

“WESTCOTT & HORT’S GREEK TEXT & THEORY REFUTED”



Taken from

The Revision Revised

By

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A Brief Summary By Pastor D. A. Waite, Th.D., Ph.D.

Dr. Scrivener's Comments on Westcott & Hort's Revised Greek Text & Theory

“There is little hope for the stability of their imposing structure, if its foundations have been laid on the sandy ground of ingenious conjecture. And, since barely the smallest vestige of historical evidence has ever been alleged in support of the views of these accomplished editors, their teaching must either be received as intuitively true, or dismissed from our consideration as precarious and even visionary.” [Dr. F. H. A. Scrivener's *Plain Introduction*, 1883, p. 531, quoted by Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, p. iv].

Dr. Scrivener's Comments on Westcott & Hort's Revised Greek Text & Theory

“Dr. Hort’s System is entirely destitute of historical foundation.”

“We are compelled to repeat as emphatically as ever our strong conviction that the Hypothesis to whose proof he has devoted so many laborious years, is destitute not only of historical foundation, but of all probability, revealing from the internal goodness of the Text which its adoption would force upon us.” [Dr. F. H. A. Scrivener's *Plain Introduction*, 1883, pp. 537, 542, quoted by Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, p. iv].

Dean Burgon's Purpose in the Book

“My one object has been to defeat the mischievous attempt which was made in 1881 to thrust upon this Church [the Anglican Church] and Realm a Revision of the Sacred Text, which—recommended though it be by eminent names—I am thoroughly convinced, and am able to prove, is untrustworthy from beginning to end.” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, p. v].

Poisoning the River of Life

“It is, however, the systematic depravation of the underlying Greek which does so grievously offend me: for this is nothing else but a poisoning of the River of Life at its sacred source. Our Revisers (with the best and purest intentions, no doubt,) stand convicted of having deliberately rejected the words of Inspiration in every page, and of having substituted for them fabricated Readings which the Church has long since refused to acknowledge, or else has rejected with abhorrence, and which only survive at this time in a little handful of documents of the most depraved type.” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, pp. vi-vii].⁵

Hitting Opponents

“Rather Hard”

“If, therefore, any do complain that I have sometimes hit my opponents rather hard, I take leave to point out that ‘to everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the sun’; ‘a time to embrace, and a time to be far from embracing’; a time for speaking smoothly, and a time for speaking sharply. And that when the Words of Inspiration are seriously imperiled, as now they are, it is scarcely possible for one who is determined effectually to preserve the Deposit in its integrity, to hit either too straight or too hard.” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, pp. vii-viii].

Unanswered After Two Full Years



“Two full years have elapsed since the first of these Essays was published; and my Criticism—for the best of reasons—remains to this hour unanswered. The public has been assured indeed, (in the course of some hysterical remarks by Canon Farrar), that ‘the “Quarterly Reviewer” can be refuted as fully as he desires as soon as any scholar has the leisure to answer him.’ The ‘Quarterly Reviewer’ can afford to wait,—if the Revisers can.

Unanswered After Two Full Years



“But they are reminded that it is no answer to one who has demolished their master’s ‘Theory,’ for the pupils to keep on reproducing fragments of it; and by their mistakes and exaggerations, to make both themselves and him, ridiculous.” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, p. xv]

The False Methods of Westcott & Hort

“In this department of sacred Science, men have been going on too long inventing their facts, and delivering themselves of oracular decrees, on the sole responsibility of their own inner consciousness.

There is great convenience in such a method certainly,—a charming simplicity which is in a high degree attractive to flesh and blood.

The False Methods of Westcott & Hort

“It dispenses with proof. It furnishes no evidence. It asserts when it ought to argue. It reiterates when it is called upon to explain. ‘I am sir Oracle.’ . . .

This, which I venture to style the *unscientific* method, reached its culminating point when Professors Westcott and Hort recently put forth their Recension of the Greek Text. Their work is indeed quite a psychological curiosity.

The False Methods of Westcott & Hort

“Incomprehensible to me is it how two able men of disciplined understandings can have seriously put forth the volume which they call ‘INTRODUCTION-APPENDIX.’ It is the very *reductio ad absurdum* of the uncritical method of the last fifty years. And it is especially in opposition to this new method of theirs that I so strenuously insist that *the consentient voice of Catholic Antiquity* is to be diligently inquired after and submissively listened to; for that *this, in the end, will prove our only safe guide.*” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, pp. xxv-xxvi]. ¹¹

Dean Burgon's Meaning of “Catholic Antiquity”

“The method I persistently advocate in every case of a supposed doubtful Reading. (I say it for the last time, and request that I may be no more misrepresented.) is, that an appeal shall be unreservedly made to Catholic Antiquity; and that the combined verdict of Manuscripts, Versions, Fathers, shall be regarded as decisive.” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, pp. xxvii].

Dean Burgon's Desire to Be Able to Spend Time for Bible Interpretation

“But I more than long,–I fairly ache to have done with Controversy, and to be free to devote myself to the work of Interpretation. My apology for bestowing so large a portion of my time on Textual Criticism, is David’s when he was reproached by his brethren for appearing on the field of battle,–‘Is there not a cause?’” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, pp. xxix].

Two “Irresponsible Scholars”
(Westcott & Hort)
“Silently Revised” the Greek Text

“But instead of all this, a Revision of the *English Authorised Version* having been sanctioned by the Convocation of the Southern Province in 1871, the opportunity was eagerly snatched at by two irresponsible scholars of the University of Cambridge for obtaining the general sanction of the Revising body, and thus indirectly of Convocation, for a private venture of their own,—

Two “Irresponsible Scholars”
(Westcott & Hort)
“Silently Revised” the Greek Text

“their own privately devised Revision of the *Greek Text*. On that Greek Text of theirs, (which I hold to be the most depraved which has ever appeared in print), with some slight modifications, our Authorised English Version has been silently revised: silently, I say, for in the margin of the English no record is preserved of the underlying Textual changes which have been introduced by the Revisionists.” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, pp. xxx].

Dean Burgon's Reason for “Descending into the Arena of Controversy”

“If all this does not constitute a valid reason for descending into the arena of controversy, it would in my judgment be impossible to indicate an occasion when the Christian soldier *is* called upon to do so:—the rather because certain of these who, from their rank and station in the Church, ought to be the champions of the Truth, are at this time found to be among its most vigorous assailants.” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, pp. xxxi-xxxii].

God's Threefold Means of Preservation of His Written Words

“(1) The provision, then, which the Divine Author of Scripture is found to have made for the preservation of His written Word, is of a peculiarly varied and highly complex description, First-By causing that a vast multiplication of Copies should be required all down the ages,-beginning at the earliest period, and continuing in an ever-increasing ratio until the actual invention of Printing,-He provided the most effectual security imaginable against fraud.

God's Threefold Means of Preservation of His Written Words

“True, that millions of the copies so produced have long since perished; but it is nevertheless a plain fact that there survive of the Gospels alone upwards of one thousand copies in the present day.” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, pp. 8-9].

God's Threefold Means of Preservation of His Written Words

“(2) Next, VERSIONS. The necessity of translating the Scriptures into divers languages for the use of different branches of the early Church, procured that many an authentic record has been preserved for the New Testament as it existed in the first few centuries of the Christian era. Thus, the Peschito Syriac and the Old Latin version are believed to have been executed in the 2nd century.

God's Threefold Means of Preservation of His Written Words

“The two Egyptian translations are referred to the 3rd and 4th. The Vulgate (or revised Latin) and the Gothic are also claimed for the 4th; the Armenian and possibly the Aethiopic, belong to the 5th.” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, p. 9].

God's Threefold Means of Preservation of His Written Words

“(3) Lastly, the requirements of assailants and apologists alike, the business of Commentators, the needs of controversialists and teachers in every age, have resulted in a vast accumulation of additional evidence, of which it is scarcely possible to overestimate the importance.”

God's Threefold Means of Preservation of His Written Words

“For in this way it has come to pass that every famous Doctor of the Church in turn has quoted more or less largely from the sacred writings, and thus has borne testimony to the contents of the codices with which he was individually familiar. PATRISTIC CITATIONS accordingly use a third mighty safeguard of the integrity of the deposit.” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, p. 9]

The Value of Lectionaries as Greek Manuscripts

“In truth, the security which the Text of the New Testament enjoys is altogether unique and extraordinary. To specify the single consideration, which has never yet attracted nearly the amount of attention it deserves. Lectionaries abound which establish the Text which has been publicly read in the churches of the East, from at least A.D. 400 until the time of the invention of printing.” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, p. 11]

The Tyrannical Ascendancy of Manuscripts "B" (Vatican) and "Aleph" (Sinai)

“Singular to relate, the first, second, fourth and fifth of these codices (B, Aleph, C, D) but especially B and Aleph have within the last twenty years established a tyrannical ascendancy over the imagination of the Critics which can only be fitly spoken of as a blind superstition. It matters nothing that all four are discovered on careful scrutiny to differ essentially, not only from ninety-nine out of a hundred of the whole body of extant MSS, besides, but even from one another.”
[Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, pp. 11-12].

The Resemblance Between MSS “B” (Vatican) and “Aleph” (Sinai)

“Between the first two (B and Aleph) there subsists an amount of sinister resemblance, which proves that they must have been derived at no very remote period from the same corrupt original. . . . It is in fact *easier to find two consecutive verses in which these two MSS differ the one from the other, than two consecutive verses in which they entirely agree.*” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, p. 12]

The Unreliability of “B” (Vatican) and “Aleph” (Sinai)

“Next to D, the most untrustworthy codex is Aleph, which bears on its front a memorable note of the evil repute under which it has always laboured:–viz. it is found that at least ten revisers between the 4th and the 12th centuries busied themselves with the task of correcting its many and extraordinary perversions of the truth of Scripture.”
[Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, p. 13].

The Depravity of “B” (Vatican), “Aleph” (Sinai) and “D”

“We venture to assure him, without a particle of hesitation, that “Aleph,” “B,” “D” are three of the most scandalously corrupt copies extant;-exhibit the most shamefully mutilated texts which are anywhere to be met with:-have become, by whatever process (for their history is wholly unknown), the depositories of the largest amount of fabricated readings ancient blunders, and intentional perversions of Truth,--which are discoverable in any known copies of the Word of God.” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, p. 16].

The Worst N.T. Corruptions Came in the First 100 Years

“It is no less true to fact than paradoxical in sound, writes the most learned of the Revisionist body [that is, Dr. F. H. Scrivener], ‘that the worst corruptions to which the New Testament has ever been subjected, originated within a hundred years after it was composed: that Irenaeus (A.D. 150), and the African Fathers, and the whole Western, with a portion of the Syrian Church, used far inferior manuscripts to those employed by Stunica, or Erasmus, or Stephens thirteen centuries later, when moulding the Textus Receptus.” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, p. 30].

Burgon Defended the Traditional Text Against the Westcott & Hort Text in These Verses:

- **Mark 2:1-12 (pp. 30-34)**
- **Luke 11:2-4 (pp. 34-36)**
- **Mark 16:9-20 (pp. 36-40)**
- **Luke 2:14 (pp. 41-51)**
- **Acts 27:37 (pp. 51-53)**
- **Acts 18:7 (pp. 53-54)**
- **Matthew 11:23 & Luke 10:15 (pp. 54-56)**

Burgon Defended the Traditional Text Against the Westcott & Hort Text in These Verses:

- **Mark 11:3 (pp. 56-58)**
- **Mark 11:8 (pp. 58-61)**
- **Luke 23:45 (pp. 61-66)**
- **Mark 6:20 (pp. 66-70)**
- **Mark 9:24 (pp. 70-71)**
- **Matthew 14:30 (p. 71)**
- **Mark 15:39 (pp. 71-72)**
- **Luke 23;42 (p. 72)**

Burgon Defended the Traditional Text Against the Westcott & Hort Text in These Verses:

- **John 14:4 (pp. 72-73)**
- **Luke 6:1 (pp. 73-75)**
- **Luke 22:19-20–32 words (pp. 75-79)**
- **Luke 22:43-44–26 words (pp. 79-83)**
- **Luke 23:34–12 words (pp.82-85)**

Burton Defended the Traditional Text Against the Westcott & Hort Text in These Verses:

- **Luke 23:38--7 words (pp. 85-88)**
- **Luke 24:1,3,6,9,12-37 words (pp. 88-90)**
- **Luke 24:40,42,51-53-23 words (pp. 90-91)**
- **Matthew 27:21 (pp. 91-92)**
- **Matthew 28:11 (pp. 92-93)**

Burton Defended the Traditional Text Against the Westcott & Hort Text in These Verses:



- **Luke 9:55-56 (p. 93)**
- **Luke 24:41 (p. 93)**
- **Luke 6:1 (pp. 93-98)**
- **1 Timothy 3:16 ("God manifest in the flesh") (pp. 98-106, and pp. 424-491)**
- **2 Peter 2:22 (p. 106)**

Burgon's Evidence of "God manifest in the flesh" (1 Timothy 3:16)

Evidence for THEOS ("God")

N.T. Greek Manuscripts

(Lectionaries & Copies) = **289**

Ancient N.T. Versions = **3**

Greek Church Fathers = **c. 20**

Total: ****312**

Burton's Evidence of "God manifest in the flesh" (1 Timothy 3:16)

Evidence for HO ("which")

N.T. Greek Manuscripts = 1

Ancient N.T. Versions = 5

Greek Church Fathers = 2

Total: **7

Burgon's Evidence of "God
manifest in the flesh" (1
Timothy 3:16)

Evidence for HOS ("who")

N.T. Greek Manuscripts =	6
Ancient N.T. Versions =	1
Greek Church Fathers =	<u>0</u>
Total:	**7

[Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*,
pp. 486-496].

Burgon's Evidence of "God manifest in the flesh" (1 Timothy 3:16)

“It has been the ruin of the present undertaking—as far as the Sacred Text is concerned—that the majority of the Revisionist body have been misled throughout by the oracular decrees and impetuous advocacy of Drs. Westcott and Hort, who, with the purest intentions [???] and most laudable industry, have constructed a Text demonstrably more remote from the Evangelic verity than any which has ever yet seen the light.” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, p. 110].

The Error of “Alternative Readings”

“What are found in the margin are therefore ‘alternative readings’-in the opinion of these self-constituted representatives of the Church and of the Sects. It becomes evident that by this ill-advised proceeding, our Revisionists would convert every Englishman’s copy of the New Testament into a one-sided Introduction to the Critical difficulties of the Greek Text; a labyrinth, out of which they have not been at the pains to supply him with a single hint as to how he may find his way. . . .” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, p. 236].

The Error of “Alternative Readings”

“What else must be the result of all this but general uncertainty, confusion, distress? A hazy mistrust of all Scripture has been insinuated into the hearts and minds of countless millions, who in this way have been forced to become doubters,—ye, doubters in the Truth of Revelation itself.”

[Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, p. 237].

Lachmann's Textual Theory

“Lachmann’s ruling principle then, was exclusive reliance on a very few ancient authorities—because they are ‘ancient.’ He constructed his text on three or four—not infrequently on *one or two*—Greek codices. Of the Greek Fathers, he relied on Origen. Of the oldest Versions, he cared only for the Latin. To the Syrian . . . he paid no attention. We venture to think his method *irrational*.” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, pp. 242-43].⁴⁰

Tregelles' Textual Theory

“Tregelles adopted the same strange method. He resorted to a very few out of the entire mass of ‘ancient Authorities’ for the construction of his Text. His proceeding is exactly that of a man, who—in order that he may the better explore a comparatively unknown region—begins by putting out both his eyes; and resolutely refuses the help of the natives to show him the way. Why he rejected the testimony of every *Father of the 4th century except Eusebius*,—it were unprofitable to enquire.” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, p. 243].

Tischendorf's Textual Theory (1831 A.D.)

“Tischendorf, the last and by far the ablest of the three, knew better than to reject ‘eighty-nine ninetieths’ of the extant witnesses. He had recourse to the ingenious expedient of adducing all the available evidence, but adopting just as little of it as he chose; and he chose to adopt those readings only, which are vouched for by the same little band of authorities whose partial testimony had already proved fatal to the decrees of Lachmann and Tregelles.” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, p. 243].

Summary of the last Three Theories

“Enough has been said to show–(the only point we are bent on establishment–that the one distinctive tenet of the three most famous Critics since 1831 has been a superstitious reverence for whatever is found in the same little handful of early,–but not the earliest,–nor yet of necessity the purest,–documents.” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, p. 244].

Errors of the last Three Theories

“Strange,” we venture to exclaim, (addressing the living representatives of the school of Lachmann, and Tregelles, and Tischendorf):– ‘Strange,’ that you should not perceive that you are the dupes of a fallacy which is even transparent. You talk of ‘Antiquity.’ But you must know very well that you actually *mean* something different.

Errors of the last Three Theories

“You fasten upon three, or perhaps four,—on two, or perhaps three,—on *one*, or perhaps *two*,—documents of the 4th or 5th century. But then, confessedly, these are one, two, three, or four specimens only of Antiquity,—not ‘Antiquity’ itself. And what if they should even prove to be unfair samples of Antiquity? . . .” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, p. 244].

Errors in Dr. Hort's Theory



“ . . . Dr. Hort informs us that Lachmann's Text of 1831 was 'the first founded on documentary authority.' . . . On *what* then, pray, does the learned Professor imagine that the Texts of Erasmus (1516) and of Stunica (1522) were founded: His statement is incorrect.

Errors in Dr. Hort's Theory



“The actual difference between Lachmann’s Text and those of the earlier Editors is that *his* ‘documentary authority’ is partial, narrow, self-contradictory; and is proved to be untrustworthy by a free appeal to Antiquity.

Errors in Dr. Hort's Theory

“*Their* documentary authority, derived from independent sources,—though partial and narrow as that on which Lachmann relied,—exhibits (*under the good Providence of God*,) a Traditional Text, the general purity of which is demonstrated by all the evidence which 350 years of subsequent research have succeeded in accumulating; and which is confessedly the Text of A.D. 375.”
[Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, p. 250].

Errors of “Intrinsic & Transcriptional Probability”

“The dissertation on ‘Intrinsic’ and ‘Transcriptional Probability’ which follows (pp. 20-30)–being *unsupported by one single instance or illustration*,–we pass by. It ignores throughout, the fact, that the most serious corruptions of MSS are due not to ‘Scribes’ or ‘Copyists,’ . . . but to the persons who employed them. .

. .

Errors of “Intrinsic & Transcriptional Probability”

“We venture to declare that inasmuch as one expert’s notions of what is ‘transcriptionally probable,’ prove to be the diametrical reverse of another expert’s notions, the supposed evidence to be derived from this source may, with advantage, be neglected altogether.”

Errors of “Intrinsic & Transcriptional Probability”

“Let the study of *Documentary Evidence* be allowed to take its place. **Notions of ‘Probability’ are the very pest of these departments of Science which admit of an appeal to *Fact*.”
[Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, pp. 251-52].**

Errors of “Genealogical Evidence”



“High time however is it to declare that, in strictness, all this talk about ‘Genealogical evidence’ when applied to Manuscripts is *moonshine*. . . .But then, it happens, unfortunately, that we are unacquainted with one single instance of a known MS copied from another known MS.

Errors of “Intrinsic & Transcriptional Probability”

“And perforce all talk about ‘Genealogical evidence,’ where *no single step in the descent* can be produced,—in other words, *where no Genealogical evidence exists,—is absurd.*”
[Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, pp. 255-56].

Errors of “Genealogical Evidence” Illustrated



“The living inhabitants of a village, congregated in the churchyard where the bodies of their forgotten progenitors for 1000 years repose without memorials of any kind,—is a faint image of the relation which subsists between extant copies of the Gospels and the sources from which they were derived.” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, p. 256].

“Conflation” Verses Answered

“The following 8 verses alone are offered as alleged examples in Westcott and Hort’s Introduction: (1) Mark 6:33; (2) Mark 8:26; (3) Mark 9:38; (4) Mark 9:49; (5) Luke 9:10; (6) Luke 11:54; (7) Luke 12:18; (8) Luke 24:53. ##1, 2, 5, 6, & 7 don't even exhibit the phenomenon.]

“The interpretation put upon them by Drs. Westcott and Hort, is purely arbitrary: a baseless imagination,—a dream and nothing more.” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, pp. 258-262].

The False “Syrian Text Recension” (250 & 350 A.D.) Refuted

Hort & Westcott wrote: “The Syrian Text must in fact be the result of a ‘Recension,’ . . . performed deliberately by Editors, and not merely by Scribes.” (Introduction, p. 133). Dean Burgon answers: “But *why* ‘must’ it? Instead of ‘*must in fact,*’ we are disposed to read ‘*may-in fiction.*’

The False “Syrian Text Recension” (250 & 350 A.D.) Refuted

“The learned Critic can but mean that, on comparing the Text of Fathers of the 4th century with the Text of codex B, it becomes to himself self-evident that one of the two has been fabricated. Granted. Then,—Why should not the solitary Codex be the offending party? . . . why (we ask) should codex B be upheld ‘contramundum’?” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, pp. 272-73].

The False “Syrian Text Recension” (250 & 350 A.D.) Refuted

“Apart however from the gross intrinsic improbability of the supposed Recension,—the utter absence of one particle of evidence, traditional or otherwise, that it ever did take place, must be laid to be fatal to the hypothesis that it *did*. It is simply incredible that an incident of such magnitude and interest would leave no trace of itself in history.

The False “Syrian Text Recension” (250 & 350 A.D.) Refuted

“As a conjecture–(and it only professes to be a conjecture)–**Dr. Hort’s notion of how the Text of the Fathers of the 3rd, 4th, and 5th centuries,**–which, as he truly remarks, is in the main identical with our own *Received Text*,–came into being, **must be unconditionally abandoned.**” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, pp. 293-94].

The Importance of Refuting the False “Recension” Theory



“We have been so full on the subject of this imaginary ‘Antiochian’ or ‘Syrian text,’ not (the reader may be sure) without sufficient reason. Scant satisfaction truly is there in scattering to the winds an airy tissue which its ingenious authors have been industriously weaving for 30 years;

The Importance of Refuting the False “Recension” Theory

“But it is clear that with this hypothesis of a ‘Syrian’ text,—the immediate source and actual prototype of the commonly received Text of the N.T.,—stands or falls their entire Textual theory. Reject it, and the entire fabric is observed to collapse, and subside into a shapeless ruin. And with it, of necessity, goes the ‘New Greek Text,’—and therefore the ‘New English Version’ of our Revisionists, which in the main has been founded on it.” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, p. 294].

Westcott & Hort's Admission that the T.R. is 4th Century




“The fundamental text of the
late extant Greek MSS
generally is, beyond all
question, identical with [what
Dr. Hort chooses to call] the
dominant Antiochian or Graeco-
Syrian text of the second half of
the 4th century . . .

Westcott & Hort's Admission that the T.R. is 4th Century

“The Antiochian [and other] Fathers, and the bulk of extant MSS, written from about three or four, to ten or eleven centuries later, must have had, in the greater number of extant variations, a common original either contemporary with, or older than, our oldest extant MSS.” [Westcott & Hort, *Introduction to the Greek N.T.*, p. 92. quoted by Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, p. 295].

Burton Agrees on 4th Century date for the T.R.



“So far then, happily, we are entirely agreed. The only question is—How is this resemblance to be accounted for? Not, we answer,—not, certainly, by putting forward so violent and improbable—as *irrational* a conjecture as that, first, about A.D. 250,—and then again about A.D. 350,—an authoritative standard Text was fabricated at Antioch; of which all other known MSS.

Burton Agrees on 4th Century date for the T.R.

“(except a very little handful) are nothing else but transcripts; but rather, by loyally recognizing, in the practical identity of the Text exhibited by 99 out of 100 of our extant MSS, the probable general fidelity of those many manuscripts to the inspired exemplars themselves from which remotely they are confessedly descended.”

Burgon Agrees on 4th Century date for the T.R.

“And surely if it be allowable to assume (with Dr. Hort) that for 1532 years, (viz. from A.D. 350 to A.D. 1882) the *Antiochian* standard has been faithfully retained and transmitted,—it will be impossible to assign any valid reason why the inspired Original itself, the *Apostolic* standard, should not have been as faithfully transmitted and retained from the Apostolic age to the Antiochian [from A.D. 90 to A.D. 250-350]—i.e. throughout an interval of less than 250 years, or *one-sixth* of the period.” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, pp. 295-96].

More on the “Recension” Theory

“Drs. Westcott and Hort assume that this ‘Antiochian text’-found in the later cursives and the Fathers of the latter half of the 4th century-must be an *artificial*, an *arbitrarily invented* standard; a text *fabricated* between A.D. 250 and A.D. 350. And if they may but be so fortunate as to persuade the world to adopt their hypothesis, then all will be easy;

More on the “Recension” Theory

“for they will have reduced the supposed ‘consent of Fathers’ to the reproduction of one and the same single ‘primary documentary witness’: . . .

Upset the hypothesis on the other hand, and all is reversed in a moment.

More on the “Recension” Theory

“Every attesting Father is perceived to be a dated MS. and an independent authority; and the combined evidence of several of these becomes simply unmanageable. In like manner, ‘the approximate consent of the cursives’ . . . is perceived to be equivalent *not* to ‘A PRIMARY DOCUMENTARY WITNESS,’—*not* to ‘ONE ANTIOCHIAN ORIGINAL,’—but to be tantamount to the articulate speech of *many witnesses of high character, coming to us from every quarter of primitive Christendom.*” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, pp. 296-97].

The Vatican (“B”) Manuscript Described



“Behold then the altar at which Copies,
Fathers, Versions, are all to be
ruthlessly sacrificed,—the tribunal from
which there shall be absolutely no
appeal,—the Oracle which is to silence
every doubt, resolve every riddle,
smooth away every difficulty. All has
been stated, where the name has been
pronounced of-codex B.” [Dean John
W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, p. 301].⁷⁰

Fallacy of Worshiping “B”

“And then, by an unscrupulous use of the process of Reiteration, accompanied by a boundless exercise of the imaginative faculty, we have reached the goal to which all that went before has been steadily tending; viz. the absolute supremacy of codices B and Aleph above all other codices,—and when they differ, then of codex B.

Fallacy of Worshiping “B”

“And yet, the ‘immunity from substantive error’ of a lost Codex of *imaginary* date and *unknown* history cannot but be a pure imagination,–(a mistaken one, as we shall presently show,)–of these respected Critics: while their proposed practical inference from it,–(viz. to regard two remote and confessedly depraved Copies of that original, as ‘a safe criterion of genuineness,’)–

Fallacy of Worshiping “B”

“this, at all events, is the reverse of logical. In the meantime, the presumed proximity of the Text of Aleph and B to the Apostolic age is henceforth discoursed of as if it were no longer a matter of conjecture.”

[Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, p. 304].

Why Vatican (“B”) & Sinai (“Aleph”) Survived

“Lastly, We suspect that these two Manuscripts are indebted for their preservation, *solely to their ascertained evil character*; which has occasioned that the one eventually found its way, four centuries ago, to a forgotten shelf in the Vatican library; while the other, after exercising the ingenuity of several generations of critical Correctors, eventually (viz. in A.D. 1844) got deposited in the wastepaper basket of the Convent at the foot of Mount Sinai. Had B and Aleph been copies of average purity, they must long since have shared the inevitable fate of books which are freely *used* and highly prized; namely, they would have fallen into decadence and disappeared from sight.” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, p.319]

Previous Veneration of Vatican ("B") & Sinai ("Aleph")



“Since 1881, Editors have vied with one another in the fulsomeness of the homage they have paid to these ‘two false Witnesses,’—for such B and Aleph are, as the concurrent testimony of Copies, Fathers and Versions abundantly prove. Even superstitious reverence has been claimed for these two codices; and Drs. Westcott and Hort are so far in advance of their predecessors in the servility of their blind adulation; that they must be allowed to have easily won the race.” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, pp. 319-20]

“B” & “Aleph” & Superstition

“B Aleph C But when I find them hopelessly at variance among themselves: above all, when I find (1) all other Manuscripts of whatever date, (2) the most ancient Versions, and (3) the whole body of the primitive Fathers, decidedly opposed to them, I am (to speak plainly) at a loss to understand how any man of sound understanding acquainted with all the facts of the case and accustomed to exact reasoning, can hesitate to regard the unsupported (or the slenderly supported) testimony of one or other of them as simply worthless. The craven homage which the foremost of the three ["B"] habitually receives at the hands of Drs. Westcott and Hort. I can only describe as a weak superstition. It is something more than unreasonable. It becomes even ridiculous.” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, p. 325]

You Can't Conclude a Universal from a very few Particulars

[Burgon disagrees that Westcott and Hort can take a very small number of particular examples of Antiquity and conclude a UNIVERSAL about ALL Antiquity.] **He wrote:**

“To make them the basis of an induction is preposterous. It is not allowable to infer the universal from the particular. If the bones of Goliath were to be discovered tomorrow, would you propose as an induction therefrom that it was the fashion to wear four-and-twenty fingers and toes on one’s hands and feet in the days of the giant of Gath?”

[Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, pp. 329-30]

Burgon's Firsthand Manuscript Comparisons of B, Aleph, C & D

“On first seriously applying ourselves to these studies, many years ago, we found it wondrous difficult to divest ourselves of prepossessions very like your own. Turn which way we would, we were encountered by the same confident terminology:—‘the best documents,’—‘primary manuscripts,’—‘first-rate authorities,’—‘primitive evidence,’—‘ancient readings,’—and so forth: and we found that thereby cod. A or B,—cod. C or D—were invariably and exclusively meant. It was not until we had laboriously collated these documents (including Aleph) for ourselves that we became aware of their true character.

Burgon's Firsthand Manuscript Comparisons of B, Aleph, C & D

“Long before coming to the end of our task (and it occupied us, off and on, for eight years) we had become convinced that the supposed ‘best documents’ and ‘first-rate authorities’ are in reality among *the worst*:- . . . A diligent inspection of a vast number of later Copies scattered throughout the principal libraries of Europe, and the exact Collation of a few, further convinced us that the deference generally claimed for B, Aleph, C, D is nothing else but a weak superstition and a vulgar error:-that the date of a MS. is not of its essence, but is a mere accident of the problem.” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, p. 337]

Burgon's Best & Only Method

“We deem this laborious method the only true method, in our present state of imperfect knowledge: the method, namely, of adopting that Reading which has the fullest, the widest, and the most varied attestation. Antiquity and Respectability of Witnesses, are thus secured. How men can persuade themselves that 19 copies out of every 20 may be safely disregarded, if they be but written in minuscule characters,—we fail to understand. To ourselves it seems simply an irrational proceeding. . . . As for building up a Text, (as Drs. Westcott and Hort have done) with special superstitious deference to a single codex,—we deem it about as reasonable as would be the attempt to build up a pyramid from its apex; in the expectation that it would stand firm on its extremity, and remain horizontal for ever.” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, p. 342]

The Mind-Set of Westcott & Hort Followers

“Phantoms of the imagination henceforth usurp the place of substantial forms. Interminable doubt,—wretched misbelief,—childish credulity,—judicial blindness,—are the inevitable sequel and penalty. The mind that has long allowed itself in a systematic trifling with Evidence, is observed to fall the easiest prey to Imposture. It has doubted what is demonstrably true: has rejected what is indubitably Divine. Henceforth, it is observed to mistake its own fantastic creations for historical facts; to believe things which rest on insufficient evidence, or on no evidence at all.”

[Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, p. 350]

No Compromise in this Battle!

“Compromise of any sort between the two conflicting parties, is impossible also; for they simply contradict one another. Codex B and Aleph are either among the purest of manuscripts,–or else they are among the very foulest. The Text of Drs. Westcott and Hort is either the very best which has ever appeared,–or else it is the very worst; the nearest to the sacred Autographs,–or the furthest from them. There is no room for *both* opinions; and there cannot exist any middle ground.

No Compromise in this Battle!

“The question will have to be fought out; and it must be fought out fairly. It may not be magisterially settled; but must be advocated, on either side, by the old logical method. . . . The combatants may be sure that, in consequence of all that has happened, the public will be no longer indifferent spectators of the fray; for the issue concerns the inner life of the whole community,—touches men's heart of hearts. . . .GOD'S TRUTH will be, as it has been throughout, the one object of all our striving.” [Dean John W. Burgon, *Revision Revised*, pp. 365-66]

No Compromise in this Battle!

Hort's Own Three Estimates on the Extent of the Greek Textual Problems Between His Text and the Textus Receptus. In 1882, Hort wrote an Introduction to the so-called Westcott and Hort Greek Text of 1881. In his *INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW TESTAMENT IN THE ORIGINAL GREEK--The Text Revised by Brooke Foss Westcott, D.D. and Fenton John Anthony Hort, D.D.*, Hort made an estimate of the differences between various Greek texts. His estimate had three parts. Let me quote each of the parts:

#1 Hort's Estimate of the Proportion of the Greek New Testament that Was Virtually Accepted by Everyone.

He wrote:

“With regard to the great bulk of the words of the New Testament, as of most other ancient writings, there is NO VARIATION or other ground of doubt, and therefore no room for textual criticism;... The proportion of words virtually accepted on all hands as raised above doubt is VERY GREAT, not less, on a rough computation, than SEVEN EIGHTHS OF THE WHOLE. The REMAINING EIGHTH therefore, formed in great part by changes of order and other comparative trivialities, constitutes the whole area of criticism.” [Hort, *INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW TESTAMENT IN THE ORIGINAL GREEK*, p. 2, B.F.T. #1303]

#1 Hort's Estimate of the Proportion of the Greek New Testament that Was Virtually Accepted by Everyone.

Since the “whole” in numbers of Greek words and pages in the Greek New Testament, as seen in the table above, is 140,521 Greek words (100%=647 pages), Hort's 7/8ths of the Greek New Testament virtually agreed to by all would be 122,956 Greek words (87.5%=566 pages). Hort's 1/8th of the Greek N.T. that he claimed was in dispute would be 17,565 Greek words (12.5%=81 pages). In point of fact, as seen in the above table, the area of dispute between the Westcott and Hort Greek text as opposed to the Textus Receptus that underlies the KING JAMES BIBLE is only 9,970 Greek words (7%=45.9 pages). So Hort's estimate in this area is incorrect.

#2 Hort's Estimate of the Proportion of the Greek New Testament that Would Still be in Doubt if His Principles Were Followed.

He wrote:

“If the principles followed in the present edition are sound, this area may be very greatly reduced. Recognising to the full the duty of abstinence from peremptory decision in cases where the evidence leaves the judgment in suspense between two or more readings, we find that, setting aside differences of orthography, the words in our opinion still subject to doubt only make up about ONE SIXTIETH of the whole New Testament.” [Hort, *INTRODUCTION*, *loc. cit.*]

#2 Hort's Estimate of the Proportion of the Greek New Testament that Would Still be in Doubt if His Principles Were Followed.

Since the “whole” in numbers of Greek words and pages in the Greek New Testament, as seen in the table above, is 140,521 Greek words (100%=647 pages), Hort's 1/60th of the Greek New Testament still subject to doubt if his principles were followed, would be 2,342 Greek words. This represents 1.76% of the Greek words, or 11.4 pages in a Greek New Testament if put all in one place. But we don't follow Hort's “principles” at all. Because of this, we who hold to the Greek text that underlies the KING JAMES BIBLE are still disputing 9,970 Greek words (rather than only 2,342 Greek words). This represents 7% of the Greek words (rather than only 1.76%), or 45.9 pages in a Greek New Testament if the words were put in one place (rather than only 11.4 pages). So Hort's estimate in this area is incorrect again. We still maintain that the of Greek words in dispute are vastly more in number than Hort has stated.

#3 Hort's Estimate of the Proportion of the Greek New Testament that Contains "SUBSTANTIAL VARIATION."

He wrote:

“In this second estimate the proportion of comparatively trivial variations is beyond measure larger than in the former; so that the amount of what can in any sense be called SUBSTANTIAL VARIATION is but a small fraction of the whole residuary variation, and can hardly form more than A THOUSANDTH PART of the entire text.” [Hort, *INTRODUCTION, loc. cit.*]

#3 Hort's Estimate of the Proportion of the Greek New Testament that Contains "SUBSTANTIAL VARIATION."

Since the "whole" in numbers of Greek words and pages in the Greek New Testament, as seen in the table above, is 140,521 Greek words (100%=647 pages), Hort's 1/1000th of the Greek New Testament that he thought could be called "SUBSTANTIAL VARIATION" would be 140.5 Greek words (.1%=.647 pages). This would be a little over one half a page in the Greek New Testament. This is extremely wide of the mark of truth! Since we don't follow Hort's "principles" at all, we who hold to the Greek text that underlies the KING JAMES BIBLE are still disputing, either in "SUBSTANTIAL VARIATION" or otherwise, a total of 9,970 Greek words (7%=45.9 pages). It is Hort's last estimate that has been seized by his modern day puppets and grossly distorted in order to fool people into thinking that the problem is very tiny, when in reality, it is much, much larger!

#3 Hort's Estimate of the Proportion of the Greek New Testament that Contains "SUBSTANTIAL VARIATION."

Hort's pupils are either knowingly or unknowingly, misquoting their teacher. They want to make the DIFFERENCES in the Greek texts very, very slight so as to minimize the arguments against the false Westcott and Hort-types Greek text. From the above quotations from Hort's *INTRODUCTION*, his differences in Greek texts would be either 81 pages (1/8th), or 11.4 pages (1/60th), or .647 pages (1/1000th). Rather than merely "a little over one half a page," Hort's 1/8th of total differences would amount to 81 pages. In reality, we are faced with 45.9 pages of difference!

#3 Hort's Estimate of the Proportion of the Greek New Testament that Contains "SUBSTANTIAL VARIATION."

A current illustration of this practice of distorting the facts in this area is found in a tape-recorded message given by Dr. Kenneth Barker, the chairman of the translation committee responsible for the *NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION*. Dr. Barker spoke in the Sunday evening service, September 12, 1993, at the SOUTHSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH in Greenville, South Carolina. A friend recorded the message and gave me a copy.

Dr. Kenneth Barker stated:

“There are over 5,000 Greek manuscripts, and all of them are AGREED 98% of the time. So all of this debate that Carson refers to in *The King James Version Debate*, all of this debate, **all of the hullabaloo is over less than 2% of the entire text of the New Testament. And in that **less than 2%**, you can select any reading that you wish among the manuscripts, (that's not our approach, but you can) and **it won't change Christian doctrine one bit**.”**

Dr. Kenneth Barker stated:

Dr. Barker is wrong on TWO COUNTS! (1) His “less than 2%” difference between any of the Greek manuscripts would be 2,810 Greek words (12.9 pages). The truth of the matter is that there is a 7% difference between the Westcott and Hort Greek text and the Textus Receptus that underlies the KING JAMES BIBLE. This would be 9,970 Greek words (45.9 pages). This is a most serious error. It is a blatant falsehood that is being promulgated by the chairman of the *New International Version* translation committee. It would give false confidence to the Pastor and members of this church that had just recently given up the KING JAMES BIBLE in favor of Dr. Barker's *NIV*.

Dr. Kenneth Barker stated:

(2) The second serious error is Dr. Barker's statement relative to the fact that variations in manuscripts "won't change Christian doctrine one bit." In our book, we specify 158 such passages. Dr. Jack Moorman lists 356 such passages. These two falsehoods, from someone who should know better, are the major ones used to lull Bible believing Christians into deep slumber concerning the Bible version controversy that has been raging.