

of the Observatory, Mr. H. F. Newall, Trinity. Demonstrator in Physics, Mr. W. C. D. Whetham, Trinity; Animal Morphology, Mr. E. W. MacBride, St. John's; Pathology, Mr. Cobbett, Trinity. The principal changes in the College officials include the appointment of Mr. W. W. R. Ball as one of the tutors of Trinity, and of Dr. Donald Macalister as one of the tutors of St. John's. Two elections to Honorary Fellowships have been made, Mr. Justice Kennedy as Honorary Fellow of Pembroke College, and the Rev. Osmond Fisher as Honorary Fellow of Jesus College.

The Oxford correspondent of the *Guardian* notes the most recent changes there. "A Scotch barrister and Edinburgh professor, Mr. Henry Goudy, has been sent us in place of Professor Bryce, to be Regius Professor of Civil Law, and in that capacity our leading exponent of Roman Law, and the official head of our law school." The Rev. W. C. G. Lang has returned from

Leeds to be Dean of Divinity at Magdalen; and the Rev. R. L. Ottley, who succeeded Mr. Gore as head of the Pusey House, becomes theological tutor at the same College. The death is announced of the Rev. C. E. Moberly, well known as the editor of school editions of Cæsar, Arrian, Xenophon, and especially Shakespeare; and—more deeply felt loss—the death of Professor Nettleship. "Many in Oxford will miss the high ideal of scholarship, the gentleness and unselfish kindness of character shown by Henry Nettleship." "For the rest," says the correspondent of the *Guardian*, "Oxford—academic Oxford, at least—is empty and untenanted, save for a passing 'don,' who is found bemoaning that even his college kitchen is closed, and the silence is broken only by bands of tourists, who tear through the quadrangles like squalls down a Scotch loch."

Professor H. H. Wendt has just been translated from Heidelberg to Jena as successor to Lipsius.

The New Syriac Fragments.

BY THE REV. F. H. WOODS, B.D., FELLOW OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD.

THIS book¹ deserves more than the short notice which was given of it in the August number of THE EXPOSITORY TIMES. It is important from many different points of view. (1) For the study of Syriac Palæography the book is singularly interesting. Whatever be the exact date of the MS.,—or more strictly MSS., for one leaf is by a different hand, and probably somewhat later than the rest,—it is certainly one of the oldest, if not the very oldest example of Palestinian Syriac known. Mr. Gwilliam points out some interesting peculiarities in the form of letters, etc. (2) The fragment is also of considerable importance for Syriac philology. The specimens of the Palestinian dialect are so few (see Professor Marshall's remarks in the August number of THE EXPOSITORY TIMES, p. 511), that even a few leaves of MS. have their distinct value. Roughly speaking, it differs from the Aramaic of Edessa and the Syriac Church in approaching, at any rate, more closely to the

Chaldee of the Targums and the biblical Aramaic of Ezra and Daniel. The exact extent of this similarity it is difficult to gauge from the absence of vowel points in these MSS. (3) What we have said hitherto concerns points of interest for Syriac scholars. There is, however, another fact in connexion with this discovery which gives it a far wider interest, viz. its relations to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament.

In order to make this clear to those who have little acquaintance with this branch of biblical study, I will first make a few introductory remarks. Our chief sources for determining the text of the New Testament are MSS. of the New Testament itself, early lectionaries, ancient versions, or translations into other languages, quotations by the Fathers, especially the ante-Nicene. These have, after a long and minute study of critics extending over many years, been now classified under various groups. The several groups are distinguished by the occurrence of certain peculiarities of text, and are connected, more or less definitely, through Patristic quotations, with certain geographical districts. For

¹ *Anecdota Oxoniensia. Fragments of the Palestinian Version.* By G. H. Gwilliam, B.D. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press. 4to, pp. xli, 23. 6s.

example, the familiar type of text from which our A.V. was ultimately derived is characterised by what are called conflate readings, *i.e.* the combination of two or more readings of different texts into one. A familiar example of this is in Mark ix. 49. The common text here reads *πας γαρ πυρι αλισθησεται και πασα θυσια αλι αλισθησεται*. The last clause is omitted in some very important early MSS., notably \aleph and B, and is, in all probability, only another reading of the first clause, the *αλι* being repeated by mere iteration before *αλισθησεται*. This group is best represented by A, the great Alexandrian MS. now in the British Museum, the Peshitto, or authorised version of the Syrian Church and St. Chrysostom. From the connexion of the latter with Antioch, the text represented by this group is called the Syrian text.

Another well-defined group is commonly known as the Western. This group is chiefly characterised by a number of very striking interpolations, some of them of an apocryphal character, some few of which have found their way into the common text. Perhaps the most interesting is the explanation given of the waiting of the infirm folk at the pool of Bethesda in the last clause of John v. 3 and 4. The great representative of this group is the Græco-Latin MS. D, Codex Bezae, now in the University Library of Cambridge. In this MS. Scrivener tells us that there are no less than 600 interpolations in the Acts alone. The same group is also represented by the early Latin MSS., and several Latin Fathers. Hence its name. But as it is also represented pretty generally by the Syriac Curetonian, and not unfrequently by the Peshitto, many critics regard the title as a misnomer, and consider that we ought to look for its origin, not in the West, but somewhere in Syria.

A third group, less clearly defined, has been called the Alexandrian, from its being largely represented by the quotations from Origen, who, it must be remembered, quotes profusely. It is distinguished by alterations made for the sake of grammatical accuracy. (4) Westcott and Hort give us yet a fourth group, if it can be called such, represented by two MSS., namely \aleph , the Sinaitic, now in the Library of St. Petersburg, and B, the Vatican, which is in the Vatican Library at Rome (\aleph has, however, Alexandrian tendencies). The reading supported by these two MSS. they call the neutral text.

The history of the text of the New Testa-

ment is believed by these two eminent critics to be somewhat as follows. When \aleph and B agree, except in a few cases where different scribes may have obviously made the same error independently, we have the original reading, or at any rate the earliest attested text. Some cases of still earlier corruption are possible, and even probable. But as early as the second century, by the incorporation of traditional matter and grammatical corrections, and other causes largely accidental, two important types of text differentiated themselves from the parent stock, namely, the Western and the Alexandrian. Later on, but chiefly in the fourth and fifth centuries, the comparative study of divergent texts and the growing tendency towards uniformity produced the revised eclectic text known as the Syrian. This is a rough outline of the critical views propounded by Drs. Westcott and Hort, and accepted in the main by the majority of critical authorities in England and abroad. It is possible, however, to agree in the main facts on which the groups are separated, and yet to hold a somewhat different view of their relation to each other. The chief question turns on the relative value of \aleph B on the one hand, and the Syrian text on the other.

With reference to the MSS. recently published by Mr. Gwilliam two questions naturally arise. (1) What relation do they bear to other Syriac MSS. of the New Testament? (2) What is their position among, or their testimony as to the comparative value of, the groups of textual witnesses described above? The first question is easily answered, but in order to make the answer intelligible, it is necessary to make a few general observations about the Syriac MSS. of the New Testament. These are naturally divided under four heads—(a) First in importance are those containing the version called the Peshitto, that which, from at least the fourth century to the present day, is the authorised version of the Syrian Church. (β) Closely connected with the Peshitto is the Harcleian version, which was in fact a revision of it carried out by a certain Philoxenus, and again revised by Thomas Harkel in 616, evidently with the intention of making it correspond more closely with some Greek text. (γ) A single fragment differing very considerably from the Peshitto, and yet related to it. This is generally known as the Curetonian version, and is regarded by Bishop Westcott and some others as the original form of the Peshitto, what is now known as the Peshitto being, in their

opinion, a revised version of it made during the fourth century. Others, in fact Mr. Gwilliam himself (see *Studia Biblica*, i. pp. 170-173), put the Curetonian much later than the Peshitto, which they consider to be now substantially in the same condition as when executed in probably the second century. To this we must now, of course, add the more perfect copy of the Curetonian as it seems, recently discovered at Sinai. (δ) Lastly, we have those fragments which are classed as Palestinian, or the Jerusalem Syriac. Mr. Gwilliam in this publication gives a complete list of them. By far the most important is the Evangelistarium Hierosolymitanum, or Gospel Lectionary of Jerusalem.

These different Syriac versions, if we should call them so, do not all belong to the same group of critical witnesses. The Curetonian most frequently contains readings supporting "the Western Text." This is true to a more limited extent of the Peshitto, which on the whole, however, more closely approximates the "Syrian." The Harcleian is obviously of no use for critical purposes, all that is not in agreement with the Peshitto being derived from a comparatively late Greek text. But what about the Jerusalem Syriac? It occupies, in a certain sense, a unique position. It has a singular number of what are generally believed ancient readings, in which it agrees with the Curetonian. Again, it agrees at times with the Peshitto against

the Curetonian. And further, it has readings differing from both, and usually regarded as later. Are these peculiarities due to intrusion from a variety of sources, many of them Greek? or are they marks of genuine independence and very early date? The former is practically the view of Westcott and Hort. Mr. Gwilliam seems to think that the other may after all be the true solution. In any case the question should be carefully studied, and anything which contributes even in a small degree to its solution deserves a warm welcome.

If these fragments do not themselves carry us very far, they do something to stimulate critical inquiry; and, moreover, they suggest the hope that some day larger fragments of this interesting version may be discovered. We say "version," but Mr. Gwilliam reminds us that even this may be a misnomer. We cannot for certain say that the many different fragments of the Syriac Bible in Palestinian Syriac necessarily belong to one single Palestinian version. But it is *à priori* probable that it is so, and it is also obvious that some Syriac version of the Scriptures would have been needed at Jerusalem in very early times. Even then if we admit that the surviving fragments show marks of one or more later revisions, there seems no reason why such revisions should not have been based upon an ancient Palestinian text.

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