

It was because I saw the living Christ, and "heard the words of His mouth," and, I beseech you, listen to no words which make His dominion less sovereign, and His sole and all sufficient work on the cross less mighty as the only power that knits earth to heaven.

So the sum of this whole matter is—abide in Christ. Let us root and ground our lives and characters in Him, and then God's inmost desire will be gratified in regard to us, and He will bring even us stainless and blameless into the blaze of His presence. There we shall all have to stand, and let that all penetrating light search us through and through. How do we expect to be then "found of Him in peace, without spot and blameless"? There is but one way—to live in constant exercise of faith in Christ, and grip Him so close and sure that the world, the flesh and the devil cannot make us loosen our fingers. Then He will hold us up, and His great purpose, which brought Him to earth, and nailed Him to the cross, will be fulfilled in us, and at last, we shall lift up voices of wondering praise "to Him who is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy."

ALEXANDER MACLAREN.

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THE REVISED VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

A CRITICAL ESTIMATE.

FIRST PAPER.

A NOTED judicial dictum lately vested the censorship of literature and art in the general British public. We think the modern tribunal is likely to find far more "artistic merit" in the O.T.<sup>1</sup> Revisers than in their *confrères* of the

<sup>1</sup> The following abbreviations will be used in these papers: N.T. for New Testament; O.T. for Old Testament; A.V. for the "Authorized Version" of

New Dispensation. The Hebrew text has been left in its original state of questionable integrity. Obscure passages for the most part remain as unintelligible as the lover of "that sweet word Mesopotamia" can desire. The alterations admitted in the translation do but little affect, what the *Standard* calls the "music of the Bible," meaning that of King James' translators. These, we are told, are strong points in favour of the Revised O.T. with our "Bible-loving" people. We believe it, and fear it will be long before their aspirations are of a higher sort.

The thoughtful (and perhaps equally "Bible-loving") student would probably rather have this matter of translation severed from the causes of sentimentality and modern pietism. For him there is no *prima facie* reason why a translator of ancient literature in 1885 should idolize the diction of a translator of 1611. The one thing needful is that these Hebrew and Greek writings should convey to us as near as may be the sense they conveyed to their first readers. Determinedly therefore he puts out of court alike the issues of subsequent history and the prejudices of Churches and sects. He demands the plain truth although cherished texts go overboard, and for perspicuity he will pay even the price of a verbose paraphrase. If any existent grandeur or rhythmical beauty in the original can be reproduced, it is a point gained, but the *caveat* is paramount, that there be no sacrifice of fidelity.

We scarcely need go further to show that in our thinking the Companies of Revisers attempted the impossible. The scholars who met in the Jerusalem Chamber were fitted for a nobler task than tinkering up the Version of 1611 for the populace, under the restrictions of the Canterbury House of Convocation. Many educated persons desire an accurate

1611; R.V. for the new Revised Version; LXX. for the Septuagint Translation of 285 B.C. (?); Vulg. for Jerome's Vulgate Version, cir. 405 A.D. We use square brackets [ ] in preference to italics for the parts of a translation not in the original.

and intelligible translation of both Scriptures in bold English, without any unnecessary tinge of archaism. Never was there a better opportunity for producing it. The religious world desired merely an authoritative emendation of the worst mistranslations in the A.V. It would have been but a few weeks' work to effect it. Between the two stools the Revisers could not but fall. Their alterations will, to a large extent, remain "caviare to the general." The timorous conservatism of their O.T. will vex those who desired a translation on a level with modern erudition. Their pigeon-Jacobean diction in both O.T. and N.T. will always provoke disparaging comparison with the easy rhythm of our great English classic. The one permanently valuable outcome of this singular episode in the history of literature is Westcott and Hort's Greek Testament text, which is recognised by Continental critics as a credit to English scholarship.

This brings us to the first point in our survey of the O.T. Company's labours. The task of *textual* emendation they have frankly declined. Palpable misreadings remain. Conjectural emendation is not admitted, and the witness of the LXX. and other Versions to a different text in all but a few cases finds expression only in a side-note, which is of course valueless where the book is read aloud, and which may not always be printed. These side-notes, we may remark, generally suggest that the Company did not quite know its own mind. So far as they concern translation, they doubtless often indicate what the more scholarly minority would have put in the Version. Often, however, they are quite unnecessary. Of this more anon. The Preface tells us that our knowledge is "not at present such as to justify any attempt at an entire reconstruction of the text on the authority of the Versions." "In some few instances" (which might have been tabulated) "a reading has been adopted on the authority of the Ancient Versions":

but the broad rule is—servile adhesion to the Massoretic text, and to the vowel-points. Here and there the “Kri” or Massoretic emendation rightly finds a place in the translation, as in Isa. ix. 3; xxx. 32; Ps. c. 3. But these emendations were of course familiar to every Hebraist, and the English reader could have found them in the A.V. margin. The Revisers thus assume quite a different standpoint from the other Company, which gave to the world, not a new translation only, but a new Greek Testament. In this regard the Revised N.T. is on a level with the scholarship of the day; the Revised O.T. is not.

It is only fair to admit that in this matter of textual criticism the responsibilities of the two Companies scarcely bear comparison. King James’ Version of the N.T. was taken from MSS. of small value and comparatively late date, and newly acquired access to the great uncial Codices rendered a revision of the Greek Text imperative. The O.T. perforce stands on a different footing. Its case stands thus. All our MSS. aim at giving with scrupulous accuracy the text of consonants finally determined by the Massorettes. Who were the Massorettes? The traditional account of them may be expressed in the words of Jehudah hal-Levi. “There were hundreds of thousands of them, generation after generation, for ever so many years, and the time of their commencement is not known to us.” Less partial writers are content with the view that certain Rabbis of Tiberias, cir. 500 A.D., effected a scrupulously exact recension of the Hebrew Bible, and that these were those Massorettes to whom the text owes its pretensions to finality. *Massora* only means “tradition.” We may of course imagine that “scribes” and “lawyers,” from the time of Ezra onwards, carefully guarded the Scripture text and its “traditional” variations of reading. But on this point nothing is known.<sup>1</sup> Nor do we know how the “wise

<sup>1</sup> We should add that the Talmudists (dating perhaps from the 3rd century

men of Tiberias" (who are the persons we shall henceforth mean when we use this vague term Massorettes) proceeded, or whether their work was conservative or critical in character. It was at least sufficiently laborious. Every verse, every letter, was counted; and the numeration remains preserved by the aid of a *memoria technica*. The vowel-points were added somewhat later, and have less pretension to sacrosanctity. Two systems of vowels were devised. The Babylonian survives in the Codex Petropolitanus of A.D. 916. That of Tiberias, which has entirely superseded the other, exists (perhaps has been inserted) in the less known Cambridge MS. *Mn.* 5. 27, which claims the early date 7th of Adar, A.D. 856. But MSS. may go to the winds in this problem of textual criticism. The original Massoretic text may be got by their aid, but what then? It is a far cry from cir. 500 A.D. to the dates of even the latest O.T. writers.

Ancient Versions—Greek, Chaldee, and Latin—take us much nearer to the O.T. times. For instance there is the LXX. which may have been begun in 285 B.C. But as the Revisers hint, much remains to be done before we can say with precision what text the LXX. translators had before them. Sometimes a variation is in one MS. of the LXX., not in another. Sometimes it may be deemed a late critical emendation. Why, we ask here, did not some of the Company work out a scholarly recension of the LXX. with a full account of the state of each book? It is not likely we shall ever have better material: the occasion was suitable; and the men were not wanting.

To cut our argument short,—in the textual criticism of the O.T. we are thrown back to an unusual degree on internal evidences, and the dictates of common sense. Conjecture suggests that the Massorettes did their work *more Judaico*—

A.D.) have many of the *lectiones defectivæ*, etc., afterwards stereotyped by the Massorettes. The O.T. text as quoted in the Talmud agrees in the main with that of the Massorettes.

that they were no critics, but merely servile copyists of a text already corrupt in some places. Ought we to retain these corruptions when they are palpable, when moreover, as is sometimes the case, the LXX. or Targum indicates a preferable text. The Revisers say "Yes," but they speak half-heartedly. "The time is not ripe," they hint. But when will it be? In this regard, that absence of fixed scholarly principle which is the inherent vice of Committee-work, becomes noticeable. The Revisers are not wholly against emendation; *e.g.* in Ps. lix. 9, they rely on the Greek versions, and boldly and rightly alter the Massoretic ׁע, "his strength," to ׁעׁ, "my strength." But in other passages where emendation is quite as necessary, and where it has equally authoritative sanction, the old text is retained without comment.

Here are some of the emendations<sup>1</sup> for which we claim a moral certainty. They would be admitted, we think, by all Hebraists not working under the tutelage of the "Revision Committee of Convocation," and we deeply regret that this opportunity of giving them a sanction has been neglected.

Lev. xi. 14, proscribes the eating of *two* birds, the "kite" ראה, and the "falcon" איה. But the law in Deut. xiv. 13 gives *three* birds, *i.e.* it includes with the "falcon" and the "kite" (here spelt ריה), what the A.V. and R.V. agree to call the "glede." The Hebrew is ראה. This word is wanting in the Samaritan Codex and LXX., and but for this passage it would be unknown to the Hebrew language. In view of the misleading similarity of ר and ׁר is not its origin plain? A scribe noticed the divergent spelling ריה and wrote at the side of his MS. an explanatory ראה. It was easy for a later scribe to misread the word as ראה, and

<sup>1</sup> In these passages we retain the R.V. translations. We of course take no notice of its side-notes, which we cannot allow to discount the final decision the Revisers lay before the public in their text. By that they must stand or fall. In most of these passages, however, the side-notes say nothing to our purpose.

incorporate it in the text as a third unclean bird. We are convinced the most lax of Jews never infringed the Torah by eating a ראה.

In Joshua ix. 12, the Gibeonites who gained compassion by artifice use the verb הוצייר, "took for provision." This verb-form occurs nowhere else; but is quite unimpeachable, since the cognate substantive denoting "provision" occurs in vv. 5, 14. But in v. 1, we have a verb הוצייר, otherwise unknown. The R.V. says that the Gibeonites "made as if they had been ambassadors." We need scarcely claim our support here from the LXX., Targum, and Vulgate. Plainly ו and ו have again been confounded. The verb of verse 12 should be substituted, and the rendering "took provision for themselves" given.

1 Sam. xvii. 12. The text gives an expression strange to Hebrew usage: "the man came among men (בא באנשים) for an old man in the days of Saul." Eliding one letter we have an ordinary idiom: Jesse "was in the days of Saul an old man *stricken in years* (בא בשנים)." Here we notice the characteristic half-heartedness of the R.V. Probably the absurd rule requiring a majority of two-thirds of the quorum prohibited a straightforward textual emendation. Yet there was a wish to give the true meaning. So we have (without comment), "the man was an old man in the days of Saul, *stricken* [in years] *among men*," which we hold to be an impossible rendering of the Massoretic text.

2 Sam. vi. 5. David and the Israelites play before the Lord "on all manner of [instruments made of] fir wood." The expression is strange; "on all fir trees" would be the literal meaning of בכל עצי ברזים. But the parallel passage, 1 Chron. xiii. 8, has in lieu thereof, בכל עו ובשרים, "with all their might, even with songs." This is clearly the true, the other the corrupted text. Similarly David, a few verses afterwards, dances before the Lord בכל עו, "with all his might."

2 Sam. viii. 13 wrongly states that it was the "Syrians" (אַרִיִּים) who were defeated in the Valley of Salt. In 1 Chron. xviii. 12 and Ps. lx., title, it is the "Edomites" (אֲדוֹמִים). Edom was defeated in the same locality (which was probably on its borders) by Amaziah, 2 Kings xiv. The fact that there was a contemporaneous war with Syria has, we know, suggested an elaborate emendation here, to include both nationalities. But we hold there is no other mistake than the familiar confusion of ך and ך, and we have the LXX. on our side. But at all events scholars are agreed that it was Edom who was defeated in the Valley of Salt, not Syria. Why should the R.V. perpetuate a historical blunder?

2 Sam. ix. 11, illustrates the common confusion of the letters ך and ך. It is hopeless to invent the words ["said the king"] in order to give sense to שלחני, "my table." Read שלחני, and all is plain. Mephibosheth "was eating at his table as one of the king's sons." So LXX. "at David's table."

Considering the state of the text of Samuel, we marvel that the R.V. does not even notice the LXX.'s reading in xxiv. 13, which makes the story agree with 1 Chron. xxi. 12. There is no proof it is an emendation; and if it be, it is a good one. The story in the archetypal copy was doubtless that David had the choice of *three* years' famine, three months' war or three days' pestilence. The symmetry of the alternatives is obvious, and the reading "*seven* years' famine" in Samuel may be due to the corruption of the numeral ך to ך. Perhaps the tradition of the "*seven* years' famine" in Joseph's days facilitated the error.

2 Sam. xxiv. 23, should certainly run, "All these things did Araunah give unto the king." The attempts to deal with המלך ("as a king," A.V., "O king," R.V.) are futile. LXX. and Vulg. have it not, and it is plainly an interpolation. Doubtless למלך was written twice by some careless



scribe, and הַמֶּלֶךְ was a subsequent bad emendation, of the kind noticed in Deut. xiv. 13.

At the end of Ps. xviii. the R.V. retains "He will be our guide [even] *unto death.*" Hebraists have yet to learn that by any straining עַל מוֹת can mean "unto death." It is plain that LXX. and Targum read the one word עֲלֵמוֹת which survives in some MSS. Both versions failed however to give a satisfactory account of this word, which indeed cannot be treated as an integral part of the verse. It is doubtless the same musical sign that we have in Pss. ix., xlv., and the meaning is simply "on maiden voices," or "*soprano.*" The poem thus ends with the words "He it is that shall guide us." As Pss. xlv. -xlviii. probably celebrate one and the same victory, it is natural that the triplet has the same musical sign at beginning and end.

In all these passages we think an unfettered translator would emend the text, noting the Massoretic reading as a corruption. Equally useful emendations should be made elsewhere, *e.g.* in Ps. xxv. 17; Isa. v. 17; Exod. vii. 16. There are also numerous corruptions of names and numbers to which we may allude hereafter. But we must now pass to another phase of the question. How should variant recensions of a speech or poem be treated? The R.V. leaves them as they stand; and perhaps a translation of higher aim would do the same, save where the text gave mere nonsense. This question however is of a very suggestive character, and its study scarcely tends to increase our faith in the Massoretic text. The most noted duplicate recensions are those of David's poem in 2 Sam. xxii. and Ps. xviii. Ps. liii. is also a duplicate of Ps. xiv., and Pss. lvii. lx., are interwoven in the single piece Ps. cviii. We have also two recensions of the prayer of Hezekiah and Isaiah's answer (2 Kings xix.; Isa. xxxvii.).

Now comparing such duplicates, we find variations. Sometimes they may be deemed intentional. But the

merest tyro can often see that they are due to a confusion of letters originating in similarity of shape or sound. Thus, comparing 2 Sam. xxii. and the Psalter's recension of the same poem, we find the following suggestive divergences—  
 וירא “and was seen,” וירא “and did fly”; חשרת מים “gathering of waters”, חשקת מים “darkness of waters”; ים “sea”, מים “waters”; ויתר דרכי “and guideth in his way”, ויתר דרכי “and maketh my way”; ארקים “stamp them”, ארקים “cast them out”; תשמרני “hast kept me”, תשימני “hast made me.”  
 It is far out of our province to reconstruct the original text of this poem: we only point out that in all the cases we have cited one of the two variants is *certainly wrong*. The shock of finding the text so manifestly unsettled in a case where we have the rare advantage of a duplicate recension is to some extent lessened by the fact that 2 Samuel is exceptionally corrupt. The variations of Pss. xiv., liii., on the other hand, may be considered for the most part intentional. But the theory of intention cannot apply to such obvious “itacisms” as מצור and מבצר, in the corresponding vv. of Pss. lx., cviii. Nor, if we compare the duplicate accounts of Hezekiah's trouble, can we justify מלון, שרפה, and סחיש in 2 Kings xix. for מרום, שרמה, and שחים in Isa. xxxvii. Again, a critical conjecture is provoked in Jer. xlvi. 45, where the prophet incorporates two poetical passages from Numbers. For in Num. xxiv. 17 we have וקרקד כל בני שח, “And break down all the sons of tumult,” but in Jer. xlvi. 45, שאון וקרקד בני, “and the crown of the head of the tumultuous ones.” Our suspicion is strengthened when we find that the Samaritan Codex reads וקרקד in Num. xxiv. This was probably the reading current in Jeremiah's day. Translating שח, “tumult,” as R.V. rightly, for “Sheth” of A.V., we have a text in Num. xxiv. sufficiently similar to the Prophet's loose quotation.

But as we have already said, the Revisers were perhaps justified in leaving such passages uncorrected. The

duplicates can be compared ; a good sense is given in each case ; and a corruption in a poem or speech stands on a somewhat different footing from one in a narrative of fact. It is difficult to press this distinction : it might of course be asked, Is not prophecy historical rather than oratorical ? We will not here attempt a line of demarcation. We can only say that we could tolerate the retention of the variants just given with a note indicating their divergence, but that we absolutely resent the conservatism of the Revisers in the passages first enumerated. If this matter is looked at from the Canterbury Convocation's point of view, the fact presses that certain historical books of the O. T. are much read in social strata where the critical faculty is non-existent. Take the cases of David's alternatives of punishment, and of the battle in the Valley of Salt. For one person of this sort who will read the less interesting narrative of the Chronicler, ten will learn the corrupt account of 2 Samuel. Again, wisely or unwisely, the young in elementary schools are incited to "cram" such books as Samuel for diocesan or other examinations. The R.V. text will of course be regarded in such quarters as the highest flight of scholarship. Henceforward therefore, the historical inaccuracies alluded to will boast a kind of academical *imprimatur*. Those who are informed of them will wrongly conceive a low idea of the Revisers' qualifications.

The principles accepted by the Revisers in the matter of translation will be treated of hereafter. Our remaining space must be devoted to their general plan of arrangement. First we notice that the Titles of the Books, their sequence, and the division of Chapters, are exactly as in the Version of 1611. The requirements of the public demanded this, and there was nothing to be urged against it. The Titles—taken originally from the LXX.—are sufficiently appropriate. The arrangement of Books corresponds neither with any of the Hebrew divisions, nor with that of the

LXX. But it too is unimpeachable. Its threefold division is easily remembered and is less artificial than that of the Hebrew Bible, with its inexplicable *N'biim* and *C'hoobim*. With regard to Chapters, those in the Hebrew Bible do not always correspond with those of our A.V. But the true Jewish division is really quite a different one, and the "capitular" arrangement is of no antiquity. Cardinal Hugo de Santo Caro (cir. 1248), devised the chapters; in later times the Jews adopted them for controversial purposes. In our opinion the Jewish deviations are generally changes for the worse. Certainly in Isa. ix. and Job xli. the English capitular division is preferable. The verse-division, on the other hand, is purely Jewish, and is at least as old as the Massorettes. For its questionable reproduction in the N. T. we are indebted to the great editor Robert Stephens (1551). Apropos of verses, we notice with approval that our Revisers reproduce their metrical form in poetical passages.

While on this subject of arrangement, we notice two archaisms we would fain away with. First—Why should the English Bible and Prayer-Book remain the only works in which when a pronoun is used referring to God, it is *not* distinguished by a capital letter? Can it be that these publications remain behind the penny papers in point of reverence, from mere deference to the printers' usage in the sixteenth century? But our challenge is not on the point of reverence, but of perspicuity. In innumerable passages, were "Thy" printed for "thy," "His" for "his," etc., the uninitiated would understand what is now very obscure. Secondly—(to borrow the N.T. Revisers' own words on the verse question), "let any one consider for a moment the injurious effect that would be produced in some great standard work" by never using *inverted commas* for speeches and quotations. We might descant long on the great inconvenience these two *ἀρχαία ἔθη* cause. Take the Song of Solomon—what un instructed reader of the A. V. ever

succeeded in distinguishing the speeches? Nay, did not two noted scholars not along ago publish a mystical Commentary in which the words of the bride went into the mouth of the bridegroom, and *vice versa*? The fact that the Hebrew 2nd person has two genders of course differentiates the speeches in the actual book. The use of the sign “ ” would be bare justice to the perspicuity of the original. The strophe-arrangement of the R.V. in this particular book is a great boon, but even now there is danger of misunderstanding. The sign ‘ ’ should of course distinguish citations within a speech, and words put into another’s mouth. This would be of special service to many readers in the Book of Job, where by the way we notice one colloquy as wholly obscured to all but students for want of the inverted commas and capital letters. We mean the final dialogue of Jehovah and Job in xlii. 2-6. Similarly Hosea xiv. 8 is admitted to be a colloquy between Jehovah and Israel. How many clergymen read it as such? Were it printed thus in the R.V. all would see its signification,—Ephraim shall say, “What have I to do any more with idols?” “I have answered, and will regard him.” “I am like a green fir tree.” “From Me is thy fruit found.”—Again in Ps. ii. 12, commentators agree that it is Jehovah, not the “anointed,” whose wrath is threatened. This would be plain, had we “He” and “His,” for “he” and “his.”

We suppose the Revisers were to some extent hampered by the other Company’s treatment of such details; and here—to close this paper—we notice that the system of indicating quotations from the O.T. adopted by the N.T. Revisers was inexcusably bad. A needless pedantry marks “the metrical divisions of the Hebrew original;” yet if we look at the Revised O.T. (where if anywhere they should be marked), they are only indicated in the poetical passages. Worse still, this system is only pursued when the quotation extends to two lines. Thus, single-line quotations have to

be beaten up by the student ; while the more lengthy ones stand out like citations from a ballad-book. Worse yet, those indirect citations, so dear to all writers reared in Jewish modes of thought, are not indicated at all. We would venture a wager that ninety-nine out of a hundred educated Christians have yet to learn that the following originates in the Old Covenant, not in the Gospel—"If thine enemy hunger, feed him ; if he thirst, give him drink : for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head" (Prov. xxv. 21, 22 ; Rom. xii. 20). A like ignorance prevails in the matter of the saying, "Ye are a royal priesthood, a holy nation" (1 Pet. iii. 9). This we know to be used by polemical text-mongers as if overthrowing the Roman theory of an official hierarchy. They would probably be surprised to find that it comes from the Law of Moses (Exod. xix. 6). These interesting links between the two Covenants remain obscured to the public by a silly prejudice against adopting in a translated Bible the convenient usages of modern literature. To give another instance from the Revised N. T., the questionable alteration of "charity" to "love" might gain some adherents were it indicated that "love covereth all sins" stood long ago in the A. V. of Prov. x. 12 ; in fact that 1 Pet. iv. 8, is a loose citation, not an original Apostolic precept.

A. C. JENNINGS.

W. H. LOWE.

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*THE RESTORATION OF ORDER IN A CHURCH  
THREATENED WITH DISSOLUTION.*

*FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.*

NEARLY two years had passed since the Apostle Paul had vindicated the cause of Christian liberty in Galatia (early

<sup>1</sup> Written for the *EXPOSITOR* by Professor Godet, and translated by Mrs. Harwood-Holmden.