

ARTICLE VII.

THE NEW LEXICON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.<sup>1</sup>

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IT was as long ago as 1864 that the first announcement was made in the BIBLIOTHECA SACRA (October number, p. 886), of the intention of Professor Thayer, at that time of Andover, to prepare a translation of Grimm's Latin Lexicon of New Testament Greek, the first edition of which was then in course of publication. Exactly twenty-two years have slipped away while the book was preparing, a second edition of the original (completed in 1879) having appeared in the meanwhile and been made the basis of the translation. This has been a quarter of a century of constant growth in New Testament studies and of unremitting effort on the translator's part to subsidize the continually increasing material in the interests of his work, which thus took more and more the character not so much of a translation as of a revised, improved, and enlarged edition.

Dr. Grimm's *Lexicon Græco-Latinum in libros Novi Testamenti* already stood at the apex of a long development of New Testament Lexicons. The springs of this development may be said to have risen in George Pasor's Lexicon, which appeared first in 1626, and often afterward up to 1774 (with animadversions by J. F. Fischer). Stock's *Clavis linguæ sanctæ N. T.* (1725 up to Fischer's edition of

<sup>1</sup>A GREEK-ENGLISH LEXICON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT: Being Grimm's Wilke's *Clavis Novi Testamenti*, translated, revised, and enlarged by JOSEPH HENRY THAYER, D.D., Bussey Professor of New Testament Criticism and Interpretation in the Divinity School of Harvard University. New York: Harper Brothers, Franklin Square. 1887. [*Sic*: actually issued in October, 1886.] 4to. (pp. xix., 726. 10½×7½.) \$5.00.

1752), and Schöttgen's *Novum Lexicon Græco-Latinum in N. T.* (1746, enlarged by Krebs, 1765, and by Spohn, 1790), together with Fischer's *Prolusiones* (1799) may be accounted affluents of the stream, which became a river in the first great work in this department, J. Friedr. Schleusner's *Novum Lexicon Græco-Latinum in N. T.*, which appeared at the end of the last century (1792). Schleusner's position at the close of the long discussion as to the nature of Hellenistic Greek placed all the materials that had been gathered throughout that contest within his reach, and he embodied them with liberal hand in his book, thus collecting a vast mass of undigested matter for the use of his successors. It almost at once displaced all previous Lexicons, and passed through four editions (1792 to 1819) before it was itself supplanted by the better arranged and digested works of Wahl (*Clavis N. T. philologica*, etc., 1819), whose strength was given to the investigation of the classical usage of the New Testament words, and Bretschneider (*Lexicon Manuale Græco-Latinum in libros N. T.*, 1824), who performed a similar service for the Hellenistic usage. These two really meritorious works held the ground in a series of three parallel editions (the third of each falling respectively in 1843 and 1840) until at last C. G. Wilke smelted their results together for the use of students in his *Clavis N. T. philologica*, which appeared in 1841—a service that had already been done, and certainly well done, for American scholars by Dr. Edward Robinson in 1836. A second edition of Wilke (as also of Robinson in 1850) appeared in 1851–2, and almost simultaneously (1851) the first Greek-German Lexicon of any importance, prepared by J. C. Schirlitz, though it could have no pretensions of rivalling in excellence either Robinson or Wilke. Wilke's work was soon outgrown by advancing scholarship. A still further improvement seemed necessary, and on the issue of the first part of Grimm's revision in 1862 it was at once seen that the right hand had been laid to the work. But if Grimm's first edition (1862–1868) was re-

ceived with favor, his second edition, which was completed in 1879, was received with nothing short of acclamation. The advance it marked on all previous Lexicons was decided. In particular, the compression of the material was grateful, especially when it was seen to be accompanied by concise completeness in tracing the history of the words, crisp precision and logical arrangement in the definitions, almost encyclopædic richness of treatment of proper names and matters of antiquarian interest, and possibly over-numerous explanations of difficult passages.

Clearly, it was worth while to translate this book. To translate Wilke would have been useless. Dr. Robinson's second edition had already preëmpted the ground for English-speaking students. But Grimm was a different matter. Nevertheless, it is evident from the result that Dr. Thayer was well advised in undertaking much more than a mere translation. The advance that he has thus made on Grimm himself is distinct. What he has done for his author in the way of enlarging and improving, may be briefly indicated by saying that he has done for Grimm just what Doctors Hackett and Abbot did for Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible." He has carefully retained all that his original contained, and then he has revised this throughout, and added a great mass of fresh matter (distinguished by enclosure in square brackets) sufficient to give it almost redoubled value. The details of this work will be best explained in his own words. The leading objects that he set before himself were, as he tells us: "To verify all references; . . . . to note more generally the extra-biblical usage of words; to give the derivation of words in cases where it is agreed upon by the best etymologists and is of interest to the general student; to render complete the enumeration of (representative) verbal forms found in the New Testament (and exclude all others); to append to every verb a list of those of its compounds which occur in the Greek Testament; to supply the New Testament passages accidentally omitted in words marked at the end

with an asterisk [in order to indicate that every case of their occurrence has been quoted]; to note more fully the variations in the Greek Texts of current editions; to introduce brief discussions of New Testament synonymes; to give the more noteworthy renderings not only of the "Authorized Version" but also of the Revised New Testament; to multiply cross-references; references to grammatical works both sacred . . . . . and classical; . . . . . also to the best English and American Commentaries as well as to the latest exegetical works that have appeared on the Continent; and to the recent Bible Dictionaries and Cyclopædias, besides the various Lives of Christ and of the Apostle Paul." (Preface, p. vi.) Certainly there is outlined here a sufficiently onerous undertaking, and when we perceive the excellence of the execution, under each item of the enumeration, we cease to wonder that twenty-two years have been consumed in its completion.

The comprehensive character of Dr. Thayer's scheme of revision has scarcely escaped the notice of the reader. He has been ambitious enough to attempt to provide a Lexicon which will serve all the needs of the student from his first entrance into the study of the New Testament Greek up to his highest advancement. "In the case of a literature so limited in its compass as the New Testament," he tells us (Preface, p. viii.), "it seems undesirable that even the beginner should be subjected to the inconvenience, expense, and especially the loss of facility incident to the change of text-books." Accordingly, "in making his supplementary references and remarks the editor has been governed at different times by different considerations corresponding to the different classes for which the Lexicon is designed. Primarily, indeed, it is intended to satisfy the needs and to guide the researches of the *average student*; although the specialist will often find it serviceable, and, on the other hand, the beginner will find that he has not been forgotten." For the beginner's sake, for example, there has been added at the close of the volume a very full

list of verbal forms covering twenty-five or twenty-six columns, by the use of which all the puzzles of the paradigms are cleared up. The copious references to the grammars will serve him also many an excellent turn. While, on the other hand, the more advanced scholar will be delighted with the painstaking care with which the various readings are cited, and the actual forms found in the New Testament are adduced, as well as with the accuracy that has been attained everywhere in the references, and the increased copiousness of those references which direct to fuller discussions of words and matters than could well be furnished in a Lexicon. By this feature of the work, when taken in connection with the somewhat over-numerous exegetical remarks of Prof. Grimm's on difficult passages, the Lexicon is made little less than a thesaurus of the *dubia* of the New Testament. The care of the editor has evidently not scorned even such material concerns as the type and spacing—no small matters to those who are to use the book. And were there no other considerations to determine the scholar's preference of this translation over the original Latin, the superiority of its mechanical form ought to decide him; for, though the type is scarcely larger, the spacing and whole arrangement is so superior that no comparison can be instituted between them.

We have left ourselves little space for detailed criticism. We cannot, however, consent to close before we have called attention to the richness of some of the translator's additions. For instance, the quotation from Zetzschwitz which he has attached to the article on *ἀγαθός* forms a most fruitful comment on Mark x. 18, reminding us, as it does, that "in the Old Testament the term 'righteous' makes reference rather to a covenant and to one's relation to a positive standard; *ἀγαθός* would express the absolute idea of general goodness." The long additions to the articles *αἰών* and *αἰώνιος* are very important. In particular, the synonymes are treated everywhere with a clearness of distinction and a brevity that command

our highest praise. We have our eye, in this remark, especially on the very admirable discussion of the vexed question of the relations of θέλω and βούλομαι, in which what seems the right conclusion is attained, and strongly commended by appropriate evidence. Other instances are, however, scarcely inferior even to this. It is a pleasure to see the synonymy carried a step beyond the more striking words, into the words denoting time (under αἰών and καιρός), for instance, or the distinction between ἄρτι, ἤδη, and νῦν (under ἄρτι), and the like. How helpful it may be to grasp the true distinction between words and therefore their real implications, in even what may seem the most unlikely instances, may be seen from the synonymy of the words denoting to command, which are treated excellently under κελεύω. Here we learn, for example, that ἐπιτάσσειν differs from ἐντέλλεσθαι "in denoting fixed and abiding obligations rather than specific or occasional instructions, duties arising from the office, rather than emanating from the personal will of a superior." When, now, we find St. Paul describing himself to Timothy thus: "Paul, apostle of Christ Jesus according to God's ἐπιταγήν" (1 Tim. i. 1), we perceive, at once, a new meaning in the words. Paul holds an office of apostle, the duties of which arise out of its functions; he writes as an officer in fulfillment of his duty, not as a mere agent; and in the κατὰ ἐπιταγήν he puts forward an appeal to his duty rather than an assertion of his right, which διὰ θελήματος would have emphasized. When next, in the third verse, we read that Timothy is to "charge" (παραγγείλῃς) the Ephesians, we observe anew that not the word which would suggest that he had a permanent office in Ephesus, with its duties attached, but rather the one which "is used especially of the order of a military commander which is passed along the line by subordinates" is employed; and we may already perceive an adumbration of the diverse relations of Paul and Timothy to the church at Ephesus as well as of their relations to one another. Dr. Thayer has given us

studies on a larger number of synonymes than the young student can easily find treated elsewhere; and our only regret is that he has not still further extended his list. For instance, the New Testament words denoting "care" are interestingly elucidated by Mr. Massie in *The Expositor* I. XII. 104-123, and those denoting "blessed" by the same writer in the same journal, I. IX. 345 and 460, and references at least might be inserted to these discussions, if space could not be given to an independent discrimination of the words concerned. We must not forget, however, that a manual lexicon will not hold everything, and Dr. Thayer's selection of words to be treated certainly is everywhere judicious.

It is not often that we meet with a word which seems inadequately treated. Probably *ἀνόσιος* may be accounted one; for an adequate treatment of it, see Ellicott on 1 Tim. i. 9. *Μητραλῆας* and *πατραλῆας* seem to belong to the same category. It is probable that the sense borne by them in 1 Tim. i. 9 is that set down in the lexicon, but certainly the possibility of the milder meaning contended for by so many expositors, ought to be recognized. The related words, *πνευματικός*, *ψυχικός*, *σαρκικός*, *σάρκινος*, are not altogether satisfactorily treated. The remark of Grimm concerning the last of them: "It is used where *σαρκικός* might have been expected," and "in these passages, unless we decide that Paul used *σαρκικός* and *σάρκινος* indiscriminately, we must suppose that *σάρκινος* expresses the idea of *σαρκικός* with an emphasis," is not only wrong but rests on a very shallow exegesis. Dr. Thayer adds a reference to Trench, indeed, where the right view may be found, but without a word to advertise to the student that there is an opposite view, much less that it is to be found in the passage cited. And this uncovers one of the very few complaints we should make of the editing. We are, indeed, warned in the preface that the authors cited do not necessarily defend the views upheld in the article in which the citation is made; yet it is inconvenient, to say the

least, not to be informed of the fact when they directly controvert the only view expressed. This is sometimes made clear; but not infrequently, not a word is said which could advise the student that any controversy exists. Another example of this may be found under *καταστολή*, although the "but" there may be intended to mark opposition; and another in *Σέργιος*, where no one could guess that the reference was intended to correct Grimm's "otherwise unknown." It is hardly an instance of inadequate treatment, but rather of the impossibility of too freely altering the plates, probably, that the note on *Ἀρέτας* is not up to date. We know now that this Aretas was Aretas IV., "lover of his people" (Hâr-ithat Râham-'ammêh), who reigned from B.C. 9 (or 8) to A.D. 39 (or 40), and much else that is interesting with regard to the succession of monarchs among the Nabatheans.

The only serious complaints which we should have it in our hearts to make against this Lexicon, however, would concern not Dr. Thayer's but Dr. Grimm's work. He has an odd fashion of speaking derogatorily of the "orthodox" view in an entirely unnecessary way, and he gives the benefit of the doubt in disputed cases usually to the side that opposes the historical accuracy of the New Testament writers. Under *Κυρήνιος*, Dr. Thayer has added the antidote in the shape of references, in which Keil's full discussion deservedly has the place of honor; but this is not always done. It cannot be held, however, to be essential in a manual lexicon to express a dogmatic opinion on every debated question, and such a course is very injurious to a work which is designed also for the use of beginners. For our part, we could heartily wish that Dr. Thayer had seen his way clear to omit or soften such *dicta* in all cases in which the matter is of no great importance to the explanation of the word. As we have already hinted also, we cannot help thinking that the exegetical element is often somewhat overdone by Professor Grimm. Dr. Thayer's general opinion is stated in the preface (p. vii.) to be that



the lexicographer "should refrain from rehearsing the general arguments which support the interpretation adopted, as well as from arraying the objections to the opposing interpretations." It cannot be denied, however, that Professor Grimm occasionally oversteps this rule, as for instance, under the word ἀδελφός where the exact relationship of Christ's "brothers" to him is not only stated but argued. We quite agree with Grimm's finding in the matter; but we cannot help thinking that this whole discussion is out of place. Under the word Ἰάκωβος, on the contrary, so much of it as is necessary to define who this James was, is distinctly in place. But on the other hand, again, under the word καταλέγω the legitimate limits of lexical treatment seem to be overstepped by the mere presence of the commentary at all; for all this discussion of who the "widows" were, has nothing to do with the meaning of the word under discussion. The article ἄγγελος, again, is a congeries of comments, most of which, like the one on the widows, are not only unnecessary but wrong. The passages adduced from Revelation have no tendency to prove that "separate angels have the charge of separate elements;" it is at least disputable whether "guardian angels of individuals are mentioned in Matt. xviii. 10, Acts xii. 15," and whether the explanation given of Rev. i. 20, ii. 1, and 1 Cor. xi. 10 are right; while that given of 1 Tim. iii. 16 is pretty certainly wrong. It is no doubt difficult to fix accurately the limits to which such comments can be safely extended in a lexicon, but in general the rule seems to be a sound one, to introduce nothing the decision of which does not depend on the word actually under discussion, and it is certainly in the interest of that brevity which is the perfection of a lexicon, to allow no comments that are not necessary. There is a danger also in the matter which ought not to be overlooked. Students soon learn to look upon professed commentaries as expressions of individual opinion, and to allow for them accordingly. But the explanatory comments included in their

lexicons seem to come with more authority, and easily exercise far too strong an influence over their judgements to be desirable when they can be avoided. Once more we could wish that Professor Thayer had felt justified in using the pruning knife here and there in the matter of comments, substituting for them references, where help seemed needed, to places where opinion could be not only asserted but fully argued.

Such a course as we have here desiderated would have been no doubt inconsistent with Professor Thayer's plan to preserve intact all that Professor Grimm had written and to add his own matter in brackets. But though Professor Thayer thinks (Preface p. vi.) that this plan will commend itself to the judgment of scholars, in the end, as the best, we find it impossible to agree with him, and could distinctly wish that he had dealt more freely with his original—always in a broad and liberal spirit, of course—and had freely altered, omitted, and compressed, as well as enlarged. It can serve no good purpose, save to the scholar who is interested in tracing the share which each hand has had in the work, to print an erroneous statement and its correction side by side. And the new lexicon would have been both less bulky and more useful had it been rewrought into a well-compacted whole. Perhaps, however, as Robinson's Wahl preceded Robinson's self, the time may come when Thayer's Grimm will give place to Thayer's own. We sincerely hope so.

*Μωμείσθαι ῥᾶόν ἐστιν ἢ μμείσθαι:* we do not forget the proverb. Nor would we have the reader forget how petty are the criticisms that we have offered. The fact is that we have a monumental work here, the best lexicon to the Greek Testament that has ever been framed, the most valuable aid to the study of the Greek Testament which America has given to the English-speaking world in our generation. The beginner will find in it everything that he needs in order to gain an acquaintance with New Testament Greek: the advanced scholar will soon discover it to be

his indispensable *vade mecum*, and a marvellously rich index to the best biblical literature. American students owe a debt of gratitude to Professor Thayer for his twenty-two years of labor which they will never be able to repay.

We have already pointed out that the book stands at the apex of the development of New Testament Lexicons on the Continent of Europe. Our pride ought not to allow us to forget that it also worthily caps another series,—that of English Lexicons to the New Testament. It was only thirteen years after Pasor's Latin Manual Lexicon appeared that Sir Edward Leigh, a member of the Long Parliament and of the Westminster Assembly, published his "*Critica Sacra: or Philologicall and Theologicall Observations upon all the Greek Words of the New Testament in Order Alphabetically*," and thus laid the foundations of an English Lexicon of the Greek Testament (1635; 2d Ed. 1646-1650)—foundations of which we need not be ashamed. Far slighter works were those of "T. C." (1658), Andrew Symson (1658), Henry Jessey (1661), and John Williams (1767). But John Parkhurst's "*A Greek-English Lexicon to the New Testament*," &c. (1769, 1794, 1798, &c.; best ed., Rose's, 1829) was a worthy performance for the time, and was not superseded entirely by even Schleusner, the best editions of which were printed on English soil (Edinburg, 1814, and Glasgow, 1817, 1824). The Grammar and Comprehensive Lexicon of Greville Ewing (1812), the Miniature Lexicon of John H. Bass (1820), probably the first pocket Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, and the full treatment of New Testament words in the Greek Lexicon of John Jones (1823), need mention only for the sake of completeness. For the next real step in advance was taken in our own country by the issue of a translation of Wahl by Dr. Edward Robinson (1825), and then of his independent Lexicon in 1836, and in a much improved second edition in 1850, which united many of the best features of Wahl and Bretschneider, and stood worthily by the side of Wilke. Dr. Bloomfield edited Robinson in Lon-

don in 1837, and then issued an independent Lexicon of his own, (1840, 1845, 1860), which, however, is distinctly inferior to Robinson's second edition. This latter was really an epoch-making work as the first successful attempt to bring together in moderate compass the results of both Wahl's and Bretschneider's researches; and Robinson has worthily held the ground among English-speaking students for a half-century. As an English Lexicon Prof. Thayer's work takes its place at the head of this series also. May it be as truly a seed for a half-century's harvest as was the work of Dr. Robinson, which it replaces!