

CODEX B.

FROM the clumsy attempt of Cardinal Mai to edit Codex **B**, down to the almost romantic story connected with the acquisition by the late Dean Burgon of a photograph of the page containing the end of St. Mark's Gospel, there was a seemingly hopeless mystery enshrouding the true contents and readings of this most famous manuscript—a mystery, the veil from which it seemed nigh impossible for the best intentioned critics to succeed in removing. Such was the jealous care,—nay, the vicious watchfulness,—with which the Codex was guarded by its Vatican custodians.

True, long before Mai began his ill-fated attempt, others had given the world an inkling of its contents,—Sepulveda, Erasmus, Bombasius, Brugensis, Werner, Carafa, Morinus, Caryophilus, Vossius, Possinus, Bartolocci, Zacagni, Mill, Wetstein, Scholz, Mico, Thomas Bentley, Rulotta, Birch, Hug,—a host of names, but to no sufficient purpose. Then learned Cardinal Mai stepped into the breach, but with what a result! Hear Dr. Scrivener:

“The text is broken up into paragraphs, the numbers of the modern chapters and verses being placed in the margin; the peculiar divisions of the Codex Vaticanus sometimes omitted, sometimes tampered with. The Greek type employed is not an imitation of the uncials in the manuscript (of which circumstance we do not complain), but has modern stops, breathings, accents, iota subscript, etc., as if the venerable document were written yesterday. As regards the orthography, it is partially, and only partially, modernized; clauses or whole passages omitted in the manuscript are supplied from other sources, although the fact is duly notified; sometimes the readings of the first hand are put in the margin, while those of the second stand in the text, sometimes the contrary: in a word, the plan of the work exhibits all the faults such a performance well can have. Nor is the execution at all less objectionable. Although the five volumes were ten years in printing (1828–38), Mai devoted to their superintendence only his scanty spare hours, and even then worked so carelessly, that, after cancelling a hundred pages for their incurable want of exactness, he

was reduced to the shift of making *manual* corrections with movable types, and projected huge tables of *errata*, which Vercellone has in some measure tried to supply. When once it is stated that the type was set up from the common Elzevir or from some other printed Greek Testament, the readings of the Codex itself being inserted as corrections, and the whole revised by means of an assistant, who read the proof-sheets to the cardinal, while he inspected the manuscript, no one will look for accuracy from a method which could not possibly lead to it."

This then was the first *edition*. Shall we, as we are tempted to do, skip all the worthy names which intervene, and deal at once with the object of this paper—the *last* edition? Shall we not rather pass slowly down the line of heroes, and note their struggles and their disappointments as we go? To *mention* them is to recall their trials: Tischendorf, Muralt, Tregelles, Vercellone, Kuenen, Cobet,¹ Buttmann, Burgon, Alford, Cure, Sergius, Fabiani, Ubaldi, Rocchi, and last, but worthy of all honour, COZZA-LUZI.

Recall poor Tischendorf's vain endeavours to edit at his own cost, Tregelles' painful feats of memory in order to retain some of the treasure dazzled so temptingly before his eyes, Burgon's and Alford's glimpses, and we can but rejoice that, as long ago as 1868 and 1881, pontifical conservatism had so far relaxed as to give the world a better and full version of Codex B's most noteworthy text. But what would all these worthies say to-day could they be in *our* position, and carry home, as we can, under our arm, *the exact photographic reproduction*, jot for jot and tittle for tittle, so to speak, of the cause of all their hopes and fears, of their struggles and their longings!

When I first heard that zealous Abate Cozza-Luzi had been authorized to superintend the issue of a photographic reproduction of the famous Codex B, I was hardly able to believe that such a treat could be in store for the disciples

¹ A few days after this was written Cobet too passed to his rest (26 October ult.) without ever, I may almost state with certainty, having seen the *last* edition of Codex B.

of textual criticism. But it is now an accomplished fact, and the Greek MS. No. 1209, "the glory of the Vatican Library"—as far as regards its New Testament portion—lies before me as I write. How through all one's satisfaction at the *possession* of this much coveted treasure, for so many generations out of almost every one's reach, the sad thoughts chase each other through one's heart, and speak of those "departed this life,"—of one especially, personally very dear—who would have been so wondrously elated to possess *this* edition, and who, as Tischendorf at Mount Sinai over his beloved Codex **N**, would have burnt the midnight oil in devouring its long hidden pages!

The cover of the case which contains the plates reads as follows:

H ΝΕΑ ΔΙΑΘΗΚΗ

NOVUM TESTAMENTUM

E CODICE VATICANO 1209

NATIVI TEXTUS GRAECI PRIMO OMNIUM

PHOTOTYPICE REPRAESENTATUM

AUSPICE

LEONE XIII. PONT. MAX.

CURANTE

JOSEPHO COZZA-LUZI ABATE BASILIANO

S. ROM. ECCLESIAE VICEBIBLIOTHECARIO.

And at foot, below the Papal arms, we note

ROMAE

E BIBLIOTHECA VATICANA

AGENTE PHOTOGRAPHO DANESI

MDCCLXXXIX.

Inside there is a repetition of the foregoing on the first page, and then a loose page of lithographed preface matter

in three columns, and on its reverse a "table of contents." The preface teaches us nothing, nor does it pretend to, but merely emphasizes the value of an absolutely facsimile edition of the manuscript, "*non artificio hominum, sed ab ipso solari lumine,*" in preference to, and as eclipsing any previous attempts. At the end the names of Hug, Scrivener, Tregelles, Tischendorf, Burgon, Mai, Vercellone, Ceriani, Giovannini, Nestle, Gebhardt, Fabiani, and Gregory are mentioned (in this order).

Then follows the main work in a series of beautiful plates, showing the manuscript to be more wonderfully preserved than I (who have not had the good fortune to see the original) had any idea was the case. It is in better preservation than our own Codex Alexandrinus. I would call attention next however to the fact that the plates are struck off on *double* quarto sheets of excellent paper; and then, being slipped one inside the other, are arranged (all except the first sheets, comprising fols. 1235-1244 and the last, comprising fols. 1505-1518) in *quinions*, to resemble the arrangement of the skins in the original. The edition—if one may so term it—has thus a great advantage over our own photographic reproduction of the British Museum Codex A, above referred to; for, instead of a series of loose sheets, as in the latter publication, we have thirteen quinions, containing fols. 1245-1504, one *quaternion* at the end (with the last two pages *blank*), and the first *ternion*, embracing the title-page and fols. 1235-1244 as above (with the preface lithographed on a separate sheet). The whole might therefore as easily as not be bound in "red morocco,"¹ and, but for the title-page (which is something of an eyesore from an attempt to keep it in harmony with the rest by giving it a kind of photographic *background*), be taken on the shelves of any library for the great **B** itself!

¹ Scrivener, *Plain Introduction*, 3rd edition, p. 102.

One of the first things which sprang to my mind, having now the whole of **B** before me, was, had I materials enough in the shape of photographs of Codex **N** to attempt to verify or controvert the opinion so definitely expressed by Tischendorf,¹ that his hand **N**^D had been the author of Codex **B**, or rather, I should say, that the scribe of **B** had written six pages of the New Testament portion of **N**. I found that, out of the photographs of four pages of Codex **N** in my possession (a gift from the late Dean of Chichester) *one* was that of the page containing the end of St. Mark's Gospel and the beginning of that according to St. Luke, and hence would serve the purpose. I find however that I can only raise my voice to disagree with Tischendorf; his conclusions are based on a good many *minutiæ*, which he is at the pains to explain at length, and to which account the reader is referred, as it would be impossible to reproduce the arguments here, even in condensed form; but on comparing the handwritings themselves, and the formation of the individual letters, which formed hardly any part of Tischendorf's plan of procedure, I cannot reconcile the two. Had I space, I could take letter by letter, and go through the reasons which lead me to this conclusion; but here I can only state that the way *kappa* is made, the way in which the strokes of *nu* are joined, the way in which the cross-stroke to *eta* is imposed in each MS., forbid the idea that the same hand wielded the pen in either case. I do not even think the instrument was held in anything like the same way or at the same angle by the *two* scribes (as I must call them); in fact, the touch of him who was employed on **B** is much *lighter* than that of the scribe of **N** at this place. Compare the way *omega* is *written* (**B**) by the one, and *imposed* (**N**) by the other. In **N** each stroke in the formation of a letter

¹ *Novum Testamentum Vaticanum*. Lipsiæ, 1867. *Prolegomena*, p. xxii, etc., and *Appendix Codicum Celeberrimorum Sinaitici, Vaticani, Alexandrini*. Lipsiæ, 1867. *Prolegomena*, pp. x, xi.

was an effort; whereas in **B** the small, delightful uncials seem to have glided from the pen of its writer.

And now to the text.

This account would have been more interesting, or would certainly have attracted more attention, had I been able to draw up a long list of divergences between the previous edition in uncial type by Vercellone and Cozza, issued in 1868, and these photographs. After considerable examination, I find that I can only congratulate those editors, and their printer Marietti, on the excellence of their proof-reading (for that is to what such an edition comes); and although they may have been somewhat too free in printing second and later hands' additions, especially at the end of lines (in which cases in the printed edition it is impossible to distinguish between what is original and what is not), and have passed over a few minor details, and have copied the contraction bars unfaithfully, I must heartily commend the results obtained, which are now for the first time really on their trial. I have next to no doubt that a full collation of these two last editions, the one with the other, would reveal *some* inaccuracies and a few slips; but I have tested the 1868 edition in a good many places, and have collated numbers of whole pages, and I can only subjoin the following meagre results:

Page 1279, col. 2, line 15. The 1868 edition gives at the end of the line

ΚΡΑΒΑΤ

(line 16)

ΤΟΝ, etc.

as if to read *κραβαττον*, but I cannot see any τ at the end of line 15. I do however find a kind of second β over β, so as to read apparently *κραββατον*.

Again the same page and column, line 4 from the bottom, at the end *beta* has been added, reading

ΚΡΑΒ

(next line)

ΒΑΤΤΟΝ, etc.

but the 1868 edition takes no notice of it, giving

κρΑ

ΒΑΤΤΟΝ, etc.

although the addition is evidently made by a hand to whose corrections the editors have in other places paid attention. The same thing occurs on the same page, col. 3, line 5, where β looks very much as if it were *à primâ manu*.

Page 1277, col. 3, line 25. The tenth letter of the original scribe should be the itacism η for the ι (as given in the 1868 edition) in ΤΡΙΧΑΣ.

Page 1278, col. 3, line 18. An η is imposed above an ε (eleventh letter). I cannot see that ε (ΔΙΕΚΟΝΕΙ) was ever the first reading.

Page 1241, col. 3. The sectional number λζ in the 1868 edition is given to the wrong line, and should belong to the *following* one ΣΤΑΙΗ, etc.; there is also a line above it in the original, which in this case is not rendered in the 1868 edition.

Again page 1249, col. 3. Towards the bottom, the sectional number οε should come exactly opposite the line below, ΠΙΟΥΣΙΝ, etc.; in fact, the ε of οε is placed over the last mark of quotation >, and not as in the edition of 1868.

Page 1259, col. 2, last line, η now appears on the photographic plate at the beginning of the line, reading CΥΝΝΗΓΜΕΝΟΙ. Same page, col. 3, line 18, we find η at the beginning of the line, reading CΥΝΝΑΙΡΕΙΝ, both, as far as can be seen, the work of the first hand, though the letters stand out in the margin, and although less *correct* than the printed edition, the latter is here not *faithful*.

Then we have an opportunity of seeing the letters, words, and lines which the scribe who retraced the writing of the original hand purposely did not go over. See fol. 1262, col. 3, line 28, &c. We can also notice where the editors or printers of the 1868 edition have put in and left out

early uncial corrections, apparently at pleasure. See (*not* at the end of lines),

fol. 1264, col. 2, line 11 *omitted* in 1868

„ „ „ 26 *inserted* in 1868

and both certainly to be treated as equally important to notice, if not the first more than the last.

In conclusion, each column of writing measures $7\frac{3}{8}$ inches long by $2\frac{1}{4}$ in. broad; and it is an interesting point to note that before the original scribe began his task, the skins on which he wrote had already in them the majority of the *lacunæ*—holes—which they have to-day, and which he had to avoid; see pp. 1277–8, 1255–6, 1293–4, 1427–8. Further, note that later hands' alterations are comparatively few, and chiefly confined to filling up omissions in transcription by the original scribe.

Notice a glorious page, as fresh and bright as possible, fol. 1276.

And so the work begun so poorly by Mai under Pope Leo XII. has been as grandly completed this year under Pope Leo XIII. by Cozza-Luzi, to whom we owe a debt of deep gratitude, as much, or perhaps more, for his large share in the good edition of 1868, so often referred to, as for this last.

And now it remains for the Tzar to follow his predecessor's generous example of twenty-five years ago (when photographic reproduction was not known and used as it is to-day), by giving us a facsimile edition of *his* treasure, the Sinaitic Codex **Σ**.

H. C. HOSKIER.