

III.—CONFLATE READINGS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

It has for some time been my conviction that many of the textual obscurities in the New Testament and other early books are due to the operation of unrecognized causes, for the want of a perception of which the scholar is often presented with a text which might, indeed, be genealogically nearer to the true reading than other more popular presentations of an author's words, but which, as regards good sense, are often very widely remote from the truth. One such hitherto occult factor (I call it occult since I cannot find any recognition of it in any book that I know) I believe to lie in the existence of lateral aberrations from one point to a corresponding point in the columns of an ancient MS, and there are instances to be found of the application of this remark to textual criticism in various errors which are alluded to in the supplement to the 12th number of the *American Journal of Philology*. Since publishing these I have from time to time returned to the point, and last year endeavored to prepare, by means of these lateral errors, a complete restoration of the text of the Epistle of James, line for line and page for page, to its archaic form. Unfortunately, I have not as yet been able to lay this restoration before those who are interested enough in New Testament studies to give the matter a careful examination.

It will easily be seen that any attempt to find the origin of the textual errors of the New Testament in the early forms of the text itself, is part of a larger theory, viz. that *the study of transcriptional errors belongs to the paleographer first and the general critic afterwards*. Unhappily, the course of modern criticism, with a few honorable exceptions, has been in the opposite direction. We often hear from the critics explanations of scribes' blunders; their scribe, however, is not a machine, but a highly cultured cleric, with an unlimited facility for confusing the Bible with itself and correcting the New Testament by means of obscure verses in the book of Job, or Proverbs, or Leviticus. Neither Burgon nor Hort could sit down to copy the New Testament and make some of the mistakes which they attribute to the scribes.

On the other hand, when we treat the scribe as a machine imperfectly adjusted, and examine the errors which he is most

likely to make, we find, upon examination, that these are often the very mistakes which he has made; and that a very simple explanation will often replace some obscure assimilation. Even when a scribe assimilates his text to some other, there is often a reason to be given for his error, which removes it from the catalogue of things purely arbitrary. For instance, if we observe that the structure of all known MSS is rectangular, the principal motions of a scribe's eye are mechanical motions right and left, and up and down. It follows, therefore, that the machine-errors to which he is most liable are right and left errors, and up and down errors. The latter causes line-omissions and line-repetitions, the former causes page-aberrations, and the omission or repetition of equal large portions of the text. No one doubts the existence of the vertical error which is patent in the omission in almost every written document of lines of the copy; but a great many people fail to see that the cause which produces this error can be turned through a right angle and still retain its efficiency. The reason of this is, that in ordinary printed texts it is easy to detect the line error, but the page-error is often veiled, especially in those cases where it is confined to the borrowing of a few letters or a single word from a distant part of the copy. Moreover, our modern printed books seldom show more than two columns to the eye at once, and do not therefore suggest such errors. A transposed page is, however, easy to recognize; this form of mistake is more often due to the bookbinder than to the scribe.

It must not be supposed, from what has been stated, that the recognition of the line-aberration has been accompanied by a proper critical application of the principle of such aberrations to the text of the New Testament. Some of the best printed editions are disfigured by ghastly line-errors. For example, Westcott and Hort print on the very first page of their N. T., Matt. i 7 :

Ἄβιὰ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἀσάφ,
 Ἄσάφ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἰωσαφάτ,
 Ἰωσαφάτ δὲ κτέ

where the reading Ἄσάφ arises simply from the corresponding letters in the word Ἰωσαφάτ. Perhaps an exactly similar explanation holds on the next page, where we read :

Μανασσῆς δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἀμῶς
 Ἀμῶς δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἰωσείαν
 Ἰωσείας δὲ κτέ

It can hardly be accidental that this coincidence of letters is found in the proper names. And this simple paleographic explanation being given, is not to be shaken by an array of excellent MSS in which the archaic error may be preserved. For another instance take Luke xv 29; if the text were written in the form

ΕΔΩΚΑCΕΡΙΦΟΝΙΝΑ
ΜΕΤΑΤΩΝΦΙΛΩΝΜΟΥ

it would be likely that any transcriber who had written *ἐρίφιον* for *ἔριφον* had been guilty of an eye-aberration into the *φίλων* of the next line; and then the variant would hardly have been promoted to the margin of Westcott and Hort's text on the single authority of Cod. B.

Nor should we, in Mark vi 14, read *ἔλεγον* for *ἐλεγεν*, if we observed that in

ΤΟΟΝΟΜΑΑΥΤΟΥΚΑΙΕ
ΛΕΓΟΝ

the tense has been affected by the first syllable of *ὄνομα*. Neither should we read *ἐπέγνωσαν* in Mark vi 33 for *ἔγνωσαν* if the text were printed

ΕΓΝΩCΑΝΠΟΛΛΟΙΚΑΙ
ΠΕΖΗ

where the inserted letters are evidently taken from the line below. We might say much more on the subject of line-errors, but for the present let this suffice. We pass on to make a few remarks on the page-errors.

Let us then once more demonstrate the frequency of the error to which we give the name of lateral aberration, or parablepsy. The importance of the study of the lateral aberrations becomes more and more evident as we examine microscopically the text of the New Testament; it is probable that not a single one of the books of the New Testament, except some of the shorter epistles, has escaped from this error. And in many cases the most perplexing variants are cleared up by the recognition of the existence of such a source of error in columnar texts. We shall give a string of illustrations. For example, in the text of Matt. xiii 35 we have a very difficult reading in which there is the following distribution of authority: *ὅπως πληρωθῆ τὸ ῥηθὲν διὰ τοῦ προφήτου λεγοντος, Ἄνοιξω ἐν παραβολαῖς τὸ στόμα μου κτέ* by almost all authorities. After *διὰ* is

added 'Hsaíov by **N*** 1, 13-124-346, 33, 253 rushw. æth. cod., Hom. Cl. Porphy. (cf. Brev. Psalt. in Hier. Opp. vii 270, Vall.)¹

If we were left simply to balance these authorities, we should, I think, conclude in favor of the ordinary reading. But the affair is not so simple as at first sight appears. For, as pointed out by Dr. Hort, we have the evidence of Jerome that there was a third reading, in which 'Aσάφ takes the place of 'Hsaíov. And although this reading is not to be found in any existing MS, yet according to the Brev. in Psalmos, we are assured that it was found in all old MSS, but was removed by ignorant men; that by an error of scribes 'Hsaíov was written for 'Aσάφ, and that at the time of writing many copies of the Gospel still had 'Hsaíov.

I propose to show that 'Aσάφ may be the correct reading, although it has disappeared from all known MSS. In order to see this, let us write the passage in question out conjecturally in the style of an early codex or paper roll.

Matt. xiii 35 :	ΟΠΩΣΠΛΗΡΩΘΗ	ΜΑΘΗΤΑΙΔΥΤΟΥ
	ΤΟΡΗΘΕΝΔΙΑΣΑΦ	ΛΕΓΟΝΤΕΣΔΙΑΣΑΦ
	ΤΟΥΠΡΟΦΗΤΟΥΛΕ	ΗΣΟΝ ΗΜΙΝ . . .
	ΓΟΝΤΟΣΑΝΟΙΣΩ	
	ΕΝΠΑΡΑΒΟΛΑΙΣΤΟ	
	ΣΤΟΜΑΤΟΥ ΕΡΕΥ	
	ΣΟΜΑΙΚΕΚΡΥΜΜΕ	
	ΝΑΔΠΟΚΑΤΑΒΟΛΗΣ	
	ΤΟΤΕΑΦΕΙΣΤΟΥΣΟ	
	ΧΛΟΥΧΗΛΘΕΝΕΙΣ	
	ΟΙΚΙΑΝΚΑΙΠΡΟΣ	
	ΗΛΘΑΝΔΥΤΩΟΙ	

A single glance at the second lines of the two columns will suggest that six letters in one column were transferred from the other; and whether we have hit upon the exact arrangement of text or not, the concurrence is difficult to explain except by some such restoration. We must now take one of two hypotheses: (a) Column 1 took the letters from col. 2; (β) The converse.

In discussing the first, we are to remark that in the assumed case we have to replace a right reading (whatever it may be) by a wrong one which itself is so apposite to the case that it would be a perfect marvel in the history of curious coincidences. Surely no

¹ Hort, Notes on Select Readings, p. 13.

scribe remembered that Ps. LXXVIII was attributed to Asaph when he saw the words in an adjacent page. And if we suppose the original reading to be Ἡσαίου we have to assume that a happy accident corrected into sense an absolute falsity, and removed a reading the acceptance of which strains all our faith in the accuracy of the writer who primitively set it down.

In the other hypothesis there is no difficulty: for not only have we very good patristic authority for the existence of the variant, but we have the additional confirmation that the displaced reading of the second column has been preserved to us. If there were no variant in the second column we might, perhaps, feel a residual hesitancy; but a reference to the textual apparatus in any New Testament will show that the proper reading is not *διασάφησον* but *φράσον*. For example, the following is the note of Tregelles. *διασαφησον* B. *Orig.* iv 254^a enarra. *a. b. g¹ h* (narra *ff²*) | *φρασον* St. CD. rel. *Orig.* iii 3^e. 4^{b,c}, 442^a, 481^b, edissere (diss.) Vulg. *Cl (Am)* (*c*) *f. (ff¹) g²* (vid. cap. xv. 15). To which it must be added that the Sinaitic Codex has *διασάφησον* corrected to *φράσον* by an early hand. If, then, we were reasoning simply upon the grouping of the MSS, we should, perhaps, incline with Tregelles and Westcott and Hort to follow the concurrence of **NB** and early Latin copies; but the cause of the variant being known, the variant, however ancient it may be, must disappear. Early the error must, of course, be, as indeed are all important errors; but this has an especial antiquity, since it has affected copies which between them can produce a singularly pure text.

And now let us gather up the conclusions which would follow from our conjecture.

1. The primitive page in Matthew, or at least a very early page, from a copy which is genealogically ancestral to almost all our early texts, contained about 160 letters.

2. Since the Sinaitic Codex has preserved the lateral error, while writing Ἡσαίου for ἀσάφ, we may endorse the statement of the Breviarium in Psalmos as to the order of genesis of the separate errors.

3. We note that Tregelles, and, no doubt, other writers, have assumed that *φράσον* is an assimilation of text to the 15th verse of the XVth chapter. This exaggerated doctrine of assimilation has led to frequent errors. The present case is one in point.

4. We cannot close our remarks without adding that here we have an instance which we believe a closer scrutiny would parallel

from many other obscure passages in the Scripture, of an original reading no longer extant.

As soon as we have recognized this archaic arrangement of the pages we have a shrewd suspicion that the very same MS or series of MSS in which the error already alluded to was made and preserved, is responsible for an omission in Matthew xvi 2, 3, 'Οψίας γενομένης λέγετε κτέ. For on examining the passage it is found to contain 162 letters, which agrees very closely with the previous estimate. Dr. Hort says of this passage, that "both documentary evidence, and the impossibility of accounting for omission, prove these words to be no part of the text of N. T." The omission of a single page is a sufficient explanation, and in nowise affects the documentary evidence in other passages, from which an induction has been made to the case under consideration.

A second instance shall be given from the same Gospel. The error, again, is one which has altogether disappeared from the copies. In the time of Origen, however, we find that in the xxi of Matthew, the expression 'Ωσαννὰ τῷ υἱῷ Δαυείδ was changed into 'Ωσαννὰ τῷ οἴκῳ Δαυείδ, in one of the two verses (xxi 9, 15) where the words occur. Origen will have υἱῷ read in both places.¹ An examination shows that the error was made in the 13th verse by lateral aberration from the 15th, probably in some copy immediately ancestral to Cod. B. For in this MS we have in the 34th line of the first column of a page

ΠΤΑΙΟΟΙΚΟΜΟΥΟΙΚΟC

and in the fifth line of the second column,

ΓΟΝΤΑCΩCΑΝΝΑΤΩΥ
ΙΩ

the interval between these lines being 14 of the lines of B or one-third of its columns.

As an illustration of the same mistake in the Gospel of Mark we may take Mark v 1, where by borrowing four letters from the fifth verse, the reading Γαδαρηνῶν has been changed by means of the word ἡμέρας lying parallel with it, into Γερασσηνῶν. It is possible that this explanation may be thought fanciful; stranger ones will be given presently and with greater certainty. From the Gospel of Luke a remarkable case will be given later on.

¹ See Tischendorf, *in loc.*

In John v 37 we have the following arrangement from Cod. B.

ΤΕΦΩΝΗΝΑΥΤΟΥΠΩ
 ΠΟΤΕΔΗΚΗΚΟΔΤΕΟΥΤΕ
 ΕΙΔΟΣΑΥΤΟΥΕΩΡΑΚΑΤΕ
 ΚΑΙ ΤΟΝΛΟΓΟΝΑΥΤΟΥ
 ΟΥΚΕΧΕΤΕΕΝΥΜΙΝΜΕ
 ΝΟΝΤΑΟΤΙΟΝΑΠΕΣΤΕΙ
 ΛΕΝΕΚΕΙΝΟΣΤΟΥΤΩ
 ΥΜΕΙΣΟΥ ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕΤΕ
 ΕΡΑΥΝΑΤΕΤΑΓΡΑΦΑΣ
 ΟΤΙΥΜΕΙΣΔΟΚΕΙΤΕΕΝ
 ΑΥΤΑΙΣ ΖΩΗΝΑΙΩΝΙΩ
 ΕΧΕΙΝ ΚΑΙ ΕΚΕΙΝΑΙ ΕΙΣΙΝ

Line 41, ΠΑΤΗΡΕΚΕΙΝΟΣ ΜΕΜΑΡ ΔΙΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΥΣΑΙ ΠΕΡΙ
 42, ΤΥΡΗΚΕΝΠΕΡΙΕΜΟΥΟΥ ΕΜΟΥ ΚΑΙΟΥΘΕΛΕΤΕΕΛ. Line 14

The influence of the second page on the first has produced *ἐκείνος* in the first line for *αὐτός*. The two readings are undoubtedly early, since they are conflated in Cod. D into *ἐκείνος αὐτός* (perhaps *ἐκείνος* corrected over line to *αὐτός*). I suppose we must call the reading *αὐτός* Western and Syrian. In spite of this it seems to be correct.

As an illustration from the Pauline Epistles we may take 1 Cor. ix 9, where *οὐ φημῶσεις βοῶν ἀλοῶντα* is by some copies corrected to *οὐ κημῶσεις κτέ*, under the influence of *κηφᾶς* in v. 5, where the syllable *κη* may have been the last syllable in a line, as it is in Cod. B to this day.

From the Catholic Epistles we give the following from James (in which epistle there are at least five). The instance is taken from the pages as we have tried to restore them :

p. 33, line 9, ΚΥ ΙΔΟΥΓΕΩΡΓΟΣΕΚ
 ΙΟ, ΔΕΧΕΤΑΙ ΤΟΝ ΤΙΜΙΟΝ
 ΙΙ, ΚΑΡΠΟΝ

p. 34, line 9, ΛΑΒΕΤΕΔΕΛΦΟΙΤΗΣ
 ΙΟ, ΜΑΚΡΟΘΥΜΙΑΣΤΟΥΣΠΡΟ
 ΙΙ, ΦΗΤΑΣ

In this passage (Iac. v 10), Cod. 13 by aberration reads after *μακροθυμίας* the impossible *δέχετε*, which has been softened to *έχετε* by A. N°. 5.40 mg. 73, and the Ethiopic version.

In the Epistle of Jude, short as it is, there is a curious aberration which has much confused the text ; the word *ἄραξ* of the 3d verse

having crept into the beginning of the fifth. We have no room to give the pages in full.

It must be admitted that these errors afford us great assistance in the restoration of the early text-forms, and in the intimately connected problem of the genealogy of the witnesses that remain to us. We shall show first the way in which early forms may, by the means indicated, be *theoretically* restored.

Let us then, in the first place, imagine to ourselves a MS written uniformly, so that there are m letters to a line, and n lines to a page. And suppose that after a certain number of transcriptions in this form a new pattern of script is introduced, consisting of p letters to the line, and q lines to the page; and so on continually, the forms being allowed to persist longer in the earlier copies than in the later ones, although this is not a necessary part of the following argument. Then let us ask ourselves what kinds of errors are most likely to present themselves in the successive and final texts, assuming them to be copied by scribes of average carefulness. In the first place, we notice that the first copy made being liable to the eye-error of vertical aberration (generally induced by similarity of the letters in separate lines) will exhibit a majority of errors, which are either m letters in length or a multiple of m , such as $2m$, $3m$, etc. The m -errors will, however, by far predominate. And each successive transcription will cause these errors to accumulate, until after a little time the mere registration of the variants would be sufficient to indicate the original form of the text, even if that form should be deserted. And now let the form be changed to that indicated by the letters p , q . The same thing will occur here, and we shall have an accumulation of p -errors, which, like the former ones, soon become by their multiplicity self-betraying as to the form of text in which they were made. And so we might carry the matter forward. Finally, if we denote the MSS which have adhered to the first form by the letters $M_1, M_2 \dots$, those which have adhered to the second form by $P_1, P_2 \dots$, to the third by $S_1, S_2 \dots$ and so on, we shall have the following results upon classifying the variants of all existing copies, viz. the insertions in or omissions from a standard text:

(1) A number of copies will exhibit, among the variants, a preference for variants of a given length, which is found to be m -letters.

(2) Another group of copies will exhibit a preference for errors of two given lengths, viz. m, p .

(3) A third group will suggest errors of lengths of *m*, *p*, *s*. And so on, the phenomena rapidly tending to obscure one another.

In determining which of these errors, from a standard text, to reject or accept, we must remark as follows: it is perfectly easy to omit a line of a text in copying it; but to add foreign matter to it, which shall precisely be equivalent to a line of the text, may be assumed to be very unlikely; and, therefore, the majority of a group of equivalent errors whose length is equal to a line of the text are pure omissions. The only case in which this breaks down will be the following: Suppose that a given line of a copy has been affected by some scribe's stupidity, so as materially to change the sense without affecting the length (as by the substitution of two or three letters from a wrong line), and that by the subsequent correction of the passage two readings have been placed in close relation, it frequently happens that the real line and the erroneous line which is equal in length to it, both combine to form a new reading, which has thus increased the text by one of its own lines. This phenomenon is known by the name of conflation. Setting aside the phenomenon of conflation, then, we say that the line-errors of a codex to which it shows a peculiar liability are *omissions*, and not *additions*. In dealing, therefore, with our groups of MSS, we must first restore to the texts denoted by the letter M, their *m*-line omissions; similarly with the P-texts and the S-texts, etc. As soon as the texts come to be broken up into a non-uniform script, the above reasoning fails, except in so far as it shows original errors conserved from the various forms through which the text has passed.

The relative antiquity of the texts, supposed uncomplicated by mixture, will then appear at once by the consideration that the M-texts have no *p*-errors, while the P-texts show both *p*-errors and *m*-errors, and, therefore, in the discussion of any given error, the M-texts have the greater weight, except in the discussion of *m*-errors. We must now return to the original text, and remark that not only is such a text, when copied, liable to line-aberrations, *m*-letters, *2m*, etc.; but there is a danger of aberration from column to column, or from one column of writing to another two columns distant. These errors, which are far more frequent than is generally supposed, will, when they can be recognized, supply intervals whose average is *mn*-letters, or *2mn*, etc.; and by means of these errors we can restore the original page; *mn* being given by the lateral aberration and *m* by the average vertical aberration.

A succession of copies will now exhibit as follows: the copies

marked M will exhibit long aberrations (in which must also be included transpositions of early pages) of an average length mn : the P-copies will exhibit average errors pq as well as by inheritance, errors of length mn : and so on. By repeating the error of aberration, whose measure is mn , the P-copies again demonstrate the M-type to be the earlier, and in this way a firm grasp may be obtained over the genealogy of the group of MSS which are placed under our consideration.

The advantage of this method is that it is purely scientific: a careful observation, for instance, will show that the New Testament documents grow smaller and smaller, both as to lines and pages, as we come nearer to the first centuries; and, therefore, the more nearly do they of necessity approach to fixed types of writing, as to length of line and page. The margin of variation of size being thus diminished, it would be possible to pick out the earliest sizes by the aid of the earlier errors, even if there were not, as we believe there is, a peculiar reason for the adoption of lines of given length. Moreover, we must not forget that, however little modern documents seem to lend themselves to the theory of aberration by lateral error, the case is widely different when the columns are narrow, and when, as in a papyrus document, many of them may be under the eye at once. Assuming, then, the existence of the vertical and lateral aberrations, we proceed to apply our argument practically to the determination of the texts and text-forms of the New Testament. We begin as follows:

Conflate Readings.

From what has been already said it appears important that, as far as possible, we should remove from the examination those phenomena which are due to conflation of separate readings. If we can do this in any particular book, or MS of that book, we shall have taken at once a step in the classification of the MSS which furnish the contending members of the conflation, and in many cases we shall obtain a clue to the original structure of the copy in which the conflation occurs.

It is well known that the most powerful part of Dr. Hort's great Introduction to the New Testament consists in the exposition of eight cases of conflation in the early texts of Mark and Luke. Nothing has been more fiercely assailed, nor as yet with less success, than this stronghold of the new textual system. All that Burgon and Cook have been able to do in attempting to demolish the cumulative argument of Dr. Hort, by the denying each instance

of conflation in detail, has been the maximum of effort and the minimum of result. For, it may be observed, it is not necessary to Dr. Hort's theory that the whole of these eight conflations should be verified; a single one, correct in all its details, would prove the chronological subordination of the texts which give combined readings to those which do not make the combination. And, moreover, there are certain considerations which present themselves at once to an enquiring mind: granted that there are groups of manuscripts say P, Q, R, which exhibit the peculiarity that R has readings combined out of separate readings in P and Q, so that we are shut up to the hypothesis either of a conflation on the part of R, or of two separate alternative omissions on the part of P and Q, surely the quicker way to upset the conflation hypothesis would be to bring forward some case in which such a group as Q had united readings out of P and R. But this has not been done, for the simple reason that no such phenomena are forthcoming. If they were, would they not be a *reductio ad absurdum* for the theory of conflation?

The fact of the matter is that the conflations cannot be wholly denied; and the conclusions which follow almost as a matter of course, from their admission, can only be evaded by a more careful examination of the argument, especially of one point, which both Dr. Burgon and Dr. Hort seem to me to have unhappily missed. It is well known that after Dr. Hort has divided his authorities into the three camps which he designates by the names Neutral, Western, and Syrian, that he rejects the Syrian readings on the ground of conflation, and the Western readings on account of multitudinous eccentricities to which the texts that contain them are liable. It is this last step to which I object. I agree to one group of witnesses being rejected or undervalued for proved or probable fabrication of text, but think the other group has been unduly depreciated. And in order to settle the question for myself, I have tried to go more closely into the case, especially in the following points: (i) Why are all the typical conflations in Mark and Luke, and none out of Matthew? (ii) Whence did the separate members of the conflated text arise, since both of them by hypothesis cannot be original?

To the first of these questions I have not been able to give an answer, however convinced I may be by the law of probabilities as to the antecedent unlikeliness of the existing circumstances. To the second, however, I find myself able to reply in some measure. And perhaps my explanation will not only throw some light on

the history of the text, but will be an illustration of the great canon of criticism, of which all the others are only uncertain and variable expressions, that *when the cause of a variant is known the variant itself disappears*.

The first thing, then, that we notice about the texts which are said to be conflated is the fundamental equality which generally prevails in the separate members.

Taking, for instance, the simplified texts, to which we are led by the analysis of Dr. Hort, we find, Mark vi 33, the readings *καὶ προῆλθον αὐτούς, καὶ συνῆλθον αὐτοῦ*. The first of these readings is 17 letters, the second is 16.

The second passage is Mark viii 26. It turns upon the variants

Μηδὲ εἰς τὴν κόμην εἰσελθης,

and

Μηδενὶ εἴπησ εἰς τὴν κόμην.

Of these the first part is 23 letters, and the second 22.

The third passage is Mark ix 38: the alternative members of which are *καὶ ἐκωλύομεν αὐτόν, ἔτι οὐκ ἀκολουθεῖ ἡμῖν* and *ὅς οὐκ ἀκολουθεῖ μεθ' ἡμῶν, καὶ ἐκωλύομεν αὐτόν*. The first of these is 36 letters, the second is 38.

The fourth passage is more difficult to handle critically, and as I do not want to force the texts to prove a theory, I omit it.

It appears, therefore, that of four passages selected to illustrate conflation in the Gospel of Mark, three exhibit an almost exact equality of the separate members. (I omit those in Luke for the present.) Now I think it will be admitted that it is not a mere chance that this equality subsists; upon the theory which asserts conflation it becomes almost inexplicable that this peculiarity should be so prominent, unless it be admitted that one of the separate members is an early and slight distortion of the other; an assumption which is almost implied in the theory of a single ancient text, from which all existing texts have been derived.

And so we come back to the question, *how did one element of a conflate text arise out of the other?*—a point upon which I have meditated often and long; sometimes proposing to myself the hypothesis of different translations of an early Aramaic text and sometimes giving the thing up as an insoluble riddle. However, the fundamental feature of the passages examined being their equality, it seems most reasonable to go back and seek the origin of the various readings in the simplest solution, a scribe's blunder. Let us examine Mark vi 33. We have, writing the verse out,

ΚΑΙ ΕΙΔΟΝ ΑΥΤΟΥΣ ΥΠΑ
 ΓΟΝΤΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΕΓΝΩΣΑΝ
 ΠΟΛΛΟΙ ΚΑΙ ΠΕΖΗ ΑΠΟ
 ΠΑΘΩΝ ΤΩΝ ΠΟΛΕΩΝ ΚΑΙ
 ΣΥΝΕΔΡΑΜΟΝ ΕΚΕΙ ΚΑΙ
 ΠΡΟΗΛΘΟΝ ΑΥΤΟΥΣ ΚΤΕ

It will be observed, on writing the text in this way, that the concurrence of *καὶ* at the end of two successive lines invites the vertical error *συν* for *προ*, and produces at once the necessary second variant, from which all the rest, and the conflated texts, can be derived. The error is, therefore, at once explained by the assumption of an early text written in lines of 16-18 letters each. It is this form which has survived with little change in Codex B, which has preserved the correct reading, and thus vindicates itself as an early text, more ancient than those of the same type as itself in which a particular error was made. And, on the other hand, the Western texts are shown to bear witness that this is one of the primitive forms of the text, by the fact that they have preserved the error made in that form. On both grounds Dr. Hort's conclusion as to the superiority of the text of B is in this case confirmed. As soon as this instance has been settled, we see the reason of the third selected conflation, Mark ix 38. We have only to write the text as follows :

ΕΚΒΑΛΛΟΝΤΑΣ ΔΑΙΜΟΝΙΑ
 ΟΣΟΥ ΚΑΚΟΛΟΥΘΕΙ ΗΜΙ
 ΚΑΙ ΕΚΩΛΥΟΜΕΝ ΑΥΤῸ
 ΟΤΙ ΟΥ ΚΑΚΟΛΟΥΘΕΙ ΗΜΙ

to see that in a text, written 18 letters to the line, a line has been accidentally repeated, or has first been moved over another line, and then conflated into a new reading. But in this case we cannot affirm with certainty which of the two separate readings is the earlier. All that we can say is that the text which lends itself most readily to the production of error is one written in lines of 18 letters. But it lends itself almost as readily to the production of error on the hypothesis that the longer recension is the correct one. We must not be positive that because Cod. B has followed very nearly the 18-line type, therefore its reading is the more ancient and correct one, for the omission of 18 letters is just the error to which that text is liable.

The fourth conflation may be explained in the same way. The text in Mark ix 49 may be conjectured to have stood as follows :

ΚΑΙΤΟ
ΠΥΡΟΥΣΒΕΝΝΥΤΑΙΠΑΣΑ
ΘΥΣΙΑΔΑΛΙΑΙΣΘΗCΕΤΑΙ

and by an error of the scribe three letters from a preceding line were repeated, making *πυρί*, and the final *a* of *θυσία* was immediately absorbed in the two similar succeeding letters. From this the repeated *αλι* was dropped, and a connecting particle introduced by some MSS, although we find *αλι* retained after *πυρι* by Cod. X. Cod. K is taken from a Greek exemplar which read *πάσα* (? γάρ) *θυσία ἀναλωθήσεται*, which is, as Dr. Hort points out, a corruption of the preceding.

In this case then, the judgment seems to be in favor of the Western MSS, and the far-fetched reference to the book of Leviticus as an inducing cause of error may be rejected. The error being of the length of 18 letters may be corrected without severely lowering the high estimate we have of the value of the neutral text. We have now discussed all except one of the confections cited from the Gospel of Mark, and shall be able to do something presently towards the investigation of the genealogical relations of the documents. We will leave the other passage for the present. All that we have shown thus far is the existence of early 18-line texts of Mark which are a sufficient explanation of several important errors. Let us now go on to examine a passage in Luke which will illustrate the doctrine of the lateral aberrations.

The eighth conflation of Dr. Hort occurs in the last verse of Luke, in which we have the two readings *αἰνοῦντες τὸν θεὸν* and *εὐλογοῦντες τὸν θεόν*. We seek to explain one reading by the other.

Let us write out at length the last three verses of Luke as they stand at the close of the gospel in the Codex Sinaiticus :

	<i>Col. 4.</i>
Line 13,	ΚΑΙ ΕΓΕΝΕΤΟ ΕΝ ΤΩ ΕΥΛΟΓΙΝΑΥΤῸ ΔΥΤΟΥΣ ΔΙΕCΤΗ ΑΠΑΥΤΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΑΥ ΤΟΙ ΠΡΟCΚΥΝΗΣΑ ΤΕCΑΥΤΟΝ ΥΠΕC ΤΡΕΨΑΝΤΟ ΕΙC ΙΕΡΟΥ CΑΛΗΜ' ΜΕΤΑΧΑ ΡΑC ΜΕΓΑΛΗC ΚΑΙ ΗCΑΝ ΔΙΑΠΑΝΤΟC
<i>Col. 4.</i>	
Line 11,	ΤΑC ΧΙΡΑC ΑΥΤΟΥ Η 12, ΥΛΟΓΗΣΕΝ ΑΥΤΟΥC
	ΕΝ ΤΩ ΙΕΡΩ ΕΥΛΟ ΓΟΥΝΤΕC ΤΟΝ Θῆ

Here we find that the *εὐλογοῦντες* has come in, by lateral aberration to the last page from the last page but one. The explanation is perfect. (Tischendorf saw that this word was the cause of the error and corrected his text accordingly against the Sinaitic Codex.) We infer: (1) that the early page of Luke was not substantially different from a quarter of the column of the Codex Sinaiticus; (2) that in this case the neutral texts must be subordinated to the Western texts, which have preserved the correct reading; (3) there is a probability that the archaic line was also not very different to that of the Sinaiticus. We need hardly say that this result will very much reverse the method in which the materials of the text are handled in the Gospel of Luke. It will enhance the authority of the Sinaitic text in Luke, though not to the same extent as if the MS had avoided the error.

From this point we can go on to discuss the seventh conflation, Luke xii 18, in which we are confronted with the four readings:

B T L X mem. 346)	ΤΟΝCITΟΝ[ΜΟΥ]	? 11 letters.
a. c. d. e. m.	ΤΟΥCΚΑΡΠΟΥCΜΟΥ	14 "
(N D. b. ff. r. q and all Syrian texts)	ΤΑΓΕΝΗΜΑΤΑΜΟΥ	13 "
B. T. L. X. mem. and all Syrian texts)	ΚΑΙΤΑΑΓΑΘΑΜΟΥ	13 "

It is needless to say that we cannot take all these readings: we remark that they are almost all line-lengths, according to the previous hypotheses. Giving especial weight to the actual reading of **N**, we feel tolerably sure that *τὰ γενήματά μου* is a line of text. In the next place we remark that the first line is not complete without a *καὶ*. For it is certainly either a line dropped, or one substituted for another line of known length, 12-14 letters. The second line is an assimilation to what has just been written, while *τὰ ἀγαθά* looks like an anticipation of *πολλὰ ἀγαθά* immediately following. Suppose, then, we read:

τοῦ σίτον μου καὶ τὰ γενήματά μου

(which is preserved only in Cod. 346).

Now the fact that *καὶ* was necessary to the completeness of the first line, shows it to be a genuine part of the text, and not an alternative line hooked on to another of the same length. Moreover, of the four MSS 13. 69. 124. 346, the first three read *τὸν σίτον μου καὶ τὰ ἀγαθά μου*, while the fourth reads *τὸν σίτον μου καὶ τὰ γενήματά μου*. This shows that *τὰ γενήματά μου* and *τὰ ἀγαθά μου* are alternative readings, of which the former has evidently the preference for us,

as it had for the scribe-corrector in 346. The conflation then consists in the union of the last two readings by the Syrian text, while at the same time the first limb of the sentence is dropped.

The discussion of those conflate readings which we are able to interpret, with any degree of certainty, leads us to the conclusion that it is impossible to predict correct readings as infallibly belonging to either group of manuscripts representing the relatively simple readings. The Western readings are found to vindicate for themselves a purity and antiquity which is, in certain cases, greater than that of the neutral readings. They cannot, therefore, be wholly rejected or used in the supplementary manner in which Westcott and Hort employ them. A reading is not to be rejected as Western and Syrian merely because it is Western and Syrian, for either the probabilities against such readings have been overestimated or the results of the textual examination have been too hastily generalized. The peculiar character of the Western text can, moreover, be eliminated to a certain extent, by remarking that its errors are those which are incidental to rapid transcription, and the causes of the separate mistakes can often be detected. For instance, in Mark xv 34, the reading of certain Western texts is *ᾠνειδισας* for *ἐγκυρέλιπες*. Now this reading might plausibly be claimed as a modification of the more difficult thought of divine desertion, or as an assimilation to other passages of the quoted Psalm. But it is more likely only an aberration to the *ᾠνειδιζον αὐτόν* of the 32d verse, the interval between the confused words being 161 letters. When we have recognized the error in the Western text as a simple transcriptional blunder, how does the discovery prove license and corruption in the remaining Western readings? And if a number of them can be explained in this innocent manner, will not our estimate of the Western readings generally change? At least the margin of wilful and artificial change will be much reduced. We hope to have more to say on this important subject at no distant date.

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