

It will hardly be necessary for me to reply at any great length to Dr. Vance Smith; the less so as his "Additional Note" either tends to reduce the points of difference between us to dimensions that do not seem worth arguing, or else raises questions much too large to be discussed within the narrow boundaries of a "Note."

I addressed myself originally to that part of Dr. Vance Smith's argument which was most novel, and which he himself seemed to think altered the balance of the argument, as it had hitherto stood, in his favour. I endeavoured to shew, chiefly upon Dr. Vance Smith's own premisses, that this was far too much weight to attach to it. Dr. Vance Smith now practically admits all for which I should care to contend.

Since I last wrote I have had an opportunity of examining the Codex Alexandrinus, and I quite agree with Dr. Vance Smith that there can be no doubt as to the punctuation. It is altogether plainer than I had expected to find it. The point is clearly marked, and it is evidently by the first hand. Future critical editors should take note of this, and the fact should be credited, so far as it goes, to Dr. Vance Smith's side of the argument. There seems now to be less danger of its importance being exaggerated.

The rest that Dr. Vance Smith says, I confess, touches me very little. When he writes that the point on which he is now prepared to insist "is that there were copyists so early as the fifth century, perhaps the fourth, men whose native tongue most probably was Greek, who saw no incorrectness in dividing the sentence at *σάρκα*, and commencing a new sentence with the words *ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων θεός*," I do not wish, and never should have wished, to deny it. I do not doubt that "the verse may be properly, *i.e.*, grammatically, so divided and so interpreted." The only question is, which division and interpretation is the most natural and probable.

In weighing this further question, I do not at all "put aside unceremoniously" the evidence of the Fathers. On the contrary, I attach considerable importance to it. But I desire to do justice to such considerations as those which are urged by Mr. Beet on the other side. It is, of course, very possible for an argument to be strong without being in itself conclusive, and without being exempt from qualification by other arguments. And those who are accustomed to estimate most nicely the force of arguments will be the last to attempt to pin down an antagonist to the sort of "all or nothing" which is so common in partisan controversy.

I read with surprise Dr. Vance Smith's expression of surprise

“that any one should be satisfied to rest in the conclusion that Christ was represented by the Apostle ‘as God over all’ on the small amount of probability which, it appears, is all that can be claimed for that proposition, so far as this Verse is concerned.” If I had wished to affirm any such proposition (and I am not aware that I did affirm it), I certainly should not have rested it on this Verse alone. But the surprise which Dr. Vance Smith, I think rather unnecessarily, expresses here, I cannot help reciprocating at a statement of his own—the statement, I mean, that St. Paul “does not appear to have held the Logos doctrine.” I should have thought it quite incredible that a fair-minded critic could say this, except, of course, in the purely verbal sense that St. Paul does not actually use the technical term Logos. Not to speak of other passages, Colossians i. 15-19 seems unmistakeable.

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It always seems to me a most unprofitable waste of time to continue a controversy after both sides have clearly said what they have to say. I cannot see that Dr. Vance Smith, in the above remarks, has added one iota of fresh evidence to the solution of the question; nor can I see how they help his position at all, except by shifting the real grounds of the controversy, and by giving him the benefit of the “last word,” which I should always be happy to concede to any controversialist who attached much importance to it. I had not the slightest intention, therefore, to add anything to what I had previously said, and it is only at the request of the Editor that for one moment I revert to the subject.

1. I find this reply of Dr. Vance Smith singularly intangible. Its shape—

If shape it might be called, that shape had none
Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb,
Or substance might be called that shadow seemed—

is too vague to admit of any firm grasp. The sole point of any importance in his first criticism on my paper was his evidence as to the punctuation in one or two of the Uncials. This has been quite sufficiently examined and appraised in the June number of THE EXPOSITOR, and in his first paragraph Dr. Vance Smith admits that he “attributed too much weight to the stop.”

2. In his second paragraph he maintains that the existence of the stop in these Manuscripts proves that the doxologic interpretation of the clause is *grammatically admissible*; but there is nothing to say on this point, because, “a little to his surprise” (*why* to his surprise?),