning of St. Luke’s is written (St. Mark xvi. 2—Luke i. 56), is one of the six leaves of Codex \aleph which are held to have been written by the scribe of Codex B. ‘The inference,’ remarks Scrivener, ‘is simple and direct, that at least in these leaves Codices B and \aleph make but one witness, not two’” (Miller and Burgon, *Traditional Text*, p. 233).

In Scrivener’s Introduction (Vol. II, pp. 337–338) he refers to the work of Burgon and argues for the genuineness of the passage. Here are his words:

“Dean Burgon’s brilliant monograph, ‘The Last Twelve Verses of the Gospel According to St. Mark Vindicated Against Recent Objectors and Established’ (Oxford and London, 1871), has thrown a stream of light upon the controversy, nor does the joyous tone of his book misbecome one who is conscious of having triumphantly maintained a cause which is very precious to him. We may fairly say that his conclusions have in no essential point been shaken by the elaborate and very able counter-plea of Dr. Hort (Notes, pp. 28–51).”

While completing this paper my attention was called to a far more recent study on the genuineness of the last twelve verses of Mark’s Gospel. It is by the Roman Catholic theologian Gerhard Hartmann, S.J., and appeared in a series of New Testament studies published at Münster in 1936 (Band XVII, pp. 175–275). This meticulous and scholarly examination of the whole question occurs as an appendix to his study on the sources of Mark (*Aufbau*) and is entitled *Untersuchungen zur Echtheit des Markus-Schlusses, u.s.w.* He pays special attention to the Greek words of the passage in question and shows how all arguments based on them fall to the ground when we examine the structure as well as the vocabulary of Mark. This evangelist everywhere emphasises *faith*; and in these twelve verses he refers to faith and unbelief in Christ’s resurrection eight times. One by one Hartmann examines the words that supposedly are an argument against genuineness and turns every alleged difficulty into a witness for the authenticity of these closing verses! The objections raised to the signs and miracles as post-apostolic he meets by referring to Mark xi. 23 and Mark vi. 13 where the faith of the disciples works even

greater signs. And then he devotes thirty pages to the history of the Greek text and the witness of the manuscripts confirming and supplementing the conclusion of Dean Burgon written sixty years earlier.

A word should be added regarding the evidence for the genuineness of the great commission as found in one of the *Freer Manuscripts*. This is designated as Codex W and was discovered at Akhmim in Upper Egypt and purchased from Ali Arabi by Charles Lang Freer of Washington, D.C., in 1907. It goes back to the fourth or fifth century and has a different ending to Mark, than that of the accepted text. (See Moffatt's N.T. translation for the full text.) In this case the passage given within brackets by Moffatt is *new* but the verses that *precede* and that *follow* are exactly like the text which we call the authorised version, *viz.* verses 12-14. and 15-20. *These are the very verses that include the great commission unaltered and the command to baptise.* A facsimile-photostat of the two sides of this leaf of Codex W is given by Caspar René Gregory in his book: and after critical study he designates the *additional* paragraph as "not genuine words of Jesus".¹ So here is further evidence of the received text and its genuineness from the Freer Manuscript as interpreted by a great authority on N.T. textual criticism.

After all this we are content to turn to the text of the Authorised English Version, to scores of translations made by the Bible Societies into hundreds of languages and rejoice to find in them no break and no mutilation of the Mark text. And as for "the signs" that shall follow those who believe all of which the critics reject as thaumaturgic and fantastic (v. 17), we are content with the miracles of missions, since the day when Paul shook off the viper at Melita to the experiences of David Livingstone in Africa, the exorcising of demons in China,² and the providential deliverances among the head-hunters of Borneo in our own day. The Lord is still working with His apostles and "confirming the word with signs following. Amen".

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¹ *Das Freer-Logion*, von Caspar René Gregory. Leipzig 1908. pp. 18, 31, 61, 62.
64. See also Albert Clark, *The Primitive Text*, pp. 76, 77.

² See John L. Nevius' *Demon Possession and Kindred Themes*.