

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Expositor* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expositor-series-1.php

Him "who loved us and gave Himself for us," "who for us men and our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man," "who died, and rose, and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and the living." "Too good to be true" for mere guesses and hopes; not too good to be true for those for whom God withheld not His only Son; not too good to be true, in all its unimaginable wonder, if the Conqueror of death has been here "to seek and to save that which was lost." "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not, with Him, freely give us all things?"

R. W. CHURCH.

*THE REVISED VERSION OF THE OLD
TESTAMENT.*

THE BOOK OF PSALMS.—II.

MUCH has been said both for and against the marginal renderings of the Revised Version. Those who are familiar with the "poetical books" will beyond doubt agree that the margins are almost always justifiable, and often at least equal in value to the textual renderings. Would that they were more in number! There is a prismatic radiance in Hebrew poetry, and it is often next to impossible to determine with certitude between different forms of a single

These ends, and these for thee, was said
To undergo death in thy stead
In flesh like thine: so ran the tale.
What doubt in thee could countervail
Belief in it? Upon the ground
'That in the story had been found
'Too much love! How could God love so?'

vague idea, or interpretations of some group of words, the key to which is to be derived from the context. "Dante," said the great modern linguist Ticknor, "is a *mare magnum* of adventure, and every time I read him, I make, or think I make, new discoveries." This will often be the experience of the constant reader of the Hebrew Psalms; and when such "discoveries" commend themselves to others, it is only reasonable that an honourable place in the margin of a translation should be accorded them. The purely English reader is only too apt to suppose that a flowing translation indicates a clear original. Now a popular translation certainly ought to flow along with some ease; otherwise, instead of meaning too much, it will certainly to the common ear and eye mean too little. But the reader ought to be warned that the waters which seem so clear, are deep, and that the meaning of the text is not to be limited to that which can most easily be expressed in English. It is a trial no doubt to have to interweave text and margin, but the sacred poets count upon willingness to take trouble in their readers. It is toilsome enough to follow them in their original language. As Delitzsch remarks, the Oriental style reckons upon an equal intellectual acuteness in the reader or hearer (note on Ps. lxxii. 15).

Let us turn now to Ps. cxxxix. There are eight margins to this psalm in A.V.; eleven in R.V., of which only two are retained from A.V. The first is on v. 3, where וְרִיזָה, rendered "(Thou hast) searched out" in the text, is given more literally in the margin as "winnowest." A.V. also gives this margin, but in such a way as to indicate that it is not intended as a more literal but as an alternative rendering. Possibly therefore the old revisers would have admitted it into the text; at any rate, R.V.'s "searched out" (=scrutinized) is not sufficiently different from the "searched" of v. 1 to be a quite satisfactory substitute. Segond's French version (his book is doubtless familiar to

my readers¹) is here the worst that I have seen. Curiously enough, it agrees with the Peshitto, which here is certainly too "simple." Kamphausen's is bold, but it satisfies my own feeling: "Ich gehe oder liege, so durchschauest du es." The image is changed, but the sense not weakened. Purvey's "Thou hast enquerid" (It. *investigasti*) might have suggested a slight improvement on "searched out." The next margin is on *v.* 11; it is necessary to make a fine passage enjoyable. The text of R.V. runs: "Surely the darkness shall overwhelm me"—an infelicitous attempt to make the best of an impossible reading. The margin, "cover," is on no philological grounds justifiable as a rendering of שׂוֹפֵן, but as the equivalent of שׂוֹפֵן or עֵיפֵן, is justified by the verdict of many of the best scholars. This however brings us close up to the important question, Are conjectural emendations² admissible in a popular version? That they are so, at any rate in the margin, may be confidently urged in the interests of the sacred writers themselves. "Surely the darkness shall overwhelm me" is enough to condemn the rigid rules by which the Revisers were bound.

"Formed" and "knit me together" (marg. on *v.* 13) are pure gains. Such a collocation of words as, "For thou hast possessed my reins," is very unilluminative and insignificant as the introduction to the second half of the poem, and the simple comparison of that exquisite passage, Job x. 11 (R.V.), will justify to head and heart the description of God as the great artist of the body in the second margin. Whether the next alternative rendering will at once be found equally illuminative is doubtful, but a little study of

¹ I refer to Segond rather than to Reuss, because it has more distinctly the note of popularity. It has been printed in a beautiful and wonderfully cheap form at the Clarendon Press, Oxford.

² I assume that the *ἐπισκεπάζει* of Symmachus is but the equivalent of a conjectural emendation. It is clear that this translator had a sense of literature, and it was this sense which forced him to correct the received text.

the context will justify it. It surely must be confessed that the third and fourth lines of *v.* 16 in the text are not very forcible, and as for the second line, what right has a translator to supply "my members"? The sum of the matter is that the marginal rendering of the second and third lines gives a noble expression to the idea of the providential ordering of the course of time—an idea which we should be sorry to miss in this deeply spiritual psalm. It must be granted that the first and fourth lines do not fit in very well with the second and third. The best way to produce a connexion is perhaps that suggested by Hitzig and adopted in an improved form by Delitzsch. "In God's book a day was 'formed' (comp. Isa. xxii. 11) for every event in human history, and one of these pre-existent days was set apart for the final perfecting and birth of the once unperfect substance" (reading לִי, the Q'ri, instead of לָא, the K'thib). That even the best way is bad enough, I fully admit, but I am convinced, with Bickell, that there is both confusion and to a slight extent corruption in the text of *vv.* 15, 16. Some may accuse this conviction of "subjectivity." The word is often used in a bad sense; but a subjectivity which forms and disciplines and tests itself by critical methods and canons is nothing to be ashamed of. How many of our most respected traditions are ultimately based on the very questionable "subjectivity" of early students and copyists and translators!

I have no space to comment on the rendering of the last line of *v.* 16 in the Peshitto. In *v.* 19 R.V.'s marginal rendering is probably correct (comp. xcv. 7, R.V.), but it suggests emending סִירִי into יְסִירִי in company with the Peshitto and the Targum. "Utter thy name" in the next margin is not much more defensible than the textual rendering, but there is one great point in its favour that it enables us to justify the supplementary "thy name" in the second line of *v.* 20. Why it should be relegated to the

margin, I cannot say. The fact is that one word of the text in both lines of *v. 20* needs to be read differently. The true pronunciation of the textual reading מְרֹדֵד is *yamrūka*, rendered in R.V. marg. "rebel against thee"; this agrees with the versions of Theodotion, Origen's Quinta, and the recension of the Septuagint text represented by the Syro-Hexapla version.¹ For the margin on *v. 20 b* it can only be said that it emphasizes the probability of a corruption in the text. If it is difficult to believe that "utter thee" can be used for "utter thy name," in *v. 20 a*, it is still more difficult to satisfy oneself that "take in vain" can be used by a kind of double ellipsis for "take thy name in vain." The margin on *v. 21 b* follows the precedent set at *cxix. 158*. We have not in English as sonorous a word for "loathed" as אֶתְקִיטֵט. "Grief," *v. 24* marg. A.V. and R.V., is a strikingly preferable alternative to the feeble paraphrase in the text.

It was a great opportunity missed when the revision of the Psalter was sent out with so few margins. But those which there are, deserve, as I have said, the most attentive study. How fine, for instance, is the literal rendering of a phrase in *lxii. 1 a*, "is silent unto God"! Why was not the whole line reconstructed so as to preserve the essence of the psalmist's own phrase? For instance, "only towards God my soul turneth in silence." Kamphausen far outdoes our version; "Fürwahr, zu Gott ist still meine Seele" is his rendering of *v. 1 a*; "Fürwahr, an Gott gib still dich hin, meine Seele," his still more delightful version of *v. 5 a*. I have mentioned Kamphausen once already, because he has evidently made a study of the problems of translation. I have no wish, however, to disregard a recent English translator, who aspires, somewhat like Kamphausen, to

¹ Of the Ambrosian codex containing this version, Cornill remarks that it "is one of our most precious treasures, and to the critic simply indispensable" (*Das Buch des Propheten Ezechiel*, p. 49).

produce a genuine modern and yet faithful version,—I refer to Dr. De Witt of New Brunswick.¹ But his renderings are generally too bold, too individual, to be mentioned in connexion with a revised ecclesiastical version. Here his rendering is striking, though still slightly open to criticism. “Only be silent before God, my soul,” is his rendering of lxii. 1. He adopts Bickell’s correction דִּיִּם (comp. v. 6, Heb.), and for the sake of English idiom substitutes “before” for “unto.” The objection to “before” is that to those who love to use old phrases in the old meanings (like old songs with their own old tunes), to be “silent before God” means to wait for the coming of Jehovah to judgment (see Hab. ii. 20; Zech. ii. 13), which is very different from the psalmist’s meaning. It is true that this also applies to R.V.’s not felicitously expressed margin to lxv. 1 a.

Among other useful margins, let me notice lxix. 20, “sore sick” for “full of heaviness.” This is a typical specimen of a small but most thankworthy class of alterations. For another I might point to vi. 2, where R.V. rightly and most poetically substitutes “withered away” for “weak” (Segond, “sans force”); with more boldness on the part of the Revisers, the phraseology of the psalmists would in many similar points have recovered that freshness and pliancy—that which their own tongue expresses by the untranslatable רִעַן—*riʿan*—which makes it sometimes appear like a budding plant in the springtide of Palestine. Even at a cost to the ear, these changes ought to be introduced in a faithful translation; the question of course is whether a popular and

¹ This American work is entitled, *Praise-Songs of Israel: a New Rendering of the Book of Psalms*. (New York, 1884.) It represents almost always the Massoretic text. Its style is glowing and clear; it is thoroughly modern, and for that reason does not shrink from paraphrase. Exuberant friends of the author have judged my own version of the Psalms by Dr. De Witt’s canons of translation and of Hebrew scholarship. This does not hinder me from greatly admiring his work.

ecclesiastical version is justified in aiming at a high degree of faithfulness. What we have received from the Revisers is a compromise; let us at least be thankful for every step towards a higher ideal of translation. Teachers of the Bible will be helped even by small changes like that in lxix. 20, which throws a fresh ray of light on the psalmist's conception of human nature. Such writers and thinkers could not be satisfied with a refined spiritualism; "Leiblichkeit ist das Ende der Wege Gottes" is a motto which accurately expresses the conception of pure Hebraism. Body and soul or spirit are, in their combination, equally essential to life, and the central organ of both is the heart. In lxix. 20, whether or not we accept the late Dr. Weir's correction, (קַיִרָה) אָנִי־שׁ הוּיָא, it is certain that it is not merely in his "moral" or "spiritual" life but in his entire nature that the psalmist feels a sore and scarcely curable pain (comp. Jer. xv. 18, "why is my wound grievous (אָנִי־שָׂרָה), refusing to be healed?"). So, again, in lxxiii. 21 we may be thankful for the margin "*Heb.* was in a ferment," which restores to the couplet the full parallelism or thought-rhythm. Second, strange to say, is bolder, and renders the whole verse very happily, "Lorsque mon cœur s'aigrissait, et que je me sentais percé dans les entrailles." Fancy a sufferer, of the school of the author of *Job*, saying that "his heart was grieved"! And then turn to that shortest but most vigorous of the Asaphite psalms—the 76th. How vivid are the marginal notes on vv. 2, 3: "covert" for "tabernacle," "lair" for "dwelling-place," and "fiery shafts" or "lightnings" for "arrows"! I do not indeed believe that the two former are correct. "Covert" suggests a comparison with Jer. xxv. 38, and it is against the analogy of xxvii. 5, xxxi. 21 to suppose that Jehovah is here compared to a lion leaving its "covert" or "lair" to attack the enemy. No; *Shalem* (Jerusalem) suggests the thought of *shalôm* (peace); Zion and its temple are "a pavilion for

shade from the heat, and for a refuge and a shelter from storm and from rain" (Isa. iv. 6). But those who are sick of the word "tabernacle" would have welcomed, at any rate, "covert" into the text. Local colouring is introduced at least into the margin of lxxiv. 15, though to "ever-flowing" my own ear asks for "streams" rather than "rivers" as a companion; Dr. De Witt has "and (didst) dry up the rivers ever-flowing" (improving the rhythm of R.V. by reversing the order of the two important words). The love of alliteration has been condescended to in the preceding line, where "fountain and flood" still remains. When Sunday-school teachers accompany their clergymen to Palestine, "fountain and torrent" will be the only tolerable rendering.

In the R.V. of lxxxiii. 14 the change of "wheel" into "whirling dust" has the authority of most modern critics (see on Isa. xvii. 13). Hupfeld however still adheres to "wheel," and Milton's striking paraphrase deserves on poetical grounds to be read.

More marginal renderings might certainly have been expected on Ps. lxviii. The most illuminative one is doubtless that on v. 13,—“When ye lie among the sheepfolds, (it is as) the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her pinions with yellow gold.” “Lying among the sheepfolds” is a current phrase for a quiet country life (Gen. xlix. 14; Judg. v. 16); the changeful hues of the dove's wings are an emblem either of the rich clothing of the Israelites after their success, or more generally of the varied happiness of Israel enjoying the sunshine of prosperity. Readers of Miss Whately's *Ragged Life in Egypt* will remember a striking passage on the lovely effects of light on the wings of pigeons on the housetops at Cairo. One of these effects is when their outspread wings catch the bright glow of the sun's slanting rays; another when they wheel round, and are seen against the light. That great alchemist, the sun of Egypt,

makes their plumage alternately appear like "yellow gold" and like molten silver. Dr. De Witt takes the same view of the construction, but seems to explain the silver and gold of the rich booty which fills the camps. His version is worth quoting for its clearness and ease,—

"When ye are in your camps among the sheepfolds,
They are as a dove's wings, covered with silver,
And her pinions with yellow gold."

The view of the sense implied in this rendering connects the verse excellently well with the preceding one. But rich clothing, as we know, was not the least coveted part of the booty (comp. Josh. vii. 21; Judg. v. 30; 2 Sam. i. 24), and certainly the dove was a symbol of Israel (comp. Dr. C. H. H. Wright, *Biblical Studies*, p. 45), not of Israel's camps.

But I must draw my remarks on the marginal renderings to a close. A few more brief references, and I will pass on. At xc. 4, we find the alternative versions, "when it is past," and "when it passeth." The latter gives a more delicate shade of meaning. Time future seems long to us; time past, short. Standing on an imaginary bridge between the old day and the new, what a "span long" seems the old day as it vanishes; what an ample space stretches before us in what we can hardly yet call "to-day"! Next, let us be duly thankful for the margin at xci. 9. The insertion of the supplementary word אָמַרְתָּ, "hast said," simple as it seems, is due to the combined thought of critics of different periods, from Theodoret to Hupfeld and Riehm. The psalmist alludes to his noble confession in v. 2. This is probably the second word which has fallen out of the text אֲשֶׁר־י being sorely missed at the head of v. 1, which, by the canons of "subjective" (?) criticism should run, "Happy is the man that dwelleth . . . that abideth," comp. R.V. margin). The two remaining margins belong to Ps. xciv., a psalm which, as Bible-students know, is specially valuable for the history of religious thought, and indeed, in Leibnitz's

view, contained the kernel of his own philosophical argument against atheism. The bad side of the rule, requiring a two-thirds majority, comes out in the fact that the correction "instructeth" for "chastiseth" is thrust aside into the margin. The change however is urgently needed. The argument is not, God chastiseth the nations; consequently will not leave these bad men unpunished; but, God educates or instructs all mankind, consequently He will also chastise men (to whatever race they belong) when they require it. The Divine education of the human race is both "in word and in power"; it implies not only rewards but punishments. At *v.* 19 in the same psalm suffice it to point out the beautiful and suggestive margin, "doubts" for "thoughts."

Looking at the new renderings which fortunately have found admission into the text, I may venture, at this distance of time from the completion of the work, to recognise explicitly the great value of many of them to the student. Instead however of "traversing the palaces" (xlvi. 13 marg.), which the Revisers have sought to restore and beautify, I will but "mark well" a window here and a projecting bastion there, which may serve to represent the rest. I need not of course always coincide with the architect. Among small but not insignificant changes, it is worth noticing "only" for "truly," in lxii. 1. It was a mark of piety towards King James's revisers to make the change; for obviously אֵל־אֱלֹהִים in *v.* 1 (2) and אֵל לַאֱלֹהִים in *v.* 5 (6) require the same rendering. It is surprising however that "surely" was retained in *v.* 9 (10). The particle אֵל occurs six times in this psalm, and *v.* 9 is now the only verse in which it is not rendered "only." Dr. De Witt, with many others, does in fact render *v.* 9 *a*, "Only a breath are the children of men"; and so Delitzsch. An excellent change is made in a psalm very familiar to Anglican church-goers—the 67th, where (*v.* 6) "Then shall

the earth yield her increase" becomes "The earth hath yielded her increase," which is not a "prophetic perfect," as many with Symmachus in pre-critical times have taken it. As Calvin points out, the poet regards the recent beautiful harvest as a pledge of the rich spiritual increase anticipated elsewhere in the psalm. In lxviii. 12, an English past tense becomes a present, "The Lord giveth the word" (for "gave"), though without a break between *v.* 10 and *v.* 11 it is perhaps difficult to make this appear natural to an English reader. In lxix. 4, there is a delicate touch revealing the hand of the good grammarian in the marginal "had to restore," which should have been noticed earlier. Tact and scholarship are shown in the improved rendering of lxxiv. 19 (the archaic termination, *-ath*, puzzled A.V.). A noteworthy change of tense occurs at lxxvii. 3 (present for past); the effect is to make *v.* 3 parallel to *v.* 1. *V.* 2 shows that the psalmist has passed out of the dark cloud, and recalls to mind the sad complaints which he uttered "in the day of his trouble"; comp. "and I said" (*v.* 10). I would deprecate being supposed to hold this view to be the correct one, but admit that the psalm is a difficult one to grasp in its unity.

Among other changes made in deference to improved notions of grammar, the student will notice that in line 3 of lxviii. 4, where "by his name Jah" gives place to "his name is Jah" (Dr. De Witt boldly, "I AM is His Name"), and that in *v.* 18, line 2, "for men" (with the odd margin, "*Heb.* in the man") becomes "among men." In xc. 12, "that we may get us an heart of wisdom," though unnecessarily rough in expression, accurately represents the pointed text. The new rendering in civ. 4 is surely a proof of the superiority of the Revisers to theological prejudice. Obviously but small credit is due to them for this; we have all learned by this time that the grammar and the lexicon are of no party. Preachers

will no doubt find out this text.—Regard for grammar is conspicuous in the new rendering of cix. 17. A too flowing translation would have checked some useful questions on the part of the student. “He loved cursing, and it came unto him,” that is, according to the anticipations of a strict believer in God’s moral government. “It came,” for the germ of punishment is in the sin; “when Ephraim offended by Baal,” says Hosea (xiii. 1), “he died.” In cxxii. 2, “Our feet are standing,” revolutionizes the psalm in a most happy sense. In cxxvi. 6, a lovely passage has received an accurate though not a charming version. In cxxxiii. 3, the innocent rationalizing of A.V. is removed.

But an important subject remains. It would not be right to conclude without some reference to the readings adopted in the text or recorded in the margin, which differ from the Massoretic text. Of course, the younger generation of critics will not think their number sufficient; but even by these few a great principle is recognised, and every serious Bible-student is the gainer. Now and then such readings have actually found their way into the text of the Revised Version. Thus in viii. 1, line 3, we find “who hast set thy glory upon the heavens.” This agrees with the rendering of the Targum, the Peshitto, Symmachus, and Jerome, and rationally viewed, requires an emendation of the text. It has, I know, been defended on grammatical grounds as a rendering of the text. Hengstenberg is of opinion that we might render literally, “Thou, in respect of whom the giving (not, the giving of) thy glory is above the heavens”; but the insight of this too stiff traditionalist is not equal to that of Hitzig, who remarks, “So thinks and writes no rational man.” The four ancient authorities must either have read נָתַתָּה (or נִתְתָּה) in their copies of the Hebrew, or have made a conjectural emendation, not in my opinion a very felicitous or poetical one. In xvi. 2 a less violent change has been made on the authority of the

Septuagint, the Vulgate, and the Peshitto. The Hebrew text, as pointed, reads "Thou (fem.) hast said," which is supposed to mean, "Thou hast said, O my soul." Hitzig and Ewald, indeed, reject this supposition. According to them, אַתָּה אָמַרְתְּ is to be explained by an Aramaizing apocope. This seems very doubtful, when we find the Targum actually paraphrasing, "Thou sayest, O my soul." It is only fair to infer from the Septuagint translator's *Εἶπα τῷ Κυρίῳ*, that in his copy the affirmative ' of 1 sing. perf. was clearly visible. It must be remembered too that on the monument of King Mesha -*ti* is regularly written in full. The Revisers therefore were perfectly justified in emending the text; "O my soul, thou hast said unto the LORD," was a survival of that "atomistic" mode of handling the Scriptures, which takes little account of sense and context. I have already spoken of the next verse ("As for the saints . . ., they are," etc.), in which the Revisers emend the text by omitting the ׀ prefixed to אֲדִירִי. I see that this has the authority of De Wette, who renders (perhaps with more insight into Hebrew idiom¹), "Die Heiligen, welche im Lande, sind die Herrlichen, an denen ich all mein Lust habe." It is difficult to know what else the Revisers were to do. Their version yields a fair sense (with a little pressing), viz., that those who are faithful to the Holy God are in the psalmist's eyes more fitly styled "excellent" or "noble" than those false-hearted "princes" who have betrayed their country and their faith. I do not know a more interesting problem than that presented by this verse, and so make no apology for returning to the passage in a fresh connexion:

Several of the more remarkable of the various readings in

¹ Ewald, *Lehrbuch der hebr. Sprache*, § 310a, points out that the rendering "quoad" for—׀ in cases like xvi. 3 is too emphatic. It does no doubt point to something which the writer or speaker would have us not overlook, but so gently that in our languages it can only be expressed by the tone.

the margin (*e.g.* that in xxii. 16) have been so abundantly disowned of late that further comment seems superfluous. A slight change at xxxvii. 36 is worth noticing, because it is typical of a large class of scribe's errors. Who can doubt that **וַיַּעֲבֹר** should rather be **וַיֵּעָבֶר**? A similar error of the ear occurs in Zech. iv. 2 and other places (comp. *Grätz, Psalmen*, p. 135, and my crit. note on Isa. li. 19). In xlix. 19, the Revisers have altered the Massoretic text by substituting **יְבוֹא** for **תְּבוֹא**. "Thou shalt go," and "It (*i.e.* the soul) shall go," are both obviously impossible; the mistake was caused by the close neighbourhood of a 2 pers. fem. imperfect. The margin might have mentioned that the Septuagint has *Ἐἰσελεύσεται*, which it would be absurd to interpret of the soul. On lx. 4 there is a marginal note which to all intents and purposes records a various reading.

"Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee,
That they may flee from before the bow,"

is an incomplete sentence. The only interpretation, at once easy and striking, is that of Ewald, who, however, fails to make it self-evident by not seeing that a little word (**אֵד**) has dropped out. The sense is, "Thou gavest us indeed a banner, when we took the field for the true religion; but what a banner! Far from being a rallying-point for God's warriors, it seemed as if only intended to scatter us in flight." The characteristic word-play on **נֵס** "banner" and **נִסַּס** "to put to flight" reminds us of one in a neighbouring psalm (lvi. 9). In lxxiii. 10, both text and margin seem to me to presuppose a doubtful view of **שׁוּב**, against which it is enough to refer to Delitzsch's note. Dr. De Witt's version of the passage is as follows,—

"Therefore God's people turn away after them,
And enjoy the waters of a full stream."

This is characteristically flowing, but could hardly be re-translated into the Massoretic Hebrew!

In some degree no doubt every translation which is at all readable is now and then open to this criticism. The R.V. for instance of lxxii. 15 leaves the reader in happy ignorance of the awkwardness of the first line in the Hebrew:—“And they shall live” (וַיִּחְיֶינָה) looks very much like a textual emendation! The object of course is to show that the king is not the subject of וַיִּחְיֶינָה; but is not this an exegetical prejudice? I do not mean to assert that the line as it stands can be translated so as to give a sense.

The R.V. of cxvi. 11 also *appears* to presuppose an emendation of the vowel-points. “All men are a lie” can only be כָּל־הָאָדָם כֶּזֶב (see lxii. 9, Heb. 10). A regard for the weaknesses of popular exegesis may perhaps excuse the alteration. “A lie” means “a disappointing object of trust”; “liars” may more easily be misinterpreted. But to excuse the change is not to justify it.

I need scarcely pause to defend “we are his” for “not we ourselves” in c. 3. In this case, the Hebrew margin is manifestly superior to the Hebrew text. The antithesis, “he, not we,” is certainly possible; but taking this line in connexion with the next, and with the parallel passage xcv. 7*a*, there can be no doubt that the antithetic reading should be rejected.—The rendering “from the south” in cvii. 3 is retained from A.V., together with the margin, “*Heb.* from the sea.” It would have perhaps been more in character, had the Revisers substituted “sea” for “south,” considering that, as Hupfeld remarks, “כְּמִים can in accordance with usage mean nothing but ‘from the west.’” The same difficulty has to be met in Isa. xlix. 16.—The reading recorded on cx. 3 is really a boon. Strong in external authority, it is still stronger by its suitability to the context. We have now, in the same verse, both the time and the place of the mustering (comp. lxxxvii. 1, cxxxiii. 3). ג and ג are confounded, as Isa. viii. 9 and often. See also 2 Chron. xx. 21, where not the warriors, but the singers who

preceded them, are said, if the margin of R.V. is correct, to "praise in the beauty of holiness," *i.e.* in holy attire. On the gain from adopting the margins at cxix. 128, there cannot be two opinions; and those at cxxxix. 20, cxlii. 5, well deserve attention. Much more might have been done by the Revisers; but that so much should have been done by a company, is matter for thankful surprise. At this distance of time from the completion of the task, it is not difficult to look upon the stately volumes of the Revision with a considerable degree of impartiality.

T. K. CHEYNE.

EZRA.

In the first six chapters of the book of Ezra some account is given of the fortunes of the Jews under Cyrus and Darius. Between the sixth and the seventh chapters a gap of sixty years is overleaped, and the narrative is resumed with an account of events in the reign of Artaxerxes, who acceded in the year 465 B.C. In the seventh year of this monarch's reign Ezra received from him the amplest commission to inquire into the affairs of the returned captives, and to make such regulations in their favour as might approve themselves to his judgment. Ezra was allowed to take with him to Jerusalem as many of his countrymen as chose to return. He was amply furnished with the means of journeying in comfort, and besides carried handsome gifts to the Temple. And to the imperial firman were added the remarkable words: "Whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven: for why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons?" It has very naturally been suggested that in these words we may see an indication that Artaxerxes suspected that the troubles of the