Since all critical apparatuses suffer some limitation, a definition of the term is needed. The most comprehensive critical apparatus will be characterized by a sound—almost inevitable—limitation.

Sound limitation will omit (1) Scribal errors, including nonsense readings, misspellings, “the leaps of the eye” and the resulting omissions or dittographies; (2) Singular readings in the Greek manuscript tradition (versional or patristic agreement with one Greek witness is not enough); (3) Readings supported by only two Greek witnesses if the agreement can be plausibly explained as coincidence in careless error; (4) Results of an individual scribe’s habits—unless supported by a group whose kinship has been established. See, for example, Jn. 1.4, ev auτω: omit ev P66 (after γεγονοντο), cited by U2. This variant should be omitted for two reasons: (a) it is the result of “the leap of the eye,” see (1) above; (b) the scribe of P66, not his archetype, has the habit of writing a syllable at a time, and frequently skips a syllable, or the article, or a short word. Thus P66 insignificantly omits the article in Jn. 1.15, o σουσω (cited by U2 with Delta 1646*), and omits it significantly in 1.18 (cited by U2 K N25* with Aleph* B C* L). (5) Harmonizations to immediate context. These are so widespread and so probable as coincidental agreement that they should be omitted, unless the supporters are members of the same group. For example, in P66 the addition of “who takes away the sin of the world” in Jn. 1.36 is such a harmonization to 1.29 (cited in N25 with little and scattered support); so also οντος P66 in 1.42 (cited in N25 with G fl)—cf. 1.41; also P66* in 1.49 add αληθως (N25 with 1241)—cf. 1.47.

Thus an ideal comprehensive apparatus will be subject to a handful

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* Distinguished Professor Emeritus of New Testament.
of limitations. I have discussed these at length elsewhere.\(^1\) In this discussion, I use the phrase "limited critical apparatus" to mean one which does not cite meaningful omissions, additions and substitutions with respect to the text given above it. Since limited is a relative term, one would expect the amount of limitation to vary widely from edition to edition. In this one will not be disappointed.

To have a fixed base from which to determine the amount of limitation, I have chosen Tischendorf's apparatus to his eighth edition (Ti 8), an apparatus which is generally available. Tischendorf limited his apparatus in two ways: (1) He omitted readings he deemed insignificant for the establishment of the original text or valueless for the writing of its history. These he restricted sharply to those I have listed above as "sound limitations: (1) Scribal errors". He included even some of these; e.g., mispellings of proper nouns. (2) He omitted some of the evidence for those readings which he cites. He does this by blanketing individual manuscripts under such labels as al pau, al mu, al plu, al pler, al 20, minusc vix mu, al omn, unc pler, etc., etc. These blanket terms are most often used for the Greek minuscules.

What Tischendorf includes is a tremendous number of passages where variation exists (1) in the presence or absence of a word, (2) in the substitution of one word for another, and (3) in the order of words. Thus his apparatus may be used for comparative purposes as an example of an "unlimited" apparatus. In the first chapter of John, Ti 8 cites manuscript evidence for one hundred and seventy-eight passages.\(^2\) When I use the words "a limited critical apparatus," I mean an apparatus that cites manuscript evidence for a markedly smaller number of passages. Using this definition justifies calling N25 a limited apparatus. In chapter one of John, N 25 cites manuscript evidence for fifty-nine passages. This is one-third as many as in Ti 8. So also Kilpatrick's apparatus (K) can be called limited. In chapter one of John, K cites evidence for twenty-two passages. This is about 12% of the number in Ti 8. So also in the apparatus in Souter's first edition (S).\(^3\) In chapter one of John, S cites evidence for fifteen passages.

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\(^2\) The exact number will vary with each tabulator's decision as to what constitutes one unit of variation.