

*A FEW VARIOUS READINGS IN THE
NEW TESTAMENT.*

As I have reason to believe that our glance at a few of the most remarkable various readings in the Epistle to the Romans was interesting to some of the readers of THE EXPOSITOR, I will in the following paper group together one or two typical classes of variation in other parts of the New Testament, and will endeavour to state the principles on which we are now enabled to decide with tolerable certainty on what were the actual words of the sacred writers.

It is a remarkable fact that in no less than four memorable instances the question of the reading affects the evidence of the text to the cardinal doctrine of all Christianity—the divinity of our blessed Lord. I mentioned in my last paper the assertion of the Emperor Julian, that in no passage of the New Testament has St. Paul directly called Jesus “God.” In speaking of Romans ix. 5, we saw that the most probable punctuation—one which was all but unanimously accepted till the days of Erasmus—furnishes us with a direct disproof of Julian’s assertion, since, if Christ is not in that verse called “God blessed for ever,” we have an order of words which does not occur in a single other passage of the New Testament. Yet sufficient doubt must remain on this point to render the verse an uncertain support in controversy, on the principle that *Nil agit exemplum quod litem lite resolvit*. Perhaps when we find that three other important verses are liable to the same doubt, our readers may begin to think that textual criticism has been obliged to surrender some im-

portant bulwarks of the Christian faith. Even if it were so, the question of duty would be absolutely plain. The task of the textual critic is to establish the soundest canons of criticism and to search all available authorities, and having done this, to come to his conclusion with inflexible honesty, in spite of all doctrinal bias. The temptation to do otherwise may be very strong. We see that it is a temptation to which transcribers have succumbed in 1 Corinthians vii. 5 (*τῆ νηστεία καί*); in 1 John v. 7 (the Three Witnesses); in Romans xii. 13 (*μυελας*); in John v. 34 (the angel at Bethesda); in Acts viii. 37 (the eunuch's profession); and in other passages. Even the translators of our English Bible have succumbed to it. They sacrificed accuracy to policy in Acts ii. 47 ("those that *should be saved*") and in Hebrews x. 38 ("if *any man* draw back"), in favour of Calvinism; from a prelatric bias, in Acts xx. 28 ("overseers"); and from an anti-Romanist bias, in 1 Corinthians xi. 27 ("and" for "*or*"), and in Galatians i. 18 (to "*see*" for to "*consult*" Peter). But it is one of many hopeful signs that in these days no dogmatic consideration is allowed to outweigh the force of evidence when we are estimating external authority for a reading; and it is the common aim of all to decide upon the actual text by questions, not of policy, but of simple truth. Critics honestly decide, not upon the reading which they would like best, but on the one which seems to be best established. To regret this would not only be base and faithless, but would shew a spirit most fatal to the cause of Christian apology. No defender of the faith is more dangerous than one who fights with weapons alike treacherous and weak. If the doctrine of Christ's

divinity had been meant to depend on single texts, we may be sure that the same Providence which has preserved for us the sacred writings, and protected them amid the many perils to which I adverted in the last paper, would have also preserved above all doubt and suspicion that which would *then* have been absolutely essential to our faith. But that great Catholic verity depends in no wise on a few isolated expressions. Nay, rather it results from the teaching of the whole Bible, from the promise to the woman in Genesis to the vision of the Son of man in the Apocalypse. It is written large over the four Gospels; it is found implicitly and explicitly in every Epistle of St. Paul, from the First to the Thessalonians down to the Second to Timothy, and it is involved in every page of the great Epistles to the Galatians, Romans, Colossians, and Ephesians. And, besides this, we shall see that a faithful handling of textual evidence will leave us nothing to regret. If the balance of evidence is against the controversial testimony of Acts xx. 28 and 1 Timothy iii. 16, on the other hand, it inclines in favour of readings scarcely less important in Colossians ii. 2; James i. 18; and 1 Peter iii. 15.

1. In Acts xx. 28 the latter half of the Verse in our Authorized Version runs as follows: "*To feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.*" But it is uncertain whether the true reading is "*of God*" (Θεοῦ) or "*of the Lord*" (Κυρίου). The external evidence is singularly balanced. "*Of God*" is supported by \aleph , B, many cursives, the Vulgate and Philoxenian Syriac (*text*), and by Basil, Epiphanius, Ambrose, &c. "*Of the Lord*" is supported by A, C, D, E, many cursives, the Philoxenian *margin*, the

Thebaic, Memphitic, and Armenian Versions, and by Irenæus, Didymus, Eusebius, Cyril of Alexandria, Jerome, and Augustine. Rejecting the weakly eclectic readings "*of the Lord God,*" "*of God and of the Lord,*" "*of the Lord and God,*" found in G, H, and various cursives; and, admitting that the external evidence for Θεοῦ and Κυρίου is about equal, we have to decide on other grounds which of the two expressions, "*the church of God,*" or "*the church of the Lord,*" St. Paul was most likely to have used in connection with the clause, "*which he purchased by means of his own blood.*"

But even when we turn to *paradiplomatic* evidence, there is much to be said on both sides.

If it be urged that in other passages St. Paul uses the phrase "*the church of God*" no fewer than ten times, but never once "*the church of the Lord*" or "*the church of Christ,*" it may be answered that the latter expressions are so entirely natural and unobjectionable, that the *prevalence* of the other usage furnishes no decisive proof that St. Paul might not have diverged into this phrase. Now if, in speaking to the Ephesian elders, he actually did alter his common formula, there would be a strong tendency on the part of the transcribers to revert to the normal expression, either by accident or by design. That the merely *unusual* character of an expression is no ground for rejecting it, when it is otherwise unobjectionable, is decisively proved by the single instance of "*spirit of Jesus,*" which is the undoubted reading of Acts xvi. 7 (κ, A, B, C, D, E), though it is found in that place alone.

If then St. Paul said "*the church of the Lord*"—a phrase in this instance peculiarly applicable, because

he is speaking of the *administration* of the Church of which Christ is the living Head—there exists a strong reason why this reading should have been altered in the MSS., often by the very slight transformation of $\overline{\kappa\upsilon}$ into $\overline{\theta\upsilon}$.

If however the argument is in favour of the reading *Κυρίου*, it will perhaps be asserted that there was at least an equal temptation to tamper with the reading *Θεοῦ*. That reading—involving, as it does, so startling a mental juxtaposition as “*the blood of God*”—may, it has been argued, have been of a kind which a scribe would be tempted to soften down. The probability and improbability of this temptation depends on the stream of tendency in the early Church. Now Athanasius says: “The Scriptures have *nowhere* handed down to us the phrase “*blood of God*” apart from the flesh; or that God suffered apart from the flesh and rose again. *Such audacious expressions (τολμήματα) belong to the Arians.*”¹ I cannot see that the words “apart from the flesh” weaken—at any rate to the extent which is generally maintained—the distinct assertion of Athanasius that the Scriptures do not sanction the phrase “*blood of God.*” It is true that he is arguing against the Apollinarians, who, as Hooker says, maimed and misinterpreted and pared away that which concerned the humanity of Christ; but the phrase “blood of God,” if *Θεοῦ* be indeed the genuine reading in this Verse, stands quite bare and naked, without any qualification. It seems to me that it is not only liable to the censure of Athanasius as a *τόλμημα* such as Arians might have abused in controversy, but also furnishes

¹ Athan. c. Apollin. ii. 14. *δίχα* (not *διὰ*) *σαρκός* is almost certainly the correct reading in both clauses.

a proof that Athanasius did not recognize it as genuine in the text of his day. The authority of Athanasius is therefore in favour of the reading *Κυρίου*. But then it may be answered that the text may have been corrupted from *Θεοῦ* into *Κυρίου* before his day, and in consequence of the very feeling which he here expresses. This would be a powerful argument if the feeling expressed by the great Alexandrian archbishop was at all universal in the Church. This was not, I think, the case. The fine instinct of the great philosophic theologian was not shared by others. For instance, in the Letter of Ignatius to the Ephesians (c. i.) there seems to be little doubt that the true reading is "*by the blood of God*," a phrase also used by Tertullian, though it was censured by Origen. If, then, as early as Ignatius (A.D. 107) such phrases as "*blood of God*" and "*passion of God*" (*ad Rom.* 6) had already come into vogue, it seems to me *most* improbable that if St. Paul had said "*the church of God, which he purchased with his own blood*," the phrase would have been corrected in the earlier copies into "*the church of the Lord*." The heresies of Eutychians and Patripassians, which might have led a scribe to alter the phrase, were far later, whereas the feelings which led to such terms as *Adelphotheos*, "*brother of God*," as applied to James, and *Deipara*, or "*mother of God*," as a title of the Virgin, were very early at work. But this early tendency would not at all prove that such expressions were *unobjectionable*, when they do not receive the direct sanction of the apostles. The Nicene Fathers saw and admitted that language not only undesirable, but even generally (though not intentionally) heretical, had been sometimes used by some of their perfectly

orthodox predecessors before the growth of heresy had led to the accurate formulation of theologic thought. No one I think can question the fact that the phrase "*blood of God*," if genuine, is one wholly isolated and unique in the New Testament. It was at least a profound and reverent instinct, if we ought not to regard it as a "grace of superintendency," which withheld the sacred writers from the predication of purely human attributes when they were speaking of the Divine and Co-eternal Son. We see from all their teaching that they would have accepted the great Catholic formula, ἀληθῶς, τελῶς, ἀδιαρέτως, ἀσυγχύτως — *truly, perfectly, indivisibly, distinctly*—to express their faith in Christ as *truly* God, *perfectly* man, *indivisibly* God-man, *distinctly* God and man; but they carefully avoid the use of language which would be needlessly staggering to the faithful, and which on the lips of unbelievers might easily become intolerably profane. The question of the reading in this Verse will probably be solved differently by different writers till the end of time; but to me it seems most probable that "*the church of the Lord*" is the right reading, because (1), though it does not happen to occur elsewhere, it is a most natural expression; (2) because it avoids a juxtaposition so alien from apostolic thought that no parallel to it can be adduced from the New Testament; (3) because, if St. Paul used it, there was a distinct bias, which would have led to alteration, first perhaps in the margin, then in the text; (4) because this alteration, though leading to a phrase which was deemed objectionable by great theologic thinkers, was yet in accordance with early terminology in the Church; and (5) because, if St. Paul *had* written "*the church of God*," the early transcribers would have felt

strong reason to retain it in the interests of orthodoxy, and no temptation to alter it into the less usual collocation, "church of the Lord."

2. 1 Timothy iii. 16: "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: *God was manifested in the flesh*, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

This Verse, interesting also for its rhythmical character, which stamps it as being probably one of the few fragments of hymnology which are preserved for us in the New Testament, would again furnish a strong direct assertion of the divinity of Christ if the reading were certain; but instead of "God" ($\overline{\theta\varsigma}$), the true reading is almost certainly "who" ($\overline{\omega\varsigma}$).

The facts are these. "*God*" ($\overline{\theta\varsigma}$) is the reading of K, L, and about two hundred cursives. B is here defective.

"*Who*" ($\overline{\omega\varsigma}$) is the reading of \aleph , A, C, F, G, and three cursives; and δ ("*which*") is the reading of D and the Latin Versions.

A curious battle has risen about the readings of two of the uncials. As to \aleph , Tischendorf unhesitatingly declares that the reading is δ , and that it has only been so cautiously altered into $\theta\epsilon\delta\varsigma$ by the latest corrector—in the twelfth century—as to leave no real doubt as to the original reading. On the other hand, A—our Alexandrine manuscript in the British Museum—has been examined with microscopes, and with very differing results. It is now getting very thin and worn; but Young, Huish, Mill, and others in the last century declared the reading to be $\overline{\theta\varsigma}$ ("God"). Porson, on the other hand, declared that it was $\overline{\omega\varsigma}$ ("who").

Quite recently the manuscript has been most minutely scrutinized by Bishop Ellicott, who asserts that the original reading was “*indisputably*” $\overline{\text{oc}}$, and that the suspected original diameter in the Θ was really due to the tongue or *sagitta* of an *E* on the other side of the page. On the other hand, Mr. Scrivener, after examining it at least twenty times in as many years, and once during a singularly bright hour, both with and without a lens, has “always felt convinced” that the first reading was $\overline{\text{oc}}$. Then again in C—the palimpsest *Codex Ephraemi*—the reading is declared by Tischendorf to be oc , though there is a cross line within the *O*, which he believes to be due to the correctors.

But whatever doubt any one may feel about the readings of A and C, there can be no doubt that “*who*” is the right reading: (1) because a relative “*who*” or “*which*” is found in *all* the earlier Versions; (2) because the testimony of patristic quotations (as well as the less important argument from silence) is overwhelmingly in favour of the relative; (3) because the masculine oc following the neuter word “*mystery*” is grammatically the harder reading, and therefore more likely to have been corrected; and (4) because the correction of oc into $\overline{\text{oc}}$ could be made by two slight touches, whereas if $\overline{\text{oc}}$ had been the original reading, there is nothing to account for the wilful and difficult falsification of it into a less grammatical phrase. Few critics of any note now hesitate to express their conviction that the Verse should run, “*Great is the mystery of godliness, who was manifested in the flesh,*” &c.

3. If in these two passages we lose a definite assertion of Christ’s Godhead, it is probable that textual

criticism will ultimately (at least to some extent) restore us the loss in other passages.

a. In Colossians ii. 2 there is a strange diversity of readings. Our Received Version follows K, L, and the majority of the cursives, in reading "to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ" (τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ Πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ). There are no less than ten variations of this in other Manuscripts, Versions, and quotations. The very fact of the variety shews that they must all have started from some remarkable expression, which the transcribers desired to amplify or explain. Now, it is a rule of criticism that a reading is always to be preferred when it could not have sprung naturally from the other readings, but when all the other readings can be accounted for as deviations from it. Adopting this canon, it is easy to see that the mother-reading is "the knowledge of the mystery τοῦ Θεοῦ Χριστοῦ, κ. τ. λ." This is the actual reading of B, and the Verse is quoted in this form by Hilary of Poitiers. The translation is perhaps less certain. Some render it, "of the God Christ;" others, "of the God of Christ;" others again, as Dr. Lightfoot, and with more probability, connect the Χριστοῦ with the succeeding words, "the knowledge of the mystery of God, (even) Christ, in whom are all the treasures of knowledge hidden." The readings have been doubtless caused by the obscure brevity of the original. If rendered "the God Christ," it stood completely alone in Pauline phraseology. If rendered "the God of Christ," it was equally without exact parallel, and also might seem to furnish a handle to heretics. Hence arose the gloss of D, "of God, which is Christ;" of K, L, and most cursives, followed by our text; and

the quotation of the text as though it were "*of God in Christ*" by Clement of Alexandria.

β. In John i. 18, if "*only begotten God*" is not a certain reading, it is at any rate a very ancient variation on "*only begotten Son.*" The change, indeed, from $\overline{\gamma\epsilon}$ to $\overline{\omicron\epsilon}$ would be small, but we find "*only begotten God*" in α , B, C, L, in the Peshito-Syriac and other Versions, and in the quotations of many Fathers. It is true that strong objections may be urged against this reading, but those who wish to see how ably and powerfully it may be defended should read the monograph which has been devoted to it by the Rev. Professor Hort.

γ. The readings which we have examined are of great theological importance. The next at which we shall glance will shew us how a wrong reading is able to obscure our entire conception of New Testament history.

The main object of the Acts of the Apostles is to narrate the extension of the Church to the Gentiles. It has been called "*an ancient Eirenicon;*" but if it was written with this conciliatory design, it was to prove that the work of Paul among the Gentiles was sanctioned by the Twelve, and that there was no such fatal schism between the Apostles of the Circumcision and the Uncircumcision as subsequently arose among some who called themselves their followers. The work of Stephen, the work of Philip, the work of Peter, are all divine moments in the dispensation which was to receive the mightiest human impulse for its fulfilment in the work of Paul. Viewed in this light, the culminating point of the Acts historically is Acts xi. 20. Stephen had suffered martyrdom because

he had argued against the eternal validity of the Mosaic legislation. Saul, doing to the Gentiles an inestimable service as a propagator of the gospel, even at the moment when he appeared to be its deadliest enemy, had scattered the members of the Christian community in every direction. In consequence of this Philip had won the hated Samaritans into the fold of Christ, and had boldly baptized into the Christian brotherhood the mutilated alien who was excluded by his very condition from the Mosaic communion. In consequence of this same persecution Peter had made a missionary tour in the plain of Sharon, and had been led by Divine guidance to admit Cornelius into full Christian fellowship without the rite of circumcision. But up to this time the gospel had not been directly and deliberately proclaimed to *Gentiles*. That was done for the first time by certain Cyprians and Cyrenians at Antioch. From this event sprang all the others with which the remainder of the book is almost exclusively occupied.

The Jews of Jerusalem, hearing that *Gentiles* were being converted in large numbers, sent Barnabas to report upon and to direct the movement. Finding the work grow too vast for him, Barnabas sought the aid of Paul. In consequence of this the success of the gospel at Antioch became so marked, that the city at once took the place as the second capital and starting-point of the Christian faith. Here first the Gentiles perceived that "Christians" were something more than an eccentric sect of Jews, and therefore invented for them the name by which through all ages they have been known. Here Paul, withstanding Peter to the face, first felt that Gentile Christians *could* not be,

and proved that they *ought* not to be, bound by "the by-laws of a Ghetto." And here it first became so manifest that the true ideal seed of Abraham would be found far more among faithful Gentiles than among unbelieving Jews, that it was from this city that Paul and Barnabas started on their vast mission to evangelize the world.

The whole story of the Acts, therefore, hinges upon the fact that at Antioch certain scattered brethren first ventured to take the bold initiative on which, humanly speaking, the entire future of the Church was to depend. "And some of them" [*i. e.*, of those who had been scattered by Saul's persecution], "arriving at Antioch, began ALSO to speak also TO THE GREEKS, preaching the Lord Jesus."

TO the GREEKS (*Ἕλληνας*), *i. e.*, to the GENTILES: and at this crucial point our Version follows the strange error of the manuscripts which omit "*also*," and which read "*to the GRECIANS*" (*Ἑλληνιστάς*), *i. e.*, Hellenized Jews. It is true that "GREEKS" is only found in A and D, for here the transcriber of κ must have been half asleep, and has the odd and careless error "*Evangelists*." But even if the reading were more deficient in external evidence, we might adopt it with absolute certainty from *internal* evidence. The word "Hellenists" or "Grecians" means merely "Greek-speaking Jews." There was nothing new in preaching to them. They, from the earliest days, had been included among the members of the Christian Church, and some at least of the seven "deacons" had been "Grecians." It would have been most superfluous for St. Luke to tell us (Acts xi. 19) that those who were scattered came as far as Cyprus and Phoenice and Antioch, speaking

the word *to none but Jews*, and then in the next Verse to add that some of them when they entered Antioch *also* began to speak to "*Hellenists*." The great majority of Jews in Cyprus, Phoenice, &c., must, from the nature of the case, have been Hellenists or Grecians; and there would have been no sort of climax in the next Verse, which is evidently introduced as the sequel and crowning point of the narrative; there would not even have been an additional fact in mentioning that the scattered Christians spoke *also* to Grecians at Antioch. Nor would the conversion of Grecians have excited any special notice at Jerusalem, seeing that numbers of Hellenists lived at Jerusalem, and had their own special synagogues. The force of these considerations is so strong that almost every critical editor of any judgment admits "*Greeks*" (*i. e.*, Gentiles) as the true reading without any hesitation, and there can be no doubt that its adoption in the Revised Version will restore this text to its true importance in the historic sequence, which the false reading so entirely obliterates.

5. The next instance that I shall take will shew the influence which has been exercised by personal and ecclesiastical prejudices in modifying the sacred text.

In 1 Corinthians vii. 3 our Version reads: "Let the husband render unto the wife *due benevolence*" (τὴν ὀφειλομένην εὐνοίαν). This is the merest gloss, and is only found in a single unimportant uncial; whereas the true reading, "*the debt*" (*i. e.*, *debitum tori*, "the marriage debt"), is found in \aleph , A, B, C, D, E, F, G. The whole context shews the true meaning, and the gloss is either due to euphemism or to entire mistake. This is comparatively harmless, but in the fifth Verse we

have traces of ascetic tampering. Our Version reads : "Defraud ye not one another, except it be with consent for a time, *that ye may give yourselves up* (σχολάζητε) *for fasting and prayer ; and come together again* (συνέρχεσθε), that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency." Now the true reading in this Verse is not σχολάζητε, but σχολάσητε (κ, A, B, C, D, E, F, G), and on the irresistible authority of these same uncials the "*fasting*" is an interpolation ; and instead of "*come together again,*" we should read, "*be together again.*" The reason for these glosses, interpolations, and tamperings with the true text, are betrayed by the word "*fasting.*" Even in the apostles' days there arose heretics imbued with the Essenian and Manichæan notions of the inherent corruption of matter, and the consequent necessity of such practices as would most tend to the suppression and discouragement of the body. Hence at Ephesus there were some who "forbade to marry, and commanded to abstain from meats ;" and in the valley of the Lycus there were some who relied on valueless ascetic rules, like "Touch not, taste not, handle not." These views gained wide prevalence in some sects of the early Church. They thought it desirable to find in Scripture more direct and more frequent sanctions for fasting than it really contains ; and they tended more and more to that discouragement of all sexual relations, which ended in the glorification of virginity as a far superior condition to marriage, and exalted the virtue, if not of ἀειπαρθενία, at any rate of living apart, in the married state. St. Paul had used the *aorist* verb (σχολάσητε), "that ye may have leisure for prayer" at *special seasons* : they altered this into the present, to imply that this undis-

turbed leisure for prayer, and therefore the intermission of the marriage debt, should be *continuous and habitual*. St. Paul used the verb "*be together again*," because, though there might be temporary separation, he represented the living together as the *normal state* of the married life ; but this has been altered into "*come together again*," in the same interests as the other corrections.

6. My sole object has been to present the reader with one or two typical instances of *the importance* of readings, not to multiply instances indefinitely. But lest any reader should carry away a notion that the true text is more uncertain than really is the case, I will furnish one or two instances of the almost religious care of the transcribers in general. The influences which I have enumerated in this and the previous paper were undoubtedly at work, but happily we are so able to estimate those influences that the instances in which we cannot form a plausible opinion as to the words actually written are neither very numerous nor very important. With the aid of Eastern and Western groups of manuscripts, with numerous quotations in Greek and Latin Fathers, with Versions of great antiquity and in many languages, to help us, we are arriving with more and more certainty at the original text. The following are instances in which the most trivial accidents of expression and pronunciation have been preserved to us over a period of eighteen centuries.

a. In Philippians ii. 1 our Authorized Version follows the reading *εἴ τινα σπλάγχνα καὶ οἰκτιρμοί*, "*if there be any bowels and mercies*," i.e., if there be such a thing as affection and compassion. Now this reading gives

us good grammar, and is found in most cursive manuscripts and in Clement of Alexandria and other Fathers, *but it is not found in a single uncial.* The reading of all the uncials without exception— α , A, B, C, D, E, F, G, K, L—is the daring solecism, $\epsilon\acute{\iota}$ τις σπλάγγχνα καὶ οἰκτιρμοὶ, “if any one (be) affection and compassion.” Now, although the testimony of the uncials is rightly regarded as being far more important than that of the cursives, and although it is a recognized canon that the harder reading, which scribes would be tempted to alter, is more likely to be right than the easier, which they would naturally accept, yet in this case our modern English editors—Alford, Ellicott, Wordsworth, but not Lightfoot—throw both principles overboard, and treat the startling $\epsilon\acute{\iota}$ τις σπλάγγχνα as a mere careless mechanical repetition of the $\epsilon\acute{\iota}$ τις which immediately precedes it. If they are right, we have a very strong proof of the extraordinary faithfulness with which, in writing the uncials, the transcribers scrupulously retained the error which they found before them. But I am strongly inclined to think that St. Paul, in dictating the letter, *did actually say* $\epsilon\acute{\iota}$ τις σπλάγγχνα. He is making an intense appeal, and the bold expression, “if any one be bowels and mercies,” is one of his many phrases which are, as Luther said, “like living creatures, and have hands and feet.” Perhaps he hardly *intended* the solecism, but having begun the sentence with $\epsilon\acute{\iota}$ τις, was haunted by the expression, and in his eagerness repeats it, letting the syllogism of emotion supersede the syllogism of grammar. D even reads $\epsilon\acute{\iota}$ τις παραμύθιον, which is a solecism of gender, as the other is of number. That reading would preserve the *εφαναφήρα*, or repeated phrase, still more completely,

but cannot be adopted on the slender authority of one or even two uncials. But it seems to me unlikely that *all* the uncials would faithfully reproduce *ἐῖ τις σπλάγγνα* if it had not been in the original autograph; and I seem to see in the reading an interesting trace of the submissive faithfulness of the Apostle's amanuensis. He, in his humble reverence, might easily think that it was not for him to alter what St. Paul had spoken, and that his Apostle, like the Emperor Sigismund, might claim to be *supra grammaticam*.

In one other instance, if not in two, we have a mispronunciation—in short, a wrong aspirate—immortalized by the same religious care.

a. In Romans iv. 18 we have the barbarism of *Helpis* for *Elpis* (hope) in the phrase, *ἐφ' ἐλπίδι*, in C, D, F, G. This wrong aspirate is very common in illiterate inscriptions, and one who spoke Greek as a foreigner might easily have slipped into it by mistake. Here the error may be due to the amanuensis, if the reading be accepted; but this is not the case in our next example.

β. In Galatians we are reading an Epistle in which Paul seized the pen, and wrote with his own hand. Now, in Chapter ii. 18, we find the reading *οὐχ Ἰουδαϊκῶς* in A, B, C, and *οὐχι* in D, and it is so found in several quotations. Nothing is more likely than that a Jew, speaking Greek with the Jewish pronunciation of *Yhehoudim* in his mind, and not the Greek unaspirated *Ἰουδαϊκῶς*, would have both pronounced and written the words *οὐχ Ἰουδαϊκῶς*. If this be so, it is an interesting case of accuracy preserved in a series of transcriptions. We find similar abnormal aspirates in *ἐφιδε* (Acts iv. 29), *ἀφελπίζοντες* (Luke vi. 35), and *οὐχ ὄψεσθε* (Luke xvii. 22).

Brief and imperfect as are these remarks, they will, we trust, shew to our readers something of the importance of the immense labour which has been bestowed upon the collation of manuscripts, and some of the most elementary principles of criticism. They may help to furnish a passing illustration of more than one great historical tendency, and they may leave in our minds a feeling of thankfulness that the faithful study of the text has not given us a single cause for regret, while it has indefinitely deepened our conviction of the general integrity with which the Church has preserved through so many ages the precious deposit of her sacred writings.

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ON THE COMING OF THE MESSIAH.

A JEWISH EXPOSITION.

WE find in the New Testament that our Lord more than once¹ warned his disciples that they should refrain from troubling themselves about or trying to penetrate into the knowledge of those "times and seasons which the Father hath put in his own power." The tendency to make such investigations was very common among the Jews, who were anxiously looking forward to the restoration of the temporal kingdom to Israel. We can see this from the tone of Gamaliel's remarks² when the apostles were brought before the Jewish council. The people were ready to run after a Judas or a Theudas, if he only proclaimed in loud enough tones that he "was some great one." But we can also see from the concluding portion of that speech that in the minds of the learned and thoughtful among

¹ See Mark xiii. 32; Acts i. 7.

² Ibid. v. 34-39.