

justification of this discipline lies in the character of the traditional texts. We have none of the autographs of the Biblical books. In their reproduction by copyists, variants by the thousands have found their way into the text. *Habent sua fata libelli* is rather strangely true of the sacred books. In regard to the New Testament alone, Dr. Schaff (Companion to the Greek Testament and English Version, p. 176) thinks that the variants "now cannot fall much short of 150,000." Of these, however, only about 400 materially affect the sense and only about fifty are really important, and not one affects an article of faith or precept of duty which is not sustained by other and undoubted passages.

The efforts of scholars to find the Adriadne thread out of this labyrinth of perplexities have been remarkably successful. As the result of decades of patient toil, collecting the facts and weighing them in the balance of correct principles, we have now a resultant Greek text that is undoubtedly nearer to the originals of the New Testament than has been any text since the patristic age. The three texts of Tischendorf, Tregelles, and Westcott and Hort, differ in no important particulars. Practically we have now a *Textus Receptus*, not as the result of arbitrary choice, but which has been reconstructed according to the canons of objective literary criticism. No better summary and discussion of what has been done in this department can be found than the little manual of Professor B. B. Warfield, "An Introduction to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament," 1887.

In the Old Testament textual criticism an equally good report cannot be given. Indeed the whole problem, as far as method is concerned, is quite different from that of the New Testament. In the latter the manuscripts are the chief aid in restoring the original text, in the former the versions, notably the Septuagint, occupy this position in the critical apparatus. The oldest Hebrew MS. in existence is the Codex Petropolitanus, written in 916 A. D. The Septuagint version was made in the second and third century before Christ, thus apparently representing a text more than a thousand years and more nearer to the originals of the Old Testament book. Whether in proportion it also represents an equally better text, is the vexed question for scholars in this field of research. The reconstruction of the Ezekiel text by Cornill proceeds from the premises that it does, and the new text thus secured differs materially from the traditional one. The recent work on the text of Jeremiah by the Canadian scholar, Workman, advocates similar radical measures, while Ryssel has found but little in the version of the Seventy upon which to base changes in the ordinary text of the prophet Micah. Wellhausen's examination of the text of Samuel—one of his earlier works—holds a fair medium between the extremes. On this problem, which primarily is of an historical and philological character, the investigators are not divided on the lines of radicalism and