

V.

THE LATE PROFESSOR TISCHENDORF.*

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THE death of Professor Tischendorf at Leipzig, Dec. 7, 1874, after a lingering illness of a year and a half from a stroke of paralysis, deserves more than a cursory notice. The loss to Biblical learning is, in some respects, irreparable; for he left unfinished important works, which can hardly be completed by any successor. The amount, however, of what he did accomplish is marvellous; and we can hardly be surprised that even an exceptionally strong physical constitution should have suddenly given way under the strain of such intense and unremitting activity. A brief sketch of his life, and an enumeration of his chief publications, will show how great are his claims to the gratitude of all Biblical scholars.

Lobegott (Latinized, Aenotheus) Friedrich Constantin Tischendorf was born at Lengenfeld, in Voigtland, a district of Saxony, Jan. 18, 1815. After five years of preparatory study at the Gymnasium in Plauen, he entered the University of Leipzig in 1834, devoting himself to the study of theology and philology. Here, in 1836, he won a prize for an essay entitled "*Doctrina Pauli Apostoli de vi mortis Christi satisfactoria*," which was printed in 1837. In 1838, he published a volume of poems called *Maiknospen*, "May-buds." These buds do not seem to have blossomed, though one of the poems had the honor of being set to music by the great

* *Constantin Tischendorf in seiner fünfundwanzigjährigen schriftstellerischen Wirksamkeit*. Literar-historische Skizze von Dr. Joh. Ernst Volbeding. Leipzig: C. F. Fleischer. 1862. 8vo. pp. vi., 98.

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composer Mendelssohn. In 1838, he signalized the close of his university studies by another prize essay, "Disputatio de Christo pane vite," an exegetical and doctrinal dissertation on John vi. 51-59, published in Leipzig in 1839. After receiving the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University, he spent a year and a half in teaching, near Leipzig, and in this period, besides translating one or two small works from the French, tried his hand at a novel entitled *Der junge Mystiker*, "The Young Mystic," published under the pseudonym of "Dr. Fritz." In October, 1839, he returned to Leipzig with the purpose of preparing a critical edition of the Greek Testament, and entered in earnest upon those labors to which the remainder of his life was devoted. Here he published, in 1840, an essay on Matt. xix. 16 ff., the first-fruits of his studies in textual criticism, and a dissertation on the so-called *Recensions* of the text of the New Testament, with particular reference to Scholz's theory, which he effectually demolished. His first edition of the Greek Testament appeared at Leipzig with the date 1841, though the volume was printed before the end of the year 1840. It was a convenient manual, giving the various readings of the Received Text, Knapp, Scholz, and Lachmann, with the more important authorities, and showing, on the whole, good critical judgment. The essay on Recensions, confuting Scholz's theory, was reprinted in the Prolegomena, and is the most valuable part of the book. The edition was favorably received as a work of promise, being warmly welcomed, especially by the veteran critic, David Schulz.

In preparing this edition, Tischendorf was struck with the defectiveness of our knowledge of even the most important MSS. of the New Testament, excepting the very few whose text had at that time been published. This deficiency he determined to do his best to supply, as the first essential condition of improvement in New Testament criticism. He proposed to visit the chief libraries of Europe for the purpose of making accurate copies or collations of all the uncial MSS. of the New Testament. But he was wholly destitute of the pecuniary resources required for such an enter-

prise. At last, through great exertions on the part of the theological faculty of Leipzig, represented by such men as Winer, Illgen, and Niedner, seconded by Von Falkenstein, the Minister of Public Instruction, he obtained from the government of Saxony a subsidy of one hundred thalers for two successive years; other necessary funds he could only raise by pledging a life-assurance policy for the repayment of a small loan; and when, finally, he set out for Paris, in October, 1840, he was so poor that, to use his own words, he was unable to pay for the cloak which he wore,—“*tam pauper . . . ut pro paenula quam portabam solvere non possem*” (*N. T.* 1859, Pars I., p. viii.).

At Paris, he made it his first object to copy with the greatest care, and prepare for publication, the celebrated Ephraem MS. of the fifth century, a palimpsest extremely difficult to decipher, and which had been but very imperfectly collated. The New Testament part of this MS. was published at Leipzig in 1843, in a splendidly printed volume, with excellent Prolegomena; the Old Testament portion appeared in 1845. Tischendorf's edition of this MS. was a most important service to Biblical criticism, and gained for him, in 1843, the honorary degree of Doctor of Theology from the University of Breslau. While at Paris, besides collating thoroughly or copying other important MSS. of the New Testament, as K, L, M, of the Gospels and D (Codex Claromontanus) of the Pauline Epistles, he prepared (in 1842), at the instance of the celebrated publisher Firmin Didot, two editions of the Greek Testament. One of these was designed particularly for the use of Catholics, the Greek text being conformed, as far as any MS. authority would allow, to the Latin Vulgate, with which it was printed in parallel columns, forming one of the volumes of Didot's Library of Greek Authors. By way of offset to this “Catholic edition,” which was dedicated to Affre, Archbishop of Paris, and the Greek text of which was also issued separately, he published another dedicated to Guizot, containing a text substantially the same as that of his Leipzig edition, but without the Prolegomena and critical authorities. By these publications, and by further aid from

the government of Saxony, and the liberality of private friends, he obtained the means of widely extending his travels for the collation and collection of MSS.

At this point, it will be convenient to give a synopsis of the various journeys taken by Tischendorf for critical purposes, from first to last. More than eight years were spent in these travels. His chief objects were the collation or copying for publication of all the important uncial Greek MSS. of the New Testament and of the Septuagint that had not already been published; the collation of MSS. of the Apocryphal Gospels, Acts, and Revelations, and of the *pseudepigrapha* of the Old Testament; and the collection of materials for a work on Greek palæography. He gave special attention, moreover, to important unpublished MSS. of the Old Latin version and the Vulgate, and collated for the use of Grossmann all the MSS. which he could find of the writings of Philo of Alexandria, a new critical edition of which is so much needed. For these purposes, in the years 1841-44, he not only spent a long time at the Royal Library in Paris, but visited the libraries of Utrecht, in Holland; London, Oxford, and Cambridge, in England; Basle, in Switzerland; Carpentras, in France; and Rome, Florence, Naples, Venice, Modena, Verona, Milan, and Turin, in Italy; and, after his return from his first Eastern tour, explored, at convenient seasons, the libraries at Vienna, Munich, Dresden, Hamburg, and Wolfenbüttel, in Germany; Zürich and St. Gall, in Switzerland; and St. Petersburg and Moscow, in Russia,—the last named city being visited by him in 1868. England he revisited for critical purposes in 1849, 1855, and 1865; Paris, in 1849 and 1864; and Rome and Naples, in 1866,—using for such excursions the vacations which relieved him from his labors at the University of Leipzig, where in 1845 he was made Professor Extraordinary, in 1850 Honorary Professor, and in 1859 Ordinary Professor of Theology and Biblical Palæography, the latter professorship having been founded expressly for him.

Tischendorf's great acquisitions of *new* MS. treasures