

those which are supported by the greatest number of MSS. The attacks on Bengel continued till his death in 1752: one of the latest proceeded from Wetstein, who inserted new remarks on the subject in the Prolegomena which accompanied the first volume of his Greek Testament in 1751. This, however, Bengel never saw.

It was well that some valued the labours of this critic: amongst others was Count Zinzendorf, who used Bengel's text as the basis of the German translation of the New Testament that he executed. The pains taken by Bengel to regulate the punctuation of the New Testament, and to divide it into paragraphs, were appreciated by some; and in these respects he was followed by John Gambold in the edition of Mill's text, which appeared at Oxford in 1742; and these divisions have been very frequently adopted in this country, as for instance, in the Greek Testament, edited by Bishop Lloyd, in 1828, at Oxford, and frequently reprinted. In 1745, the king of Denmark caused the authorised Danish version to be revised; and the text of Bengel was used as the standard for that purpose.

Bengel felt that the attacks to which he was exposed were not made so much against himself personally, as against the genuine text of the New Testament; he thus bore the violent language with which he was assailed, with much equanimity, while he replied firmly and temperately to those who attacked him.

In one of his replies (in 1747) he said, "Oh that this may be the last occasion of my standing in the gap to vindicate the precious original text of the New Testament! The children of peace cannot love contention; it is wearying and painful to them to be obliged to contend even for the truth itself."

Bengel's *text* was repeatedly reprinted; and he continued up to the time of his death to augment and correct his *Apparatus Criticus*; the enlarged edition of which was published in 1763, under the care of Philip David Burk.*

It is cheering to the mind of every Christian to observe the

* This is not the place to speak of Bengel's other works; it should, however, be borne in mind, that the revision of the sacred text was only *one part* of the labour of this critic.

spirit in which Bengel acts and speaks in connection with his critical labours. The revision of the text of the word of God was with him no mere affair of learning or literary skill; but, knowing the preciousness of that volume on which he was engaged, he felt that he had to act in the consciousness of solemn responsibility before God in editing His word:—and he knew that God could give the needed intelligence and diligence, and thus he looked to Him that the work on which he was engaged might be to the glory of Christ.

§ 8.—WETSTEIN'S GREEK TESTAMENT.

THE Greek Testament edited by WETSTEIN, in 1751-2, greatly enlarged the boundaries of the critical horizon by the accession of new materials, from which more accurate judgments might be formed on many points.

He commenced his critical studies when quite young. He was related to the senior partner in the firm of Wetstein and Smith, publishers and printers at Amsterdam; who, in the year 1711, had brought out an edition of the Greek Testament, in which a selection of the various readings given by Mill and Küster were repeated, and at the end an attempt was made to repudiate the greater part of them as not worthy of notice, by means of the application of certain canons of Gerard von Maestricht, the editor. Wetstein's relation to this publisher was intimately connected with his becoming the editor of a Greek Testament.

In 1713, Wetstein, then just twenty, defended a dissertation at Basle, which he had written on the various readings of the Greek Testament. His relative, J. L. Frey, who presided on the occasion, encouraged him after this to examine MSS. in different libraries with more accuracy than had been previously done. And thus, after a while, he went to Paris, and made extracts

from MSS. in the library there; he then came to England in the beginning of 1716, where he showed his collations to Bentley, who for a while employed him to compare MSS. at Paris, and to whom he sold his collations.

In 1719, Wetstein was requested by his relatives, the publishers at Amsterdam, who had heard before this of Bentley's proposed edition, to transmit to them *without delay*, for publication, the various readings which he had collected: it was, however, at length agreed between the relatives that they should be reserved for a second edition of the Greek Testament of Gerard von Maestricht, which they had published in 1711.

About 1724, Frey requested Wetstein to make a selection of those various readings which he judged the more important; he accordingly wrote such readings as he judged preferable to the common text in the margin of a Greek Testament. Frey pressed on him to undertake the publication of *the text* so revised. This appears to be the first time that it occurred to Wetstein to do more than edit the *various readings* which he had collected. He hesitated for some time; but in 1728, his brother Peter Wetstein being at Amsterdam, the subject was mentioned to the publishers there, and they pressed for a specimen of the edition, with Prolegomena. It was desired (Hug says) to anticipate the forthcoming edition of Bengel. With this request Wetstein complied; and at once he obtained from Frey copies of the fathers, out of which he gathered various readings; then he examined the early editions, and began to bring the mass of various readings which he had himself collected into some order.

In the beginning of 1729, Wetstein says that Frey's whole conduct towards him was altered; and from that time he did nothing but oppose both him and the work on which he was engaged. On the 17th of September in that year, a petition was presented to the town-council of Basle, from the theological faculty in the university, and the parochial clergy, that J. J. Wetstein, deacon of St. Leonard's, be *prohibited* from publishing his criticisms on the Greek Testament, as it was a useless, needless, and dangerous work. The town-council did not grant the petition; but the opposition of Frey and others continued unabated. The real reason of this alarm, though it can hardly be gathered from Wet-

stein's *ex parte* statement, was the certainty that this critic had adopted *Arian* sentiments, and that he was endeavouring *covertly* to introduce them in his public preaching and academical lectures. On these accounts disciplinary proceedings commenced against him, which led to his leaving Basle, and taking up his abode at Amsterdam, in 1733. He says, however, that the opposition of the Basle theologians prevented the publication of his Greek Testament for nearly twenty years more.

In 1730, the Prolegomena which he had transmitted from Basle were published anonymously at Amsterdam: they gave an outline of his proposed edition, and an account of the critical authorities which he had consulted. On many grounds, it is to be regretted that Wetstein did not *then* publish his edition; because the critical principles which he *afterwards* adopted rendered him less able to form a fair judgment of the value of the oldest authorities.

He was, however, constantly accumulating more materials; so that, in each year, the work grew and extended under his hands. In 1735, he wrote the Preface to a new edition of Gerard von Maestricht's Greek Testament, which was published by Wetstein and Smith: in this he referred to the edition of Bengel; and, indeed, the labours of that critic had no small effect on Wetstein; for opposition to him led him to repudiate many of the critical principles which he had previously held.

Originally Wetstein had thought of using the text of the Codex Alexandrinus as his basis, all other authorities being compared with it: he afterwards judged that it would be best to give a text, such as was supported by what was (in his opinion) the best evidence; but at length he determined to retain the common text, and to place immediately below it, in a distinct manner, the readings which he thought to be true.* But, in fact, the changes which he thus proposed were not many, and not very important. Twenty years before, he would have *applied* critical authorities much more steadily and uniformly. In 1763, Bowyer published

* This plan of not changing the text itself, was adopted, it is said (Marsh's *Michaelis*, ii. 475), at the request of the Remonstrants (Arminians), whom Wetstein had joined on quitting Basle. He succeeded Le Clerc as rector of the Remonstrants' High School at Amsterdam. Le Clerc's latitudinarian sentiments on Scripture inspiration, on the Godhead of Christ, and other subjects, are well known. In all these points, Wetstein seems to have been his disciple.

an edition of the Greek Testament in London, in which Wetstein's suggested readings were adopted in the text itself; and a list of these (with the exception of those in the Revelation, where they are numerous) is given at the end, the number of them being three hundred and thirty-five only: of these not a few relate to very minute points.

After such long preparations, and so many hindrances, Wetstein's edition appeared at Amsterdam in two volumes folio; the former in 1751, the latter in the following year. The upper part of each page contains the text itself; below this stand those variations from it (if any) approved of by Wetstein; then the various readings are placed; and as he had examined so many documents which no one had previously collated, the part of the page which these fill is often considerable. The lower part of the page is occupied with a mass of passages from classical authors (both Greek and Latin), Talmudical and Rabbinical extracts, etc., which in Wetstein's opinion illustrate some passage in the sacred text, or elucidate the use of some word, or present instances of a similar grammatical construction. The greatest variety is found in *this* collection; while some parts are useful, others are such as only excite surprise at their being found on the same page as the text of the New Testament. Occasional remarks show that Wetstein was not at all concerned to conceal his non-acceptance of the doctrine of the proper Godhead of Christ.

In the arrangement of the books, the Acts is placed *after* St. Paul's Epistles; this is done that it may accompany the Catholic Epistles, with which it is found in many MSS.

Ample Prolegomena precede the first volume; in these, various subjects are discussed which relate to the work in general; and the MSS., etc., are described which are cited as critical authorities in the four Gospels. Brief Prolegomena introduce the other three parts of the work,—the Pauline Epistles,—the Acts and Catholic Epistles,—and the Apocalypse.

The notation of MSS. is that which is still in common use: the ancient MSS. (those in uncial letters) are distinguished by Roman capitals, A, B, C, etc.; the other MSS. by Arabic numerals. The notation *recommences* in each of the four parts; and this is an inconvenience in two ways; for the same mark may

mean a valuable MS. in one part, and one of small importance in another; and also the *same* MS. is cited with one reference in one part, and with another reference in another: much confusion has arisen from *both* these causes, especially from the latter.

Bishop Marsh says of Wetstein, what that critic had said of Mill, that he accomplished more than all his predecessors put together. If this character be too high, it is but little more than the truth; and *this* must be borne in mind in considering the edition; because otherwise it might seem as if a work, which has been so often and so severely scrutinised, could hardly possess that importance in sacred criticism which is admitted to belong to this.

Never before had there been so methodical an account presented to the biblical student, of the MSS. versions and fathers, by whose aid the text of the New Testament may be revised, as that which is contained in the Prolegomena. The description of the early editions has also a far more scholar-like completeness than any which had preceded it.

Wetstein's own labours had been considerable in the collation of MSS.; they have indeed been often *overstated* by those who took every MS. in his list as an authority which he had himself examined: the actual number of the MSS. of the Gospels which he had *himself* collated in the course of thirty-five years was about *twenty*, and about an equal number in the other parts of the New Testament. Besides this, he had, with great industry, collected the collations of Mill and others, and had re-examined not a few of the versions and fathers. And thus his notes present the general storehouse of critical collations and examinations up to the time of the publication of his edition.

To say that this part of his work might not have been much improved, would be to exhibit a want of apprehension on the whole subject; but none who understands the difficulties connected with such a work, can do other than render a tribute to Wetstein's patient industry.

The Prolegomena contain, however, besides what is valuable, some strange theories. It had been long noticed that some of the Greek MSS. which have a Latin version written with them, present a remarkable resemblance to the readings of the Latin Testament. Hence arose a suspicion that in such MSS. the Greek