

are a trifle larger. The ink has also proved of better quality, so that it has not been retraced by any later hand save where corrections have been made. In another respect it has the advantage of the Vatican manuscript, that, though it has been mutilated at the beginning, it contains the entire New Testament complete, being the only very early manuscript that does so. Tischendorf claims that it belongs also to an earlier date than the Vatican, but the general opinion is that it must be placed, at least, a few years later. It still belongs, however, to the middle of the fourth century, and this carries us back nearly 1600 years, or about as near to the origin of the New Testament as we are to Shakespeare. Its importance as a second witness to the text is greatly increased by the fact that it is certainly independent of the Vatican copy, containing such variations from it as to make it plain that neither was taken from the other, nor yet both from the same prototype. Wherever they agree, therefore, we may feel tolerably sure that we have the original words of the apostolic writers. Westcott and Hort, the two most recent editors of the New Testament text of any importance, consider that their united evidence outweighs that of all other authorities combined. In addition to the canonical books the Sinai manuscript contains the entire Epistle of Barnabas and a con-

siderable fragment of the work known as the Shepherd of Hermas. Until the discovery of this manuscript considerable portions of both these early compositions had been known to us only through Latin translations.

3. The third in the list of great manuscript Bibles is the Codex Alexandrinus, which is one of the special treasures of the British Museum, where it is constantly on exhibition. It was presented to King Charles I., in 1628, by the celebrated Cyril, Lucar, Patriarch of Constantinople, the Crammer of the Greek Church, who vainly sought to reform it on Protestant lines, and paid the penalty with his life when the reaction came. Cyril had previously been patriarch of Alexandria, and it is thought that he had brought this work with him from the Egyptian capital on his translation to the See of Constantinople. Hence the name by which it has come to be universally known. This was the earliest manuscript of first-rate importance that was thoroughly studied by scholars for the purposes of criticism. Like the two previous ones, this work originally contained the whole Bible, but a good many leaves here and there have been lost from it in course of time, it having evidently suffered from lack of proper binding. It contains also the two Epistles attributed to Clement of Rome, and until twenty years ago was the only known authority