A FULL AND EXACT COLLATION OF ABOUT TWENTY GREEK MANUSCRIPTS OF THE HOLY GOSPELS, (HITHERTO UNEXAMINED), DEPOSITED IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM, THE ARCHIEPISCOPAL LIBRARY AT LAMBETH, &C. WITH A CRITICAL INTRODUCTION

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With a Critical Introduction by Frederick Henry Ambrose Scrivener

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FREDERICK HENRY AMBROSE SCRIVENER

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WITH A CRITICAL INTRODUCTION.

BY THE

REV. FREDERICK HENRY SCRIVENER, M.A.,

OF TRINITY COLLEGE, PERPETUAL CURATE OF PENWERRIS, CORNWALL,

AND HEAD MASTER OF FALMOUTH SCHOOL.

LORD, WHAT LOVE HAVE I UNTO THY LAW:

ALL THE DAY LONG IS MY STUDY IN IT.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

I am anxious to return my respectful thanks to the Syndics of the Cambridge University Press, for the liberal aid they have afforded me in defraying out of the Funds at their command, the expense of printing the present work.

FALMOUTH, *January* 31, 1853.

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CHAPTER I.

ON THE EXISTING STATE OF THE GREEK TEXT OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

THE following pages comprise an humble yet earnest attempt to revive among the countrymen of Bentley and Mill some interest in a branch of Biblical learning which, for upwards of a century, we have tacitly abandoned to continental scholars. The criticism of the text of Holy Scripture, though confessedly inferior in point of dignity and importance to its right interpretation, yet takes precedence of it in order of time; for how can we consistently proceed to investigate the sense of the Sacred Volume, till we have done our utmost to ascertain its precise words?

Now to whatever cause we may attribute this strange and scarcely creditable neglect on the part of English Divines, it certainly cannot arise from a paucity of unwrought materials, or exhaustion of the subject. On this point, however, in the room of any statement of my own, I will lay before the reader the ingenuous confession of one of the highest living authorities on Biblical Criticism, in one of the most recent of his publications. "Ut enim dicam quod res est, ex omnibus qui collati sunt codices, soli illi Alexandrinus [A], Ephraem. Syri [C], Cantabrigiensis [D], Dublinensis [Z], Sangallensis [Δ] et Dresdensis [G. Paul.] ita sunt excussi, ut quid scriptum sin-

gulis locis teneant quid non, scias" (Scholz, Commemoration Address at Bonn, 1845, p. 2).* A melancholy summary indeed of the labours of two centuries in a field of study, where all that is not scrupulously exact is useless at the best: yet no one who has ever compared two or three manuscripts with the representations of them contained in Mill's or Wetstein's or Griesbach's or Scholz's own edition will hesitate to admit its literal truth. To collate an ancient copy of the New Testament is a task requiring more time, care, and patience than men are very willing to bestow on such an object; to describe its external condition, to glance over a few chapters and so form a random guess at its recension or internal character, is far easier, and will swell a catalogue just as well. I have cited above the calm and mature judgment of Professor Scholz (unquestionably one of the most industrious, if not the most brilliant, of the great editors of the Greek Testament) as to the results of what has been already accomplished for the sacred text: there was a time when he held far different language; when he could speak of his own achievements in such terms as these, "omnibus fere, qui adhuc supersunt, testibus exploratis, *eorumque lectionibus diligenter conquisitis*," (Præf. N. T. Vol. I. p. 2, 1829): yet even then his own Prolegomena would have sufficed to shew how large allowance we must make for the ardent temperament of the writer. It will be convenient, in the present volume, to confine our attention to the Four Gospels. To the 286 Evangelia and 57 Evangelisteria known before the publication of his edition, his indefatigable diligence and extensive travels have added 210 Evangelia and 121 Evangelisteria: in fact, he has nearly doubled the list.

* Tischendorf's zeal has very recently enabled us to add a few items to this meagre list.

But while Dr Scholz is entitled to our gratitude for having opened to us so many veins of precious ore, it must not be dissembled that he has in a great measure left the toil of working them to his successors. Of the 331 documents he has discovered in the libraries of the East and West, he has collated entire only eleven, in greater part sixteen, in a few places or cursorily two hundred and twenty-two, while eighty-one are merely inserted in his catalogue without remark. Such a course surely could do little towards advancing a strict, accurate, and critical acquaintance with the sacred original.

But our knowledge even of those manuscripts which have been described the oftenest and inspected the most repeatedly is more loose and unsatisfactory than would be imagined prior to investigation. Three of the copies I have collated for the present volume are found in Griesbach's list (gjm): how little he really knew of their contents I shall have occasion to state in the next chapter. I am sure that I may allege the testimony of Mr Tregelles to the same effect, since he has been compelled to examine afresh even such principal authorities as the uncial MSS. EGUX, for his forthcoming edition of the New Testament. On the whole, then, I conceive the case to be simply this: while every reading actually cited from this mass of documents by Griesbach or Scholz may be relied on as genuine with tolerable assurance, very seldom will the readings quoted amount to one in three, often not to one in ten, of those which each copy contains; the omissions consisting chiefly of such rare or singular or minute variations as best enable us to determine the genius and value of the manuscript which exhibits them, and are consequently even more important to the critic than those that are given. If any exception needs be made to this general