

mountains, and the hallowed associations of Sinai. On the evening of the 4th, while walking in the garden with the steward, the conversation turned upon the Septuagint, which the Greek Church receives as the standard version of the Old Testament. Tischendorf told him that he had brought some copies of his recently published edition for presentation to the monks. The steward was gratified by such a mark of attention, and he invited Tischendorf to his room. On entering, he casually remarked that he too possessed a copy of the Septuagint, and going over to one corner he lifted a bundle rolled up in a dirty cloth, and laid it before Tischendorf. He opened it,—and there, before the eyes of the enraptured antiquary, was the very manuscript of which he had so long been in search. Not only so,—not only were the few fragments he had seen in 1844 in that bundle, but also many other and much larger portions of the Septuagint version; and, what was of infinitely greater value. *The whole New Testament, without even the smallest defect.*

Tischendorf was in a transport of joy. He could not restrain himself; and his feelings at length burst forth in an ardent expression of praise and thanksgiving to a merciful God, who had preserved such a precious treasure for his Church, and had made him the agent in its discovery. The manuscript was in leaves. Some of the leaves were torn; and thus the work of arrangement and repair was no easy one. But Tischendorf gladly undertook it, and carried the book away with him to his cell. He tells us how he spent the whole of that night—"to sleep being impossible"—in arranging and examining the contents, and copying a portion of the manuscript. The next day he had a long conference with the monks. They were almost as much surprised at the excitement and enthusiasm of Tischendorf as he was at the discovery. To his great disappointment he found that they would not—in fact they could not—either give or sell it to him. They readily agreed however, to allow him to transcribe the manuscript at Cairo, if their superior who resides in that city, should give his consent. On the 7th he left the convent, and reached Cairo on the 13th. The necessary order was easily obtained from the superior; a special messenger was despatched to Sinai, and on the 24th the manuscript was delivered into Tischendorf's hands. While engaged in transcribing it for publication he entered into new negotiations; and finally, on the 28th of September, 1859, he was authorized to convey the precious document as a present to the Emperor of Russia.

On his arrival at St. Petersburg, Tischendorf was received by the imperial family with every mark of honour. The importance of his labours and the value of his great discovery, were fully acknowledged. It was immediately determined that the Sinaitic manuscript should be published, and that one edition, limited to three hundred copies, should be printed in *facsimile*, with the utmost possible accuracy, and at the sole expense of the Emperor. The superintendence of the work was, as a matter of course, intrusted to the fortunate discoverer. He executed it with singular fidelity; and the edition, in four right royal volumes, will remain through all future ages a noble monument of the princely munificence of the Emperor Alexander, of the profound scholarship and critical skill of Tischendorf, and of the artistic abilities of all engaged in its production.

The manuscript, as discovered by Tischendorf, is not complete. It consists of 345 leaves and a half of thin and beautifully prepared parchment; of these, 199 contain portions of the Septuagint version, and the remainder the New Testament, &c. Each page contains four columns, and each column is about ten inches long by two wide, and has forty eight lines.

It has no date, and its age cannot be fixed with absolute certainty. There are, however, internal evidences by which the skilful paleographer can estimate with a high degree of probability. The simple, square form of the letters, the absence of all ornament, points, accents, and divisions, are certain marks of high antiquity.

The more recent uncials have only *one* column on each page; the Codex Alexandrinus of the fifth century has *two*; the Codex Vaticanus of the fourth has *three*; and the Codex Sinaiticus has *four*. In this respect it is quite unique, and we may safely assign its date to the early part of the fourth century, or little more than two hundred years after the death of the apostle John.

The Old Testament portion of the manuscript contains part of I Chronicles and Jeremiah, the whole of Isaiah, the minor prophets (except Hosea, Amos, and Micah), Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Canticles; together with the Apocryphal books, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, 1st and 4th Maccabees, and part of Tobit and Judith. The New Testament portion is complete. In this respect it stands alone. Some sixty uncial manuscripts of the New Testament have come down to us, but this is the *only one* perfect. The Vatican Codex wants the last three chapters of Hebrews, the four Pastoral Epistles, and the Apocalypse.