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Among the remnants of the classical literatures, Greek or Roman, the Septuagint is the one comprehensive body of Greek writings that has not yet been thoroughly emended. To the Byzantine scholars it was a book belonging to the Church rather than to the vast heritage of literature to which they were accustomed to dedicating their scholarly and critical endeavours. Much of its wording was definitively fixed by liturgical usage and the settled musical habits of Church recitation. This tended to keep the Greek Bible out of the current of literary and scholarly endeavours and to isolate it from all other literature.

The Western humanists felt the same. Their fancy led them along other paths. They wished to revive the vanished glories of the old empire on Italian soil, and Vergil was nearer to their hearts than Homer. They were romantics and suffered from an anti-clerical, if not anti-Christian, bias – and the Bible belonged to the Church. To them the Greek Bible was a barbarous piece of writing which did not yield any contribution to their classical ideals. It stood in the way like a stumbling-block between the bygone golden age and its revival upon which they concentrated. In particular the Greek Old Testament was a translation, and showed all too many traces of its barbaric original. Nothing in it responded to their cry *ad fontes*. Their *fontes* flowed from the Capitol, perhaps also from the Acropolis, but not from Zion or Alexandria.

They were content, therefore, to render the ‘classical’ literature readable, advancing from cavalier treatment to scholarly achievements. This kind of humanism was not confined to Italy. It moved through the lands of Western civilization and persisted into the nineteenth century. As a result the Greek Old Testament up to our days shared the lot of the Hebrew OT and the NT; it was reproduced in virtually the same form of *textus receptus*, or almost a *masorah*.

Even the NT took a very long time to evolve from this stage. There was no printed edition of the NT in the fifteenth century at all, and Erasmus’ influential *editio princeps* of 1516 was of a kind which he himself characterized as ‘*praecipitatum verius quam editum*’. Only two centuries later did NT textual criticism begin in earnest with Bentley (1720) and Bengel (1734); and from them it was still a long way to Lachmann,

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Tischendorf, and Westcott and Hort. Now that both the textual evidence and the grammatical features of the text are being studiously followed up, it will be easily realized what enormous strides must be made in the investigation of the LXX in order to catch up.

Yet there is urgent need of a critical and scholarly text of the LXX. Admittedly the text of our majuscules is heterogeneous as a whole and, in addition, full of contaminations from the various stages of its transmission. However, for this very reason a text must be prepared; it is vital for the OT and NT scholar, for whom the LXX is an indispensable instrument, and who cannot be expected in his own capacity to have the requisite equipment for emending the LXX text. If this had been done earlier, the *apparatus criticus* throughout Kittel's *Biblia Hebraica*³, wherever it refers to the translations of the MT, and even sometimes where it proposes to emend the Hebrew text, would differ considerably from its present form. The task, then, ought not to be postponed, for everything requisite is now available.

There is first the textual evidence. Three times in three centuries monumental editions have been produced in this country. The first, from 1707 onwards, that of J. E. Grabe, even endeavoured to give a critical text, based on codex Alexandrinus; the second, that of Holmes and Parsons, a century later, reprinted the Sixtine edition, with a vast substructure of variants from MSS, translations, and early quotations. As regards the text and its comprehensive annotation this edition may be compared with Mill's NT of 1707. But there is nothing in this edition to compare with Mill's *Prolegomena* which, as E. Nestle rightly remarked in 1907, were his only lasting achievement. Yet it was indispensable until, from 1906 onwards, it was superseded by the Cambridge edition of Brooke and McLean, to which Swete's text was a prelude. Here B, or the next best majuscule, is taken as a text, and an admirable array of variants is collected which, though not aiming at exhaustive completeness, affords everything that is needed for the study of the conditions and textual history of the text. Yet, as Ludwig Köhler once said (*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 14 April 1935, Nr. 656, in a review of Rahlfs' edition), this edition 'gives all the material and is indispensable for the master mariner of LXX research; for the cabin boy, however, and also for the seaman, it is but a roaring sea of variants in which he perishes'.

To cross this sea safely we need a compass and a pilot to teach us how to use it. To set another metaphor against Köhler's, the vast crowd of witnesses waits, as it were, to fall into line. Their contradictory evidence has to be disentangled. This was understood in Göttingen: Wellhausen

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(*Text*, 1871, pp. 223 f.) and Lagarde (*Lib.VT* 1, xvi) both insisted that family groups of MSS had to be constituted, so that from their variants the final LXX text might be constructed. And from 1908 onwards the Göttingen *Septuaginta-Unternehmen* formed another centre of collation, research and editing. After the first War, friendly contact was established between Cambridge and Göttingen, and each of the four parts of BM's second volume acknowledges its debt to Rahlfs' staff for their assistance in collation. Compared with the Cambridge editions, the Göttingen texts designedly go a step further. This is true of Rahlfs' concise Stuttgart text (which was his private enterprise) and of the great edition which is to appear in sixteen volumes and is sponsored by the *Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften*. They intend to give a critical text, and as far as possible their apparatus does not quote individual MSS, but the definite groups into which they fall. This great enterprise was preceded and accompanied by careful monographs, most of them by Rahlfs himself, in which difficult problems were brought nearer to a solution (Rahlfs, *S-St* 3 parts; *Mitteilungen des Septuaginta-Unternehmens*, 5 vols). The spectacular step forward which was taken by these editions can best be characterized by saying that the evidence, after being classified, is no longer 'a roaring sea of variants', and, by ceasing to be anonymous, has at the same time become appraisable.

The text which has perhaps already gained most from Rahlfs' minor edition with its discernment of the various recensions (even if he is too restrained in emending it) is that of the Minor Prophets, the Hebrew and Greek of which rank among the most difficult.

For our task it is most fortunate that the Cambridge and Göttingen editions cover different parts of the LXX, and Rahlfs' Stuttgart text its whole range. So there is no part of the LXX left where we do not have firm ground beneath us. Thus a fresh comparison of the Greek with the Hebrew and a determined effort to emend the Greek is now much easier and should not be postponed; for a determined effort to work back, by applying the rules of textual criticism and the resources of sober emendation, to the form of text which is behind our varied evidence now holds out great promise of success.

We also have a second reason for hoping to remove a great many mistakes from the LXX text. The LXX is the most comprehensive body of Hellenistic writings that has come down to us, and since inscriptions and papyri in overwhelming quantities have acquainted us with the peculiar speech of this period, we are now also, from a grammatical point of view, in a position to remove from the LXX an abundance of

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spellings and formations which cannot go back to the original translators, as they obviously belong to later periods of transmission. Part One of the present work is devoted to this task.

Since the emergence of reliable textual evidence and grammatical standards has created an entirely new situation, we are now at last able to avail ourselves in a new way of earlier achievements. These I propose to outline.

None of the three renowned ancient editions of the Septuagint, the Complutensian, the Aldine, and the Sixtine, is a strictly documentary reproduction of a single codex; they all result from some primitive criticism. Yet, roughly speaking, the first is closest to Lucian, as far as cod. 108 represents this recension, that is from the last twelve verses of the Octateuch onwards (Rahlfs, *Ruth* p. 77); the second, with the same reservation as to the changing character of the main MSS used, represents the Origenian and later recensions under Origen's influence; the third, which on the whole corrects the Aldine from Vat. B, is therefore closer to the genuine form of text, and even adds what were then most valuable scholia. The fact that these editions are based either on later recensions or on improvised corrections certainly diminishes their documentary value; but to a certain degree it removed a great many corruptions which, however, inevitably re-entered our texts in later times, when the latter were confined to the strict reproduction of majuscules. E. Nestle, who was so well acquainted with earlier attempts at emending the LXX, never tired of warning against considering our modern texts as 'the LXX', and in doing so he had in mind the corruptions which were thus allowed a fresh period of comparatively undisturbed sway.¹

After Agellius, who was connected with the great Roman edition,² there is an impressive array of *critici sacri*, most of them Reformed. One still gets an idea of what they achieved from the careful, though incomplete, codification in (Biel-)Schleusner's *Novus Thesaurus* (5 vols, Leipzig, 1820). After him the necessary combination of classical and theological studies and interests was no longer found; very few fresh emendations saw the light, and hardly anyone except Lagarde and Nestle took account of earlier achievements. One of the reasons for this neglect was the fact that these emendations were locked up in monographs and had not found their way into editions of the LXX apart from those of Grabe and Bos.

We cannot, of course, make indiscriminate use of these old observations, if only for the reason that our standards are no longer the

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same. For example, if we examine that brilliant exponent of sacred criticism, J. E. Grabe, we find that his point of view is still that predominant in Origen and Jerome. All three, and many with them, when faced with a discrepancy between the MT and the LXX, merely aim at restoring what Jerome called the *Hebraea veritas*. It hardly occurs to them that the true reading may have been preserved in the LXX, from which it must be introduced into the MT. Grabe was certainly very often able to show that in fact the LXX did not represent a tradition independent of the MT, and by emending the LXX he fruitfully performed one of the tasks imposed upon the LXX student. Yet the other task which is of equal importance – to indicate the real differences between the MT and the LXX, and then to decide in favour of the MT or the LXX, or a third reading behind them both – was not visualized then with the same clearness.

Of those who saw the necessity of this new task, Bishop Lowth is an early and brilliant forerunner. Yet the great name with which this achievement is connected belongs to the nineteenth century – that of J. Wellhausen. In his early *Der Text der Bücher Samuelis* (1871), which we shall have to quote more than once, he created a new method by ‘consistently and boldly turning to account the only tradition which can yield variants in the OT, the LXX. In Samuel and Kings one family of MSS differs from the masoretic text; by re-translating these readings into the Hebrew he gathered one striking emendation after another’ (Ed. Schwartz in his commemorative speech, *NGG, Geschäftliche Mitteilungen*, 1918, p. 53, now *Kleine Schriften I*, 338) – and, we may add, in the same passages demonstrated beyond doubt that here the Lucianic MSS alone preserved a Greek text which represented a better Hebrew; and thus, not only was he instrumental in restoring the Hebrew, but at the same time he showed that the remainder of the Greek evidence, including B and other well-reputed MSS, depended upon a Hebrew that had been corrupted at a later stage, our present masoretic text, and so itself in turn contaminated the original LXX. As this method was fruitfully exploited by S. R. Driver, F. C. Burkitt and C. F. Burney, there is no need to enlarge on it here.

Before passing from the instruments of our work which are a legacy of the past to those with which we have grown up, and which therefore must be recorded in the present tense, a word should be said about Lagarde. His example has been a powerful incentive to many, including the present writer. Foremost among those whom he influenced was Alfred Rahlfs. Lagarde ‘cast his mantle upon him’ and ‘he took up also

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the mantle of Elijah'. One hardly needs to read Rahlfs' centenary study on Lagarde (Göttingen, 1928); it is sufficient to balance the master's work against the pupil's to see that in Lagarde's studies, along with much toilsome preparatory work for which we are thankful, there was a strange sequence of changing, one-sided statements and vague programmes, often pushed too far in generalization and overstatement. It is most illuminating to see how Rahlfs freed himself from the fascinating prospect of the three fixed types of Bible text as mentioned in Jerome's *prologus galeatus*. It had led Lagarde's work down a blind alley and has misled many others up to the present time. Yet Rahlfs, who had gradually given up the fixed idea of tracing Hesychius' edition, soberly says that we must deal with facts and cease to pursue preconceived ideas; and afterwards he found that in his early days Lagarde's conception had been much sounder and much more like his own. By entering fully into Lagarde's work, Rahlfs set us free from the deadlock which had prevented Lagarde himself from getting results equal to his genius and industry. For Lagarde was a late product of Romanticism, and his impulses need sometimes to be translated into terms of reality. Nevertheless, the last lines of his poem about himself and his influence remain perfectly true:

Wär er nicht er gewesen,
So stünden wir nicht hier.

(Had he not been what he was,
we should not stand where we do.)

During the decades in which Lagarde strove to lay the foundations of a critical edition of the LXX the practical needs of the day were met by the seven successive editions of Tischendorf which, though based on the Sixtine, to an increasing degree tried to satisfy the demand for manuscript evidence. Its posthumous editions (1880, 1887) were greatly improved by Nestle's *Supplementum* which gave careful fresh collations of B and S with the Sixtine. Yet as this was merely a makeshift to keep a stereotyped text alive, the real need was an edition based on the earliest evidence and on nothing else. Swete's text, therefore, published from 1887 onwards, was a tremendous step forward. Apart from the great help which it gave to study, as it stands, it was intended to pave the way for the larger Cambridge edition, by Brooke and McLean, of which approximately half has by now been accomplished.

The texts of these two editions are roughly identical and we may, therefore, try to characterize their common features. In so far as an

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edition is meant to express the result of an editor's grappling with corruptions and errors of various kinds which have distorted the original work during its transmission, neither of the Cambridge texts could profess to be an edition in the strict sense of the word, as the editors knew perfectly well. Their intention was to take only the first step by providing in a scholarly manner the raw material from which a critical text might eventually be constructed. In particular, anything that would at all bias the main intention, to present nothing more than the oldest evidence, was avoided. As to strict faithfulness, their presentation of the evidence is beyond praise. Any mistakes that appear are due rather to too strict an adherence to their sources. The grammatical aspect of this will be considered later. From the documentary point of view I would make three minor comments.

(1) The first is that in their citations of the majuscules, especially B, the Cambridge editors are less discriminating than is compatible with strict critical principles. To any critical editor B ought to mean a fourth-century MS, but to Swete and his successors it means *codex Vaticanus*, including its entire history which is expressed by correctors and corrections covering almost a thousand years. Inasmuch as these are decidedly later than the original scribe, it would be methodologically better to regard them as the result of a fresh recension which happened to be written between the lines of B, but might equally well have been written down as an independent MS. For example, S^{c.a} represents a most thorough and consistent effort by a seventh-century *diorthotes* to superimpose a wholly Lucianic form of text upon an originally quite different text. The same has been observed in B, when in the Psalms ten passages were transformed from the old form of text to the Lucianic, two by B^a, two by B^c, the remaining six by B^b; and the correctors ^b and ^c, at least, are very late. I take this example from Rahlfs, *S-St* II, 57, who acutely remarks that from the copying of such corrected MSS there were likely to arise texts of varying degrees of mixture depending on whether the copyist kept mainly to the original or to the corrected reading. As soon as 'B' is considered as standing not only for its fourth-century scribe, but, at the same time, for all its correctors who, moreover, cannot be exactly dated, the result is no longer a fourth-century text, but a series of readings ranging between four and possibly many more centuries. This is an unfortunate dilution of our most valuable piece of evidence. To the critic, any corrections of B are important not so much because they are found in the codex called B, but because they form part of a different recension. This recension may be, and often is, found in a

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different group of MSS, from which the nature and origin of the correction in B can easily be determined. For, when considering a variant, the important thing is not so much to ask where it is found, but what it stands for. This levelling of B and its correctors is obvious in the Cambridge editions, whenever their text breaks away from B*, often for very good reasons, and instead follows one of its correctors, though according to the principle underlying these editions the next oldest MS ought to have been followed – and there is no lack of available MSS older than some of the correctors of B. (On this topic see also Miscellaneous Note 6, p. 275).

(2) Another point was discussed at length in a review of vol. II, part iv of BM's edition (*ThLZ*, 1937, pp. 341 ff.). There I attempted to show the awkward consequences which result from their decision to keep strictly to the reading of B. The expedient, useful in itself, of sometimes breaking away from this principle – if only in order to shorten the annotation in passages where B stands out alone, because it suffers from an individual corruption – brings about grave inconsistencies; when one has once taken this road there is no reasonable halting-place, and the halt actually made is far from defensible. I demonstrated this by going through all passages in 1 Esdras in which BM had indicated a departure from B by daggers, with the result that in the very same verses many more passages could have claimed a similar treatment. I was even able to give an example of a rash conjecture introduced into the text, a conjecture which, against the correct reading of all other evidence, was made out of a corruption in B (*ThLZ*, p. 343). (In 1 Esdras 8: 67; here γάρ is correct and found everywhere except in B and its satellite h which have the easy corruption τας; from this †τινος† is uselessly conjectured.) To be fair, these strictures ought to have been directed against Swete, for though BM more often break away from B than Swete did, the examples in 1 Esdras to which I took exception were derived from Swete's text.

However, the two points mentioned, namely the undue weight attributed to the late correctors of the chief majuscules and the inconsistency in keeping to the chief majuscule, mostly B, even when it is obvious that a mistaken and corrupt B does not deserve any more deference than a missing B, are only superficial flaws and cannot detract from the fundamental soundness with which the evidence is presented. They may be inconvenient to those using the edition, though, once noticed, they are no serious hindrance. Yet I am afraid it is different with a third point.

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(3) If we set out to use the Vet. Lat. translation as given in the apparatus, we are bound to stumble repeatedly. When consulting the original publications, e.g. U. Robert's Lyons *Heptateuch*, we find there hundreds of the most certain emendations, and there are a good many others still left for us to make. Sometimes corruptions accumulate within a few verses. So in Judg. 16: 13 f. we must restore *et texueris* and *et texuit* for *et exueris* and *et exiuit* and in v. 13 *cubitum* for *obitum*, after *cubiti* 14 (= πῆχυς in 13 in the *L* doublet). Certainly even here there is nothing to hinder a student who is able to emend a Latin text. Nor will he blindly rely upon Robert's emendations. So when in Lev. 5: 4 Robert (p. cii) puts *iuraverit* for *superaverunt*, he will have to restore *separaverit* = διαστειλή, cf. 16: 26 *separatus est* = διεσταλμένος; Judg. 1: 19 *partitus* = διεστειλάτο.

Yet I would emphasize that this part of the work ought to have been done and digested beforehand, because what we expect to find at the first glance is the Greek text underlying the Latin evidence. Even when drawing upon a brilliantly emended text like Burkitt's Tyconius, the publication of which is bound to have been an event to BM, they deliberately prefer to record the traditional corruptions, not even mentioning the obvious emendations in Burkitt's text although they alone would give meaning to their quotation. So in 2 Sam. 7: 14 BM record 'ἀφοῖς] *actibus* Tyc-codd', whereas Burkitt's text displays *tactibus*, and his apparatus, 'tactibus *scripsi*; actibus RV: ἀφοῖς LXX'. On Lev. 25: 28 BM record *possidentiae* La.^r for τῶ κτησαμένῳ αὐτά. Had they considered Robert's emendation *possidenti ea*, they would not have included La.^r among witnesses omitting αὐτά. If this is a shortcoming, it is certainly not inadvertence, yet it compels the student either to consult BM's sources or to emend all over again. The hint given by '-edd' or '-codd' that the student may find something better in the other, is not enough, and it is not even given in the passages in which Robert suggests his emendations only in the Introduction (pp. lxxxix–cxxi) of his first volume or in the notes of the second.

From this there arises the much more awkward suspicion that the same may happen when Oriental versions are quoted. They are all quoted in Latin; but that would be of real avail only if these translations represented an emended text. In fact they do so no more than the Vet. Lat. evidence which is easier for the ordinary classical student to check. But now, whenever we find a strange translation from the Armenian, Coptic, Ethiopic, or Syriac, we are at a loss; for we cannot reasonably be expected to be at home in these languages to a degree that would

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enable us to emend it off-hand, and that from its Latin rendering. This means that in passages where an Oriental translation may be most urgently needed, either to help towards the restoration of the original Greek when all other evidence fails us, or to give an idea which of two or more different readings has the support of the translations, we are left without the help which we would expect to find in this otherwise well-assorted store-house; unfortunately it is most unlikely to be supplemented in the direction suggested.

The Cambridge editions are rightly characterized as codifications of the available evidence, the text printed in full being nothing but a repetition of the relatively best-accredited MS which, if any, therefore deserves to be used as a standard text for the collations; and these collations, in their turn, represent the real and lasting contribution of these editions to the study of the LXX. With these editions a first and important period came to an end; and it can be said that the way in which they fulfil their task, the objective presentation of the available evidence, is praiseworthy. Studies like Dr Swete's *Introduction* and the suggestive work done by H. St J. Thackeray, including his *Grammar*, once more represent real progress.

When we pass on from them to the Göttingen editions, we are in a different atmosphere. We have moved from a limited task performed to a high degree of perfection to another task for which there is neither end nor limit: that of an ever-increasing approximation to the supposed archetype to which the evidence points. This is the transition from any kind of *textus receptus* to a form of text which will result from the application of the methods proved true by many scholarly editions of classical texts.³

The idea behind the Göttingen editions is from a comprehensive use of collated MSS, translations, and patristic quotations to single out the various types of text (recensions) and to work back to the oldest type of text obtainable. In so doing a certain eclecticism cannot be avoided, but it is justified by the observation that, as in many other authors, there are continual cross-relations to be traced in our evidence. The different types of MSS have influenced one another, so that the best reading may be found in a MS or group of MSS where we would not expect it.⁴ In themselves the different recensions are palpably individual. The reason why we must at times abandon even the best MS is that at different points later influences have come in, so that in different passages different MSS have retained the original text. The standards of judgement to be applied here are beyond doubt and generally recognized.