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His commandments," as the sum of human thought and life. "I find no God; I know no future." Yes! Paul long ago told us that if we were "without Christ" we should "have no hope, and be without God in the world." And cultivated Europe is finding out that to fling away Christ and to keep a faith in God or in a future life is impossible.

But if we will take Him for our Saviour by simple trust, He will give us His own presence in our hearts, and infuse there a hope full of immortality. If we live in close communion with Him, we shall need no other assurance of an eternal life beyond than the deep, calm blessedness of the imperfect fellowship of earth which must needs lead to and be lost in the everlasting and completed union of heaven.

ALEXANDER MACLAREN.

THE REVISED VERSION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

A CRITICAL ESTIMATE.

SECOND PAPER.

WE were somewhat surprised to find that the O. T. Revisers did not leave the Proper Names as they stood in the A. V. They have tried to carry out the A. V.'s system of transliteration "with somewhat greater consistency," leaving unchanged "names which by usage have become English." The changes will probably not be much noticed. We have Ije-abarim for Iye-abarim, Habazziniah for Habaziniah, Kir-heres for Kir-haresh, Jeshurun for Jesurun. Azareel becomes Azarel, which seems no nearer the true pronunciation A'zarêl. Kiriath-jearim is in equal danger of mispronunciation. If conservatism forbade Kiryath, the Kirjath of A. V. should have been left. And why, if it was right to

alter Chittim to Kittim, does *ch* still stand for *k* in Chebar, Maschil, and Maachah?

The rule of the N. T. Company was to amend only "persons and places mentioned in the O.T.," as in substituting Jeremiah for Jeremy, Isaiah for Esaias, Elijah for Elias. The O. T. Company at least did wisely not to return the compliment in the case of Hebrew names recurring in the N. T. and known best in that connexion. It is a help to the reader to distinguish the "John" and "Ananias" of the O.T. as Johanan and Hananiah, and ignore the identity of nomenclature. The truth is, this subject of names has long passed out of range of scientific treatment. The Saviour's name is everywhere known as "Jesus," "Jesu," "Yesu," "Isa," etc., instead of *Yeshu*, or *Yeshua*. Yet in English the alternative form "*Joshua*" survives, and its identification with "Jesus" devolves on the commentator. The chosen people is "Israel," not *Jisrael*. Consistency would demand "*Izreel*" for *Jezreel*, and so this name was spelt in the Genevan Bible of 1560. This version, we notice, takes credit for "restoring many of the . . . Ebrew names to the true writing and first originall whereof they have their signification." Our search has only been rewarded by "*Izhak*," "*Jaakob*," and "*Izreel*" aforesaid, three as unacceptable corrections as could be made. The rule in 1611, on the other hand, was that names should "be retained as nigh as may be accordingly as they are vulgarly used." Vulgar use meant approximately the Vulgate's use. The *sh* in names was, on such principles, a fertile source of confusion. In familiar cases the Vulgate's *s* had been popularized; thus "Moses" still represents *Mosheh*. But English tongues had not faithfully endorsed the mispronunciation of the Ephraimites of old. The same verb or noun accordingly appeared in different derivatives now with *s*, now with *sh*, and the common origin of many names is thus still obscured to the English reader. Thus

the A.V. retains the *sh* in Shimei, Ishmael, Shemaiah, but gives *s* in Simeon and Ismaiah, all derivatives of *shâma*, "to hear." The N.T. form "Solomon" stands as the English equivalent of Sh'lomoh; yet the kindred names Shallum and Shelemiah survive in true Hebrew garb. We retain "Shem" (albeit perversely calling his descendants' tongue "Semitic"), and elide the *sh* in Samuel, which is probably from the very same root. The malevolent scribe remains Shimshai, but Shimshon the mighty judge is disguised as Samson. Chavvah, "the mother of all living," is hopelessly severed from the cognate verb, noun, and adjective, and we almost regret that the suggestive Ζωή of LXX. in Gen. iii. 20 ever gave place to *Eva*, whence Vulg. "Heva" and our "Eve." In Jude v. 11 "Core" (usually read as a monosyllable) was bravely re-identified by the N.T. Revisers with "Korah." Was it impossible to favour further "the lively phrase of the Ebrewe," and give "Bilaam" in the same verse, as a lead to the O.T. Company? Certainly three grand chapters in Numbers are spoilt for public reading by the gratuitous consonancy of Balaam and Balak in repeated juxtaposition. The rhythm is marred, and the *ιδιότρης* gets "mixed" between the king and the recalcitrant prophet.

We now approach the subject of the alterations of translation. No books we may say, by way of preface, have ever been quoted so recklessly as these O.T. Scriptures. It is not too much to say that one-half the texts best known to the public are familiarized by misapplication. This usage has ancient warrant. The great Rabbis have always loved to make the letter of Scripture a vehicle for new thoughts, and even to preface such an application by the words "that the Scripture might be established," "to establish the Scriptures," etc. But then there is little deception about this Jewish method of citation; sometimes indeed its rationale is obviously a mere pun, or play on words. We, with our

modern ideas of accuracy, our inability to put ourselves in the original time and place, our wholly different view of the Hebrew literature, cannot afford this method of citation. Its tendency with us is to propagare error, and so indirectly to disparage revealed religion. If the R.V. in any way tends to make people think and study before they apply texts, it will be a gain to religion and education. In some cases indeed no translation can serve as a corrective. Thus the word "Mizpah," and the text, "The Lord watch between me and thee," will doubtless still be used as the indication of mutual affection and prayerful sympathy. In the original (Gen. xxxi. 49) both are as remote from such ideas as was our own recent "sacred covenant" with Russia. Mizpah was a monument demarcating the scientific frontier of two relations who could not live in harmony, and the text is a curse on him who should break the pact. But we trust in other cases the revised translation will be effective. "*Their strength is to sit still*" (Isa. xxx. 7) is a noted offender. "Therefore have I called her *Rahab that sitteth still*" is sufficiently near the mark to cheer those who would have Isaiah quoted as he wrote. We prefer however, "I have cried concerning this, *Rahab doth but sit still;*" for Rahab as the nickname of Egypt was not Isaiah's invention, but occurs twice, as the R.V. itself shows, in the older book of Job (ix. 13, xxvi. 12). Another impostor (*quâ* devotional usage) is Ps. lxxviii. 11. Some years back we received a form of mission-prayers issued by high ecclesiastical authority, in which were the versicles, "O Lord, give the word": "Great shall be the company of the *preachers.*" The quotation was from the Prayer-book Psalter, but the more accurate version of the A.V. equally fails to indicate that the so-called "preachers" are females. The R.V. sufficiently shows that the text treats merely of Eastern women publishing with joyous acclamation the tidings of a victory. The Prayer-book version again is re-

sponsible for the popular comparison of "young children," to "arrows in the hand of the giant." It was not babies of whom the Psalmist was thinking. He meant "children of a man's youth," who should be in the prime of manhood when the parent was aged and required defence. Here, as so often, the R.V. in aiming at reproduction of the Hebrew idiom becomes obscure. "*Children of youth*" is of course right, but will it be always understood? Why not say "children begotten in youth," which would be plain to all? Yet again certain good people appear to find a singular beauty in the metaphor of the Lord "*making up his jewels*," Mal. iii. 17. The R.V. rightly gives, "And they shall be mine, in the day that I *do make, even a peculiar treasure.*" "*Vanity and vexation of spirit*" is a phrase familiar to all, the alliteration perhaps accounting for its popularity. But we hold it certain that the Preacher used no such combination. Here, however, we hardly understand the principles on which the Revisers act in giving "*striving after wind.*" The words רוח רעות may be interpreted by Hos. xii. 1, where the R.V. retains "Ephraim *feedeth on wind.*" Or we can render "companionship with what profits not." But is it not best to interpret רעות and רעיון here by the acknowledged use of רעיון in Daniel, and to render "*unprofitable thought.*" Surely the Aramaisms in Ecclesiastes are undeniable. "Vexation" can of course be got from the root רעע, but "striving after" is to us inexplicable, unless it be a periphrasis for the bolder Hebrew idiom "companionship with." Yet it is a periphrasis which conveys no sense to English ears.

Many an uninstructed reader will lament the disappearance of what he regarded as a Messianic prophecy in Haggai ii. 7. But "*the desire of all nations shall come*" is an impossible rendering. A little study, moreover, will show how appropriate is the emendation "*desirable things*" for "desire." The poverty of the second Temple had roused

regretful reminiscences in the minds of aged lookers on. Haggai foretells that treasure shall be contributed thereto by Gentile proselytes, adding that "the silver" and "the gold" are at the disposal of the Lord of hosts. Every reader will at least rejoice in the disappearance of the meaningless "not" in the noted prophecy which is read on Christmas Day. Isaiah as a whole was badly translated in 1611, but it seems marvellous that the K'ri "to him," for C'thib "not," only found expression in the margin of Isa. ix. 2. Equally inexcusable was the adaptation¹ of Isa. xxv. 8 to the N.T. citation, "Death is swallowed up *in victory*." The words can only mean "He hath swallowed up death *for ever*," as R.V. (this time without any annotation). We have nothing to do here with subsequent writers. But St. Paul's adoption of what was doubtless a popular form of the passage is deeply interesting, as showing how the Aramaic usage of the root נצח had already led the Jews to attach a wrong sense to this Scripture. Aquila also gives εἰς νίκος.

Job xix. 25-27 has often been treated as if expressing a faith in the future Messiah, and an assurance of the Resurrection of the body. There can be little doubt that whether we translate "Redeemer," "Avenger," or "Deliverer," the first of these ideas is foreign to the thoughts of the writer. The second may be present, though such assurance is rare indeed in the O.T. But is there any clear sense in the passage as translated in the R.V.? We fail to find it. Here (as in so many of the Psalms) the aimlessness of Committee-work is discernible. The component parts have seemingly been discussed and voted on without regard to the whole. The rendering of v. 27 retained from the A.V. has always struck us as a notable instance of unintelligible Hebrew-English,—“Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another.”—Word for word right, but which of two senses is given depends on the reader's

¹ For similar adaptations in A.V. see Isa. xl. 3; Amos v. 26; Ps. xxii. 8.

emphasis. If "myself," "mine," "another," be emphasized, it means—Job shall see the Redeemer, but others (*scil.* his opponents) shall not; and so Delitzsch still interprets. If read, as in the original, with no emphasis whatever on "myself" and "mine," but a strong one on "see," "behold," "another," it need mean only—Job shall see his Redeemer and no other but Him. The latter sense we prefer. But what can be said of a translation which depends on the accident of our emphasis? We shall say more on such points anon. We will only here ask the reader, would he tolerate vague literalism of this sort in a translation of a stiff passage in Æschylus or Thucydides?

The "rose of Sharon" (Song ii. 1) is a familiar misappellation, and Goss' well-known anthem incorporates the words, "The desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose," from Isa. xxxv. 1. Yet the genuine "rose" has no equivalent in Biblical Hebrew, and the later term for the flower is very different from חַבְצֵלֶת. Its etymology proves that this word indicates a "bulbous" plant, probably either a crocus or a narcissus. Why do the Revisers do less justice to this than to the other botanical terms of the O.T.? They retain the incorrect "rose" of A.V. and relegate¹ "autumn crocus" to the margin? Feeble humourists have often attributed to cynical reviewers the desire of Job, "Oh . . . that mine adversary had written a book!" (xxx. 35.) The passage of course really expresses Job's readiness to answer the *libellum* or *indictment* of his adversary. The Revisers' view of the construction is perhaps preferable to that adopted by Delitzsch. In Ps. civ. 4, the R.V. rightly gives, "Who maketh winds his messengers," for "Who maketh his angels spirits." But it is bad scholarship to continue the verse, "and his ministers a flaming fire." The

¹ With the usual meaningless "or" prefixed. We suppose here "or" = *id est*. What is to be said of annotations in which synonyms and diversities of interpretation are indicated by one and the same symbol!

parallelism is introverted, but the clause certainly means, when done into English, "*and the lightning flames his ministers.*" In Ps. xlv. 13, we notice with approval, "The king's daughter *within* [*the palace*] *is all glorious,*" for "*is all glorious within.*" Ps. lxxviii. 16 is also correctly rendered, "*Why look ye askance, ye high mountains?*" [*scil.* at the glory of the lowly Zion,] and doubtless, "*Why hop ye so?*" will one day be as extinct as the church-clerk psalmody which it suggests. In Gen. i. 21, "great *whales*" rightly gives place to "great *sea monsters.*" In Gen. xix. 1, the translation, "*The two men,*" is correct; the third being the Divine collocutor of chap. xviii. In Job xxxviii. 31, the "*sweet influences* of the Pleiades" is rightly altered to "*cluster* of the Pleiades." Ps. cxvi. 11, "I said in my haste, All men are *liars,*" is well-known, but is inaccurate. R.V. gives "All men are *a lie,*" *i.e.* a failure in time of need. This may stand; but we would also substitute "*distraction*" for "*haste.*"

In selecting these passages, we have been thinking of what is familiar to the public. We hope hereafter to deal with the R.V. translations categorically from the scholar's point of view. This will necessitate discussion on the object and scope of translation-work generally. To clear the way, we notice here the "archaisms" which we regret to find retained in the R.V. It is degrading to descend to these miserable details, but the Revisers' principles of translation necessitate it. It consoles us to learn from their Preface that we share our disappointment with "the large English-speaking race on the other side of the Atlantic." Perhaps in this case the wise men have not come from the East. The English Company retains "bolled"; "rereward" = rearguard; "bruit"; "tabering"; "daysman"; "helve"; "neesings" = sneezings; "silverlings"; "knop"; "meteyard"; "ouch"; "post" = relays of messengers; "prevent" = forestall; "let it" = reverse it; "calamus" = sugar-cane;

“fray” = frighten; “ringstraked” = piebald. “Comfortable” in the sense “comforting” is retained, and “amiable” is applied to the Temple in the sense “worthy of love.” Not only is “astonied” conserved, but in Ezekiel iii. 15 it is substituted for “astonished,” the reader being left to perplex himself about the subtle distinction. We have “this liketh you” for “this is what you like”; and “captivity” for “captives.” On this last we notice that the Hebrew שבת שבוֹת = either “turn the captivity” or “restore the captives,” according to the context, but that the R.V. “bring back the captivity” means either or neither. The archaism “captivity” is surely sufficiently condemned by its use (or misuse) in the hymn lines, “Songs of praise arose when He Captive led *captivity*.” Of course “captivity” is taken to mean the power that held men captive. Yet the Hebrew Psalmist (Ps. lxxviii. 18), and the Apostle who quoted him in the words of the LXX., meant nothing of the kind. “Thou hast taken a *band of captives*” is all that is intended in modern idiom. In this Psalm the R.V. effects a curious compromise with its fetish. It gives “Thou hast led [thy] captivity captive.”

Other archaisms may be noticed as less conspicuous, but equally objectionable. Thus the typical housewife of Prov. xxxi. 10 is still called the “*virtuous*” woman. The phrase was in the Geneva Version, and singularly enough the LXX. had ἀνδραγαθία, “*virtuous*” in a more literal sense. But the adjective can only be applied here in the sense in which Chaucer applied it to his Servitour, *scil.* as “useful,” “serviceable.” “*A capable wife*” or “*woman*” is the exact meaning of the Hebrew. *Virtuous*, as applied to a female now, has a restricted meaning, which makes the rendering “Who can find a *virtuous* woman?” most objectionable. Babies are still “*short-coated*,” but surely “*coat*” no longer represents to our ears the tunic of an Oriental woman. The verse, “I have put off my coat,” etc. (Song

v. 3) is probably put by careless readers in the mouth of the male collocator. "*Dress*" would be intelligible and sufficiently explicit. We particularly object to the archaisms "her *pleasant things*" = things she delights in, "*pleasant vessel*" = precious vessel, "*pleasant bread*" = dainty food, "*pleasant child*," "*pleasant plant*" = child or plant that gives pleasure. Our language is now enriched by an undefined but intelligible distinction between "pleasant" and "pleasing," and the former should not be used in the sense of the latter. How will common folk understand the words, "An evil, *an only* evil: behold, it cometh"? (Ezek. vii. 5.) Of course, as a prophecy of an evil which shall be *unqualified* by good. But this is not the sense the A.V. and the R.V. intend. The Hebrew means either "a *single* evil," a special, unassociated infliction, or "a *unique* evil," one unparalleled in history. The latter sense of "only" is now unknown; the former is obsolete, without a possessive pronoun, save in regard to close relationships, as "an only son," "an only sister." "*Stuff*" seems to us a very unhappy rendering for כְּלִים, "effects," or "outfit." In Jer. xlvi. 19, Ezek. xii. 3, the original gives us the phrase "prepare an emigrant's (or exile's) outfit." The R.V. gives in one case, "*furnish thyself* to go into captivity," in the other, "*prepare thee stuff* for removing," both savouring of vague pedantry. In Ezek. xvi. 27, who will understand the expression, "thy *ordinary* food"? The term in 1611 had a force which survives to-day only in the "ordinary" of inns. "Thy rations" would exactly reproduce the Hebrew expression; if "rations" be too suggestive of military life, why not say "thy *allowance of food*"? Equally obsolete is the idiom, "those that *served themselves* of them," Ezek. xxxiv. 27, as the Revisers confess by attaching a note, "or, made bondmen of them." "For the sake of" is now used *in bonam partem* only: the ground should have been cursed "*on account of*" man, and the

storm sent "on account of Jonah" (Gen. viii. 21, Jon. i. 12). The phrase, "utter the memory of," Ps. cxlv. 7, no longer="proclaim the fame of." How will the unintelligent understand the words, "Tell him I am sick of love"? Of course as meaning "disgusted with love," not "love-sick," as the writer meant. What sense is conveyed to modern ears by the term "*several* house"? Not every hearer or reader will perceive from the context that it was a hospital, or place of prolonged quarantine, to which the leprous king Ahaziah withdrew himself. Lastly, how many people moderately versed in architecture know that the "*chapiter*" of a pillar is its capital? ¹

The Revisers' defence is broadly, that they thought the English language would be impoverished by the elimination from a Bible-translation of terms confessedly obsolete. They also argue that the archaisms they choose to retain are, "although obsolete, not unintelligible." We question if their patronage will prolong by a day the tenure of words which public opinion has evicted. We are sure that not half the terms cited above are intelligible to any but students. And deeming it of great importance that the Scriptures should be rightly understood, we regard this deference to pseudo-antiquarianism as discreditable alike to our scholarship and our religious feeling. Cannot the dilettante archæologist rest content with Wardour Street art, and "restorations," and "serio-comic-Gothic" architecture? Must a like tasteless pedantry infest the realm of literature, and dim the lustre of our great Hebrew Classics?

¹ In enumerating these instances of pedantry we do not overlook the fact that a great many archaisms have been expunged. "Lamp" in Gen. xiii., Judg. vii., etc., has given place to its modern equivalent, "torch"; "carriages" to baggage; "artillery" to weapons; "cotes" to folds; "habergeon" to coat of mail; "organ" (Gen. iv. 21) to pipe; "taches" to clasps; "earring" to plowing. Apropos of "earring" the Revisers' apology for its disappearance amusingly illustrates their knowledge of their readers' wants. We are truly grateful that Shakespeare used "its" ten times, and that the word "meal-offering" is very like the old "meat-offering" of A.V. (*vide* Preface, pp. vi.-viii.).

Or is it the Canterbury Convocation again and the popular view of the A.V. that impel the Revisers to pay this tribute to obscurity?

The truth is no translator of Oriental literature can afford to hark back to an imaginary Augustan age of English, and ignore the linguistic fruits of later time and more extended travel. The modernisms of to-day are ever the "grand old English" of the morrow. Besides, what the Hebrew writers meant was sometimes barely expressible in the English of 1611. The object surely is to put readers *en rapport*, not with King James's divines, but with the Hebrew prophets and historians. We gladly recognise the merits of the A.V. It was a wonderful translation for the age which produced it. We admit too that the accidents of political and religious history made this version a powerful agency in the formation of our vernacular. No new version of the Scriptures will ever affect popular diction in the same way. All the more reason why the two companies should have laid aside all affectations of style, and tried simply to produce what thinking people demand and unthinking people need—an accurate and lucid Bible translation.

Thus, since Isaiah (xxxv. 7) certainly mentions the "*mirage*," we hold the faithful translator is bound to use the term, and not "glowing sand," as R.V. Doubtless the phenomenon was not familiar to Shakespeare or the A.V. translators, and the word was apparently unknown in France till 1809. But what has that to do with Isaiah? The Arabs still use the very term Isaiah used, and it means "*mirage*." Knowledge of the phenomenon and its nomenclature brings us moderns nearer to Isaiah than the A.V. translators were. So again, if our increased acquaintance with the East has given us the term "*palanquin*," the Revisers need have no *arrière pensée* about having given this word in Song iii. 9, albeit its use is not discoverable before

1655. No other term gives the sense of the Hebrew writer. If the "*harem*" of Ahasuerus is certainly mentioned in Esther ii., the word should be welcomed as more suggestive of the time, place, and surroundings than "house of the women," though the latter is strictly correct. And so with all Oriental usages and metaphors, save where the latter¹ are meaningless to English ears. If all "bottles" in the East were skin-bags, let us read "*skins*" or "*bags*" or "*skin-bags*" wherever practicable, and not only where the epithet puts glass bottles out of the question, as in Josh. ix. 4; Matt. ix. 17. The *noses* of modern English women are not graced with rings. But fashions were different in the Mesopotamia of B.C. 1800, and the nose-ring is an Oriental ornament to this day. We may therefore congratulate the Revisers on not reproducing the A.V.'s prudish evasion of this characteristic detail in Rebekah's garniture (Gen. xxiv. 22, 47). So again we do not liken a lady to a "mare" with any complimentary intention. But it is otherwise in the East; and if the lover in Song i. 9 chooses to compare his bride to "a *mare* in Pharaoh's chariots," why cannot our Revisers faithfully reproduce the simile, instead of using the epicene term "*steed*"? The Jewish צניף is known to all of us as a "*turban*"; why use the term "*diadem*" or (still worse) "*mitre*," both which will suggest a head-dress of an entirely different kind?

A. C. JENNINGS.

W. H. LOWE.

¹ On the retention of Hebrew metaphors, idioms, and *façons de parler*, unintelligible to all but students, we shall speak in our next paper.