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*MISREADINGS AND MISRENDERINGS IN THE
NEW TESTAMENT.*

I.

It is a popular belief, shared even by Biblical critics, that the New Testament, as it appears in our current and especially critical editions, is the best edited book among all ancient texts. This view is founded on the consideration that, whereas the ancient classical texts are based upon MSS. which are separated from their archetypes or authors by no less than twelve to fifteen centuries on an average, the oldest Greek Testament MSS. (N B A) go back to the fourth and fifth centuries, and so come within three or four centuries of their authors. Another advantage claimed on the side of the New Testament text is that, while the ancient classics are known only in Greek and Latin respectively, the Bible appears very early in translations as well, that is, in Syriac and Latin versions following close upon Apostolic times. Lastly, it is argued that numerous passages of the New Testament are corroborated by their appearance as quotations in early Christian or Patristic literature. This last argument, however, applies, in a large measure at least, to classical texts as well, seeing that most of the ancient classics are also largely quoted by their immediate and later successors, not to mention their imitators and excerptors.

A long and laborious study of the history of the Greek language¹—which now forms the subject of my annual lectures in the University of St. Andrews—and a pro-

¹ The results of these labours, which have occupied my whole time and energy during the last fifteen years, are given in various publications, especially in my recent *Historical Greek Grammar*, chiefly of the Attic dialect, as written and spoken from classical antiquity down to the present time, founded upon the ancient texts, inscriptions, papyri, and present popular Greek. London (Macmillan & Co.), 1897.

longed research into the Greek text of the New Testament have convinced me that the above three classes of evidence underlying our New Testament text—namely, the extant MSS. versions, and patristic quotations—even granting that each and all of them constituted, in every detail, unimpeachable evidence, are not sufficient data for the complete recovery of the genuine word of the Holy Writ. Other sources and fields of information have to be laid under large contribution. Indeed an earnest textual critic must start with a good knowledge of Hebrew and late Latin; but before and above all, he must make himself *thoroughly familiar*—

(1) With the whole range and extent of the *Greek language*; that is, not only with the language of classical literature and the New Testament compositions, but also with all post-classical (alike literary and popular) phases of the Greek language, including even present Greek.

(2) With the post-classical and subsequent history of the *Greek writing and spelling*. This should include a thorough familiarity with the traditional or—as it is commonly mis-called—modern Greek pronunciation, such knowledge being indispensable for detecting itacisms and other various kinds of palæographic error.

(3) With the history of the *ancient Church* in all its details (institutions, doctrines, heresies, persecutions, etc.).

How far the above conditions have hitherto been fulfilled, is not for me to say. I merely wish to point out here that, despite the prodigious industry and learning already spent upon the text of the New Testament, all our printed editions and versions of the sacred text are still disfigured by very many and often strange misreadings and misrenderings. I propose in the present paper to give some specimens of such corruptions and blunders by selecting a few of such cases as will be obvious to general readers and students of the Bible. And I shall consider here chiefly

St. John's text, because of the independence, purity, and simplicity or naivety of the language of that Gospel.

I. *Errors of punctuation.* It is well known to general, but especially to classical, students that the ancients wrote all words in a connected line, called *scriptura continua*; that is, they wrote without stops, without accents, without breathings; in short, without any notation whatever (including marks of interrogation, exclamation, etc.). This practice, which of course applies to the Greek original and to the early versions as well, may be witnessed by an inspection of the early, especially uncial, MSS. of the Bible, where each line has the appearance of one continuous long word extending from the internal to the external margin of each column or "page." Accordingly the systematic punctuation and notation shown in our printed editions is a modern expedient resorted to since the middle ages for purposes of convenience, and as such is of no binding character for us, nor has it any absolute value; it merely reflects the personal view or subjective interpretation of each individual editor.

I begin by a lengthy passage in the first chapter of St. John, which, in its current punctuation and interpretation, suffers grievously in more than one point. The words underlined are those especially affected.

John i. 19: *καὶ αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ μαρτυρία Ἰωάννου, ὅτε ἀπέστειλαν (πρὸς αὐτὸν) οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι ἐξ Ἱεροσολύμων ἱερεῖς καὶ Λευῖτας ἵνα ἐρωτήσωσιν αὐτόν, Σὺ τίς εἶ; καὶ ὡμολόγησε καὶ οὐκ ἠρνήσατο· καὶ ὡμολόγησεν ὅτι Ἐγὼ οὐκ εἰμι ὁ Χριστός.*

The rendering of the passage in the Authorised and Revised Versions is this:—

"And this *is* the record (R.V. the witness) of John *when* the Jews *sent* (unto him) Priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? *And* he confessed and denied not: but (R.V. and he) confessed, I am not the Christ."

Now leaving aside the vagueness of the introductory pronoun *αὕτη*, "this," which may refer either to the preceding or to the following statement, no one will deny that in the grammatical construction "this is the record when the Jews sent"—the co-ordination of the present with the aorist tense is unnatural and illogical. And the difficulty is increased by the succession of *καί* in "and he confessed," seeing that "and" here, viewed logically and syntactically, cannot introduce the reply to a question; here it should rather refer to *ὅτε ἀπέστειλαν*: "when the Jews sent and (when) he confessed." A further difficulty—a difficulty which is, of course, tacitly passed over in the versions—lies in the presence of the emphatic pronoun *σύ* (*σὺ τίς εἶ*); seeing that the use of the nominative of personal pronouns in Greek implies, as we know, emphasis or contradiction.

I believe that all the above difficulties are removed if we read: *Καὶ αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ μαρτυρία Ἰωάννου. Ὅτε ἀπέστειλαν (πρὸς αὐτὸν) οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι ἐξ Ἱεροσολύμων ἱερεῖς καὶ Λευίτας ἵνα ἐρωτήσωσιν αὐτὸν Σὺ, τίς εἶ; καὶ ὡμολόγησε καὶ οὐκ ἠρνήσατο. Καὶ ὡμολόγησεν ὅτι Ἐγὼ οὐκ εἰμι ὁ Χριστός.*

That is in English:—

"And John's witness is this: When the Jews sent (unto him) from Jerusalem priests and Levites to question him, Ho thou (or Hark! I say)! Who art thou?—he both acknowledged and denied not. And he acknowledged: I am not (the) Christ."

Here then we see that the *καί* before *ὡμολόγησε* is not connective but additive or emphatic: *καί—καί, et—et*, "both—and." Hence Schoettgen's remark on the passage, as quoted by Prof. M. Dods in Dr. W. R. Nicoll's *Expositor's New Testament*, that the sentence is "judaico modo" like "Jethro confessus et non mentitus est," is out of place. Equally misplaced is Westcott's comment on the passage to the effect that "the first term (*confessed*) marks the

readiness of the testimony ; the second (*denied not*) the completeness of it. Both terms are used absolutely." Nor is less artificial the opinion of H. Holtzmann, when he says that "the *ὁμολόγησε* stands absolutely, while the *οὐκ ἤρνήσατο* refers to the succeeding speech." As a matter of fact the combination *καὶ ὁμολόγησε καὶ οὐκ ἤρνήσατο* is not individual of our writer, nor does it convey two distinct notions ; it forms a colloquial phrase, a sort of Græcism, and simply means : "he readily admitted." This may be seen from parallel passages in other ancient compositions, as *Soph. Ant.* 443, *καὶ φημι δρᾶσαι κοῦκ ἀπόφημι* ; *id.* *O.C.* 317, *καὶ φημι κἀπόφημι* ; so too *Ant.* 1,192 ; *Jos. Ant.* 6, 7, 4 (=6, 151, ed. Niese), *Σαοῦλος δὲ ἀδικεῖν ὁμολόγει καὶ τὴν ἀμαρτίαν οὐκ ἤρνείτο.*

Regarding my changing, without hesitation, the current reading *Σὺ τίς εἶ* to *Σύ, τίς εἶ*, it is obvious that *σὺ* here is not a nominative (despite the succeeding *Ἡλίας εἶ σὺ* ; *ὁ προφήτης εἶ σὺ* ; which will be discussed elsewhere) ; it is a *vocative* synonymous with (*ὦ*) *οὔτος*, *heus tu ! ho there ! hark ! holloa ! I say !*

Of other passages so misread, I may note here : *John ix.* 35 *σὺ πιστεύεις εἰς τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου* ; which should be read : *σύ, πιστεύεις, κτλ.*, "I say, dost thou believe in the Son of man ?"—*xxi.* 12 "Now none of the disciples durst inquire of Him : *Holloa ! who art thou ?*" (*Σύ, τίς εἶ* ; not *Σὺ τίς εἶ*)—*Acts xxii.* 27 "I say, tell me, art thou a Roman ?" (*Λέγε μοι, Σύ, Ῥωμαῖος εἶ* ; not *Λέγε μοι, σὺ Ῥωμαῖος εἶ*)—*Romans xiv.* 3 "Ho there ! who art Thou ?" (*σύ, τίς εἶ* ; not *σὺ τίς εἶ*).—So further : *John xix.* 9 *πόθεν εἶ σὺ* ; should be read : *πόθεν εἶ ; σύ !* "where dost thou come from ? I say !" (Here evidently Jesus was not listening to Pilate ; hence the writer proceeds : "But Jesus gave him no answer.")

But while in the above principal passage (*John i.* 19) the punctuation before or after *τίς* does not materially affect the

nature of the sense but the degree of emphasis, in other passages the laying or not laying of the stress upon the personal pronoun makes a very great difference. Thus in John xviii. 37, where Jesus says "My kingdom is not from hence," the reading of our printed text proceeds thus: *εἶπεν οὖν αὐτῷ ὁ Πιλάτος, Οὐκοῦν βασιλεὺς εἶ σὺ; ἀπεκρίθη ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Σὺ λέγεις ὅτι βασιλεὺς εἰμι ἐγώ.*¹ *Ἐγὼ εἰς τοῦτο γεγέννημαι, κτλ.*

Examining the various interpretations given to this passage, Prof. Dods says:

"Pilate understands only so far as to interrupt with *οὐκοῦν . . . σὺ*, 'so then you are a King?'—to which Jesus replies with the explicit statement: *Σὺ λέγεις . . . ἐγώ*, 'thou sayest.' This, says Schoettgen (Matt. xxvi. 25), is 'solennis adfirmantium apud Judaeos formula'; so that *ὅτι* must be rendered, with Revised Version margin, 'because' I am a King. Erasmus, Westcott, Plummer, and others render 'Thou sayest that I am a king,' neither definitely accepting nor rejecting the title. But this interpretation seems impossible in the face of the simple *σὺ λέγεις* of the synoptists (Matt. xxvii. 11, Mark xv. 2, Luke xxiii. 3)."

And so it is. As a matter of fact all these interpretations are forced and too improbable to be accepted. For my part I believe that the passage is restored if we read:

Εἶπεν οὖν ὁ Πιλάτος, Οὐκοῦν βασιλεὺς εἶ; Σὺ; Ἀπεκρίθη ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Σὺ λέγεις ὅτι βασιλεὺς εἰμι.—Ἐγὼ;² ἐγὼ εἰς τοῦτο γεγέννημαι, κτλ. That is in English:

"Pilate therefore said unto him, So then thou art a king? Thou? Jesus answered, It is thou who sayest that I am a king. I? I was born to this end," etc.

¹ The codices \aleph B D show only one *ἐγώ*, but $\text{A}\chi\Gamma\Delta\text{A}\Pi$ have *ἐγὼ ἐγώ*.

² Implying slight annoyance, *ἐγὼ*; "I? (why) I was born," etc.—The alternative reading *ἐγὼ, ἐγὼ εἰς τοῦτο, κτλ.*, in the sense of "I for one was born," "as for me, I was born," would be improbable, seeing that a simple *ἐγὼ* (as given by \aleph B D) would be sufficient or that purpose.

In a similar way the passage in Matthew xxvi. 25 is misread. To Jesus' pointed exclamation that "Woe unto that man through whom the Son of Man is being betrayed," Judas, conscious of his guilt, nervously asks, "Μή τι ἐγὼ εἶμι, ῥαββί;" to this anxious question Jesus is represented as replying: Σὺ εἶπας, "thou hast said."—Well, what? Surely this is an incomplete answer. Moreover the emphatic σὺ is altogether left out. It seems to me that Jesus' words will recover their true meaning and dignified tone if we read: Μή τι ἐγὼ εἶμι, ῥαββί; λέγει αὐτῷ, Σὺ εἶπας,—that is, in plain English, "Is it I, Rabbi? He says unto him, It is thou; thou hast hit it."

Among the numerous other passages where the current punctuation misrepresents the text, I may adduce Mark xiv. 41, with its parallel in Matthew xxvi. 45: "Sleep on now and take your rest." Here Jesus' pathetic words are grievously misread and misunderstood. To realize the proper meaning of the sentence we must remember that, before retiring to pray, Jesus expressly enjoined Peter and James and John to "keep awake" (or "watch," γρηγορεῖτε). However, to His surprise, when He comes back for the first time, He finds them asleep; He reprimands them, and again bids them to "keep awake." He returns for the second time, and again finds them asleep and too drowsy to give Him a reply. Now, when He returns for the third time and again finds them asleep, instead of rebuking them severely, as the nature of the case required, He is represented as at first remarking to them, "go on sleeping now," then immediately hereafter as again changing His mind and bidding them "stop sleeping (ἀπέχει)! arise! let us go!" Καθεύδετε τὸ λοιπὸν καὶ ἀναπαύεσθε· ἀπέχει· ἦλθεν ἡ ὥρα· ἰδοῦ, παραδίδεται ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου εἰς τὰς χεῖρας τῶν ἀμαρτωλῶν. Ἐγείρεσθε, ἄγωμεν. Ἰδοῦ, ὁ παραδιδούς με ἤγγικεν.—"Sleep on now and take your rest: it is enough; the hour is come; behold, the Son of Man is betrayed into

the hands of sinners. Arise, let us go. Lo (R.V. Behold), he that betrayeth Me is at hand."

This glaring inconsistency, this threefold change of mind—Keep awake! Sleep on! Arise!—is highly improbable in itself. One might, of course, argue that some long pause (. . .) may have intervened between "sleep on now" and "it is enough, arise," a pause which would justify the change. But such an assumption is precluded by the rapid succession of tragical events: Jesus had hardly finished the sentence *καθεύδετε τὸ λοιπὸν καὶ ἀναπαύεσθε*, when the soldiers at the head of the traitor made their appearance (*εὐθύς ἔτι αὐτοῦ λαλοῦντος*, which cannot apply to *ἀπέχει!* *ἦλθεν ἡ ὥρα, ἰδοῦ!*).

It was apparently these, or some of these, considerations and objections that led David Schulz,¹ when he was editing Griesbach's *Novum Testamentum* in 1827,² to insert the interrogation marks between *ἀναπαύεσθε* and *ἀπέχει*. But the suggestion failed to attract attention evidently on account of the presence in the sentence of the troublesome term *τὸ λοιπὸν*; for it, like *τοῦ λοιποῦ*, is taken to refer to the future, and thus mean: *for the rest, henceforth, further*, so that *καθεύδετε τὸ λοιπὸν* is rendered by "sleep further," "sleep on." But *τὸ λοιπὸν*, or simply *λοιπὸν*, is a colloquial term peculiar to post-classical and subsequent Greek—including modern Greek—as an adverb equivalent to, and substitute for, the classical *οὖν*, with which it is even found associated. Thus Polyb. 1, 15, 11 *λοιπὸν ἀνάγκη συγχωρεῖν τὰς ἀρχὰς καὶ τὰς ὑποθέσεις εἶναι ψευδεῖς*. So 1, 30, 8; 3, 96, 14 *καὶ τὸ λοιπὸν οὗτος μὲν αὐτοῦ συνορμίσας τὸν στόλον ἀνεκομίσθη*, and often. Diosc. 2, 105 (p. 232) *λοιπὸν λίνφ διάραι τὰ κυκλίσκια διεστῶτα ἀπ' ἀλλήλων κρέμασον*. Epict.

¹ According to Tischendorf, *Nov. Test.* (8th ed.) *ad loc.* p. 379 (et 184): *ἀναπαύεσθε (-σθαι)*; Schu. et in Mc. et in Mt. interrogationis signum poni vult ut h. l. F al. pauce.

² This refers to the 3rd edition of the first volume.

Diss. 1, 22, 15 ἄρχομαι λοιπὸν μισεῖν αὐτόν. 1. 18, 20 τοῦτοις τὸ λοιπὸν πεποιθῶς τοῖς δόγμασιν ὀρθῶς περιπάτει, ἐλεύθερος. 1. 24, 1. 1, 25, 15. 1, 27, 2. 1, 28, 10. 1, 29, 5. 1, 29, 8 τίνα λοιπὸν δέδοικα; 1, 29, 26. 1, 30, 5. 2, 1, 8. 2, 5, 16 2, 5, 22. 2, 6, 23 τί λοιπὸν ὡς ἐπὶ μεγάλα ἀνέρχῃ; 2, 8, 8 καὶ λοιπόν. 2, 8, 15. 2, 19, 34 λοιπὸν οὖν, *et passim*. Just. Tryph. 56 καὶ παυσάμενος λοιπὸν τοῦ λόγου ἐπυθόμην αὐτῶν εἰ ἐνενοήκεσαν. Clement. 345c τότε λοιπὸν ὁ Πέτρος, κτλ. Athan. i. 865b καὶ οὕτω λοιπὸν γέγονε καὶ ἐν τοῖς ὄρεσι μοναστήρια. Didym. Al. 489a ποῦ οὖν λοιπὸν ἢ μετὰ παίων κτισμάτων τάσσεσθαι δοκιμάζουσιν αὐτό; Acta Nerei, 2, 22; 7, 28; 9, 4; 10, 4 ἐπίσχετε οὖν λοιπόν.¹

It is chiefly in this sense of οὖν—*therefore, then, well, well then*—that (τὸ) λοιπὸν occurs also in the New Testament compositions, the adopted translations (*finally, moreover, etc.*) being untenable. Thus 1 Corinthians iv. 2, ὧδε λοιπὸν ζητεῖται, means “here then it is required.” vii. 29, ὁ καιρὸς συνεσταλμένος ἐστὶ. Τὸ λοιπὸν (so for ἐστὶ τὸ λοιπόν) ἵνα καὶ οἱ ἔχοντες γυναῖκας ὡς μὴ ἔχοντες ὦσι, “the time is short. Therefore let² them that have wives be as though they had none.” 2 Corinthians xiii. 11, λοιπόν, ἀδελφοί, χαίρετε, “Well (or So then), brethren, farewell.” So too Ephesians vi. 10 (Rev. text v. l. τοῦ λοιποῦ); Philippians iii. 1; and iv. 8; 1 Thessalonians iv. 1 (where mark the collocation [τὸ] λοιπὸν οὖν); 2 Thessalonians iii. 1; 2 Timothy iv. 8 (“Therefore,” not “Henceforth”!).

It now becomes clear that the passage under consideration in Mark xiv. 41 (also Matt. xxvi. 26) must be read thus: καθεύδετε τὸ λοιπὸν καὶ ἀναπαύεσθε; Ἀπέχει! I told you once, twice to keep awake: “well, are ye sleeping

¹ For other examples see E. A. Sophocles' Lexicon, s. v. λοιπός. I have quoted here Epictetus largely, because he was a contemporary, and then, so to say, fellow-countryman of the Apostles.

² For the use of ἵνα as a hortative particle (= ἄγε, φέρε, “let”) see my *Historical Greek Grammar*, § 1914 f. However, this question will be fully discussed in my next paper.

and resting? It is (or Ye have) enough! Behold . . . arise! let us go." This reading is moreover confirmed by the parallel passage in St. Luke xxii. 46 *τί καθεύδετε.*

One more specimen out of this numerous class of mis-readings will, I hope, remove all doubt as to the faulty state of our printed editions of the Greek text and the versions founded upon it. In John i. 40 f. we read: *καὶ παρ' αὐτῷ ἔμειναν τὴν ἡμέραν ἐκείνην ὥρα ἦν ὡς δεκάτη. Ἦν Ἀνδρέας ὁ ἀδελφὸς Σίμωνος Πέτρου εἰς ἐκ τῶν δύο τῶν ἀκουσάντων παρὰ Ἰωάννου καὶ ἀκολουθησάντων αὐτῷ. Εὕρισκει οὗτος, κτλ.*

"They abode with him that day; it was about the tenth hour. One of the two which heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He findeth first his own brother Simon and saith unto him," etc.

Now any reader who can for a moment emancipate himself from an inherited and lifelong habit of thought will at once see the incoherency and oddness of the passage. In the first place, the asyndetic succession of three sentences (*ὥρα ἦν—ἦν Ἀνδρέας—εὕρισκει οὗτος*) is unnatural in Greek,¹ since there is no question here of pathos or rhetoric; we have before us a simple, calm *narrative*. Then what has the "tenth hour" to do with the sudden account about Andrew? It was the tenth hour; Andrew was one of the two who heard John speak!

Well, then, I may be asked, where lies the crux? It lies simply in the corrupt reading of the second *ἦν* (*ὥρα ἦν ὡς δεκάτη. ἦν Ἀνδρέας*); it should be *ἦν*, an accusative of time. The obviousness of this reading will be seen as soon as we remember that the autograph, as well as its subsequent copies—including our old uncial MSS.—showed **HN**, that is *ἦν* (suppl. *ὥραν*),² an accusative of time, very

¹ This is the chief passage generally adduced as an illustration of St. John's alleged fondness for the asyndetic construction.

² On this accusative of time see my *Hist. Gr. Gram.* § 1,274 f., and compare John iv. 52; Revelation iii. 3; Acts xx. 16.

common, especially in post-classical and subsequent Greek, including modern. Accordingly the author's genuine meaning is recovered if we read: ὥρα ἦν ὡς δεκάτη, ἦν Ἀνδρέας ὁ ἀδελφὸς Σίμωνος—εἰς ἐκ τῶν δύο τῶν ἀκουσάντων παρὰ Ἰωάννου καὶ ἀκολουθησάντων αὐτῷ—εὕρισκει οὗτος¹ πρῶτον τὸν ἀδελφὸν τὸν ἴδιον, Σίμωνα, καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ, κτλ.

“It was about the tenth hour when Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter—one of the two that had listened to John and had followed him—(he) meets first his own brother, Simon, and says unto him,” etc.

One more word, and I have closed. If the above proposed new readings prove correct, which I hope, the inference to be drawn therefrom is important in another sense as well. As the misreadings under discussion occur also in the old Syriac and Latin versions, the conclusion is warranted that, whatever their origin and primitive type or character may have been, the said versions, in their extant form, are obviously more or less close adaptations to the canonical or traditional Greek text.

A. N. JANNARIS.

¹ Here οὗτος is resumptive, in which function it, like ἐκεῖνος, is very common in the New Testament, as; John i. 18; vi. 46; vii. 18; xv. 1; 2 John ix.; Revelation iii. 5; Matthew x. 22; xiii. 10; xxii. 23, etc., etc. (compare also John ii. 9).