

ART. VI.—THE USE AND APPLICATION OF HOLY SCRIPTURE IN THE PRAYER-BOOK.

WE may divide the Scriptural passages used in the Prayer-Book into three classes.

1. Passages read directly from the Bible, such as :

(a) Opening sentences in Morning and Evening Prayer which are from the A.V.

(b) The Lord's Prayer, which is identical with the A.V. of St. Matthew, except for the use of "trespasses" for "debts."

(c) The Canticles, which only differ in a few unimportant words.

(d) The Psalms, which are taken from Cranmer's Bible, and were retained as being familiar and adapted for chanting.

(e) The Ten Commandments, from the same.

(f) The Offertory sentences, ditto.

(g) The Epistles and Gospels from the A.V., and also the gospels in the Baptism services.

(h) The opening sentences in the Burial Service from the A.V., but not so the anthem, "I heard a voice."

2. Phrases incorporated in prayers and exhortations and other parts of the service, as "ministers and stewards of thy mysteries" in the Collect, "One fold and One Shepherd" in the Collect, the *Gloria in Excelsis*, and the words used at the Ordination of Priests.

3. Passages expressly cited in support of doctrine in the Exhortations—*e.g.*, in the Communion Service from John vi., from St. Mark xvi. in the Baptism of Adults, in the Homily in the Communion Service.

The question which we are to discuss as regards all these uses of Holy Scripture seems to resolve itself into two: first, as to whether the English Version used in the Prayer-Book adequately represents the original in the light of our present knowledge; and, secondly, a deeper question, whether the use of some of these passages in the context in which they occur is warranted. In short, were a revision of the Prayer-Book to be carried out, what alteration, if any, would be called for to bring our form of doctrine to a level with our present Biblical knowledge? It is evident, I think, that the last revisers of the Prayer-Book were not very anxious on the subject, otherwise they would not have left in so much of the older versions of the Bible as they did. They seem to have regarded practical usefulness in devotion as more important than scrupulous accuracy of rendering. At the present time, we ask, are the points in question of such importance as to call for further revision? Let us take a few of the most noticeable.

I. Passages read directly from the Bible.

The question of using uniformly the same version in all cases (omitting that of the Psalms) is complicated now by the existence of a R.V., which, though far from universally received, yet has in many cases recommended itself to us. Are there any instances where the various rendering is important in point of doctrine so as to call for change?

1. The Lord's Prayer. Are we prepared to adopt the Revisers' Version of this most sacred and time-honoured formula, and say "evil one" for "evil" in the last clause? Of course, no one thinks of countenancing that fragmentary piece of pedantry which figures in St. Luke, chap. xi. But, as regards this one change in St. Matthew's version, the revisers were perhaps justified in making it. It is noteworthy that in the Liturgy of St. Mark, which, according to Dr. Neale, is as early as the second century, we find in the secret prayer of the Priest, *μηδὲ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς εἰς πείρασμον, ἀλλὰ ρύσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ, καὶ ἐκ τῶν ἔργων αὐτοῦ.* This change had, we know, the authority of Bishop Lightfoot. But inasmuch as the general term (evil) includes also the specific (evil one), or, as our Catechism interprets it, "our ghostly enemy," it seems quite unnecessary, as it would certainly be impolitic, to make a change in so well known a formula.

2. The Prayer-Book Version of the Psalms we should be unwilling to change, especially as the practice of chanting them is becoming increasingly popular in all churches. It is always well, however, to remind scholars in our schools that for the meaning of obscure passages and expressions recourse should be had to the Bible.

3. In the Offertory sentences there is certainly an ambiguity in the wording of "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works," which is obviated by the R.V., "Even so let your light shine." But the same purpose is served by omitting the word "so," which really refers to the previous clause relating to the lamp.

4. In the Epistles and Gospels there may be passages which we should prefer to read from the R.V., especially in the case of the Epistle for the first Sunday after Easter, from 1 John v. Other instances are: John x. 16, where one *fold* is substituted for one *flock*; St. Mark xvi. 16, where we read, "He that believeth not shall be damned" (R.V. condemned)—the word "damned" having acquired a peculiar meaning, which does not belong to it etymologically. In 1 Cor. xi. 29, where a still greater objection lies to the word *damnation*, the marginal rendering *judgment* may well be substituted, as is always my personal use, in the Communion Office Exhortation. More will be said of these instances later on.

5. The first two opening sentences in the Burial Service have been spoken of as open to question, as (a) St. John xi. 25, 26; (b) Job xix. 25.

With regard to (a), the verse is also incorporated in the second collect of the same service, and again, partially, in the second prayer of the Baptismal Office.

The R.V. substitutes "though he die" for "though he were dead," but retains "shall never die" for *οὐ μὴ ἀποθανεῖται εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα*.

Bishop Westcott is very strong on the propriety of this rendering of *εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα*, as against the older version, "shall not die for ever," or, as in the Burial collect, "shall not die eternally."

The same point arises in the *Te Deum*, where "Ne confundar in eternum" is rendered "Let me never be confounded"; and in Psalm xv. 5, "He that doeth these things shall never fall." It would seem that in these instances, whatever may be said of other passages, the rendering "not for ever" or "not eternally" commends itself very strongly, and the rendering "shall never die" seems to the ordinary mind to convey a wrong impression.

The second sentence from Job xix. is much disputed as to its rendering and as to its reference to a future resurrection of the body. The R.V., however, does not differ very essentially from the A.V.; and though we cannot press the words "Redeemer" and "in My flesh," the general reference to a future vindication and a vision of God in another state warrant the use of the passage in this connection. The Vulgate rendering, which has "Scio enim quod Redemptor meus vivit, et in novissimo die de terra surrecturus sum; et rursum circumdabor pelle mea, et in carne mea videbo Deum meum," may well have influenced the ecclesiastical mind, and associated the passage with a more definite hope than the original could warrant.

II. Scriptural phrases incorporated into the language of the Prayer-Book. The following have occurred or been suggested to me:

1. *One fold for one flock* (Good Friday Collect).
2. *Comfortless for orphans* (Latin) or *desolate* (R.V.) (Collect for Sunday after Ascension Day).
3. "The brother whose praise is in the Gospel" applied to St. Luke (Collect).
4. St. John vi. 54, 56 applied to the Holy Communion. (Long Exhortation).
5. *Damnation for judgment* (Long Exhortation).
6. The rendering of *ὑπερέχουσα πάντα γούνα* in the Blessing after Holy Communion.

7. *Our vile body* in the Burial Service for *body of our humiliation* (R.V.).

8. *Everlasting* for *eternal* death (Catechism), *damnation* (Litany), *life* (Collect).

9. *Goodwill towards men* for *Among men in whom God is well pleased* (*Gloria in Excelsis*).

10. The use of Jas. i. 1 for the Epistle for St. Philip and St. James's Day, as identifying the Apostle with the writer of the Epistle. This instance does not really come under any of the three heads, and may be classed with the provision of Gen. xxviii. for St. Bartholomew's Day, as identifying the Apostle with Nathanael (*cf.* John i. 51).

Of the above, the most important are 1, 4, 5, 8, 9; 3 and 10 are matters of ecclesiastical antiquarianism; 2 is an inaccuracy endeared by association; 6 is also consecrated by use, and has the authority of the R.V.; 7 is hardly of the highest importance. To take most of these in order:

1. The substitution of *one fold* for *one flock* in John x. 16, though it may have been harmless at first, and indeed, if not unduly pressed, may be harmless still, has derived an importance from its being rooted in the phraseology of the Roman Church, and, to a mind unacquainted with Greek, from its appearing to assert the necessity of outward fellowship of Gentile and Jew under one human pastor, who is assumed to be the Bishop of Rome; or if the *human* pastor is not pressed, at any rate it lays stress upon the oneness of the organization of the Church, instead of upon the intercommunion of the members of the Church, who are the flock. So deeply is this version of our Lord's words ingrained into the minds of those who have been brought up in the Roman Communion that even Dr. Döllinger, in his lecture on "Reunion," written from a point of view as far as possible removed from being ultramontane, quotes the text thus at the conclusion of his last lecture, in which he has been expressing the most sanguine hopes of intercommunion between members of separated Churches, not of their incorporation into or submission to the Roman Church. One would have thought this the very opportunity for laying stress upon the original language. We naturally ask how it came about that this error of the Latin version came to remain in the English Bible. One would have supposed that a passage so liable to be abused would have attracted the attention of the various scholars, who from Tyndale onwards rendered directly from the Greek. Tyndale (1525-35), in fact, did correct it; but so strong was the influence of Wycliffe's Bible, which simply perpetuated the Latin error, that it was introduced into the Bible of 1539, and

actually retained its place in 1611. When Erasmus and even Beza retained *ovile* for the Greek *ποίμνη*, one sees how strong is the power of old associations. The error seems to have originally arisen from the carelessness of Jerome, the old Latin version distinguishing *ovile* and *grex*. Cyprian makes the correction; Augustine, in his commentary on the passage, does not note the distinction, though elsewhere he reads the passage correctly. The standard text of the Vulgate perpetuated and consecrated the error, which stares one in the face in letters of stone on the façade of the cathedral at Rouen.

5. The use of the word *damnation* in connection with the reception in an unworthy manner of the Elements in the Lord's Supper is a calamity too familiar to need much discussion. The word really conveys no more than the Latin does, and therefore is equivalent to condemnation in some penalty not defined, but varying. The English word, however, has come to have only one meaning, and that the most awful. The threat of increasing their damnation by receiving without due preparation, which is held out in the first warning in the Holy Communion, must therefore have acted as a deterrent beyond what was needed; and the repetition of the word in the Long Exhortation to actual communicants, derived from I Cor. xi., where only *κρμα* (not even *κατάκριμα*) is used, and where temporal judgments are expressly referred to in the context, is a blemish upon our Communion Office, which I think we may justly remove ourselves in reading it, because the word is manifestly an archaism, and not intended to convey what it signifies to common men.

The use of *everlasting* (instead of uniformly *eternal*) for the Greek word *αἰώνιος* is a stumbling-block to some. It may perhaps be supposed from the use of them both at once in the Burial Office, "thine eternal and everlasting glory," that the two words do not mean exactly the same thing; and there is no doubt that the latter is to most people synonymous with *endless*, whereas *eternal* is to be regarded as an equivalent for *αἰώνιος*, which has no corresponding word in English, and can only be rendered by the Latin word *eternal*. As, however, it is usual in the Prayer-Book to employ two words (synonymous or nearly so) when one is more intelligible to ordinary people than the other, it is quite possible that these two words were in the idea of the compilers of the Prayer-Book identical in meaning. It is only, therefore, in deference to recent controversies and distinctions that one would advocate the use of the word *eternal* in all cases—*e.g.*, eternal death in the Catechism, eternal damnation or condemnation in the Litany, and eternal life in John iii. 16 and other texts used in the

Prayer-Book, just as in Matt. xxv., last verse (R.V.), we have now *eternal* life and *eternal* punishment.

9. The version of the *Gloria in Excelsis* found in the Communion Office tallies with the A.V., and not with the R.V. and Vulgate, because it is a Greek hymn taken from the Codex Alexandrinus, which reads *ἐν ἀνθρώποις εὐδοκία, not εὐδοκίας*. There is much to be said in favour of both readings, but for myself I think the revisers have done well in adopting the reading of N and B, and assimilating our version of the angelic hymn to that commonly used in the Latin Church—*hominibus bonæ voluntatis*—though this latter phrase very inadequately expresses the original. *Goodwill towards men* does not convey any idea of the *εὐδοκία* of God towards man, but it is taken vaguely in the sense of good feeling between man and man, such as is associated with the season of Christmas.

We now come to (3). The collect for St. Luke's Day contains the phrase from 2 Cor. viii. 18, "whose praise is in the Gospel," assuming that the brother mentioned is St. Luke, though he is not expressly named. The point is argued at great length by Wordsworth in his edition of "St. Paul's Epistles," and he decides in favour of St. Luke by a process of elimination, there being only five other persons who answer to the description of the brother given in verse 19, as St. Paul's fellow-traveller and helper in the administration of the collection made for the relief of the poor Christians at Jerusalem. These five are Aristarchus, Secundus, Gaius of Derbe, Tychicus, and Trophimus, none of whom were such constant fellow-travellers of St. Paul on his journeys as St. Luke was, and none of whom, we may add, were of such note as to be described in such terms. The application of the words to St. Luke is supported by Origen, Primasius, Jerome, Ambrose, Chrysostom (but not always), Pelagius, Anselm, Cajetan, etc. Alford suggests Trophimus, and altogether rejects any reference to the written Gospel of St. Luke. It is plain that the expression in the Greek is a very strange one to bear this reference. If it were *διὰ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου*—"through his Gospel"—*ἐν πασαῖς ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις*—"in all the Churches"—reversing the prepositions, it would have sounded more like the Evangelist. It is more in accordance with New Testament usage to refer *εὐαγγέλιον* to an oral Gospel, as in Phil. iv., "who laboured with me in the Gospel." Enough authority, however, is found in Christian tradition to warrant the use of the expression in the collect, though one would hardly quote the Prayer-Book as an authority in the controversy. The date usually assigned to St. Luke's Gospel is 58-60 A.D., that of

2 Corinthians 57 or 58 A.D. This disposes of the reference to the written Gospel.

10. With regard to the use of the Epistle of St. James in connection with St. James the Less, our Prayer-Book adopts the conclusion that the Apostle was the same person as the Lord's brother, afterwards Bishop of Jerusalem and the writer of the Epistle. Though Bishop Lightfoot and Alford both distinguish these persons, the Article in Smith's "Bible Dictionary" concludes that they are the same. We cannot, therefore, say that the usage of the Prayer-Book has been discredited by later critics.

6. The rendering of *ὑπερέχουσα πάντα νοῦν* by *passing all understanding*, is no doubt liable to misconception. Lightfoot prefers "surpassing every counsel (or device) of man"—*i.e.*, "which is far better, and produces a higher satisfaction than all punctilious self-assertion or anxious forethought." The A.V. and R.V. are supported by another passage (Eph. iii. 20), "above all that we ask or think" (*νοοῦμεν*). Other interpretations are given by Alford from Calvin, Estius, Chrysostom, etc., but he adopts Erasmus: "Res felicior quam mens humana queat percipere." The alteration of so time-honoured a formula would be open to objection, even if more could be said against the usual rendering.

III. Passages expressly cited in support of doctrine.

1. St. John vi. 54, 55 in its application to the Eucharist.
2. St. Mark xvi. 16, cited in the Exhortation contained in the Baptism of Adults.
3. 1 Peter iii. 20, 21, in the same.

To these might be added the use of John iii. 5 in the same service. But it is hardly possible for anyone but a Quaker to dispute the reference to baptism in the words "born of water and the Spirit," whatever explanation of the words he may prefer.

1. This question is too long and important to come within the limits of this paper.

2. The citation of Mark xvi. 15, 16, not only contains the word *damned* before objected to, as conveying a wrong impression, but perhaps may be a stumbling-block to some, as involving a belief in the non-salvation of all the unbaptized. It is, however, to be noticed that the comment made on these words in the Exhortation goes no farther than this: "Which also showeth us the great benefit we reap thereby." Possibly also the doubt thrown upon the last twelve verses of this Gospel, owing to their omission from the two reputed oldest MSS. and on other grounds, would make us now unwilling to apply them to the doctrine of Baptism. Few, however, can doubt that, though they do not form part of the original

Gospel, the verse existed at a very early date and had a wide acceptance.

3. We now come to St. Peter's reference to Baptism in the third chapter of his first Epistle. The allusion to Noah's Ark was adopted in the first prayer of the Baptismal Office, and the passage is expressly cited in the Exhortation to which we have been referring; in the Office for Adults "even Baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God) by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ." The R.V. reads, "which also after a true likeness (or, in the antitype) doth now save you, even Baptism," the relative referring to the *water* going before. However disputed the reading and the rendering of the passage may be, it seems to make little difference to the general sense, which attributes saving virtue to Baptism. Only the Apostle is careful to qualify his words to guard against the idea that the washing of the body is meant, and by the introduction of the clause "by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ" points to the real source of salvation, upon which the efficiency of Baptism rests. The use of the word *ἐπερώτημα* for *answer* seems to point to a question and answer such as is used in Baptism.

On the whole, then, does it not appear that little would be gained by a revision of the Prayer-Book in respect of its use and application of Holy Scripture? Ought we not rather to depend upon increased Biblical knowledge to guard against misconception than to risk changes which, if they rest merely upon the present state of critical science, may, after all, be only provisional? The ancient and primitive instincts and traditions which our Prayer-Book has preserved and enshrined for us are not necessarily erroneous because they have been associated with texts which, to the severely critical eye of the nineteenth century, do not appear necessarily to substantiate them. The Prayer-Book, after all, is not merely for the learned, but for the simple, and we may do more harm than good by suggesting doubts on serious subjects, when we are only anxious to remove misunderstandings. The history of the R.V. of the New Testament contains, in my opinion, a plain warning against this danger. In our exposition of Holy Scripture we are free, as long as we do not make one passage contradict another. Our teaching should certainly be of a piece with the services of which our sermons form a part; but it is difficult to see that any advance in Biblical knowledge impairs the substantial unity of Church doctrine and Bible truth. Rather, indeed, the more closely we study the original of the New Testament, the more we shall find that the doctrines of our Church are

in accord with the real sense of Holy Writ, whereas the tenets of sects are too often based upon the private interpretations of individuals.

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ART. VII.—WILLIAM BLAKE : SEER AND MYSTIC.

“ **A** MAN perfect in his way, and beautifully unfit for walking in the way of any other man.” So Mr. Swinburne sums up his fellow-poet, and the phrase is more illuminative than many of the volumes, biographical and critical, which centre round the name of William Blake. For unlike other men as he undoubtedly was, unaccountable as his friends thought him, and unfit for the ordinary duties of life as his wife must often have found him, he was, after all, “ beautifully unfit,” and in that qualifying word lies the whole point of the description.

The son of a London hosier, born and brought up in Golden Square, it might have seemed that his prosaic surroundings must inevitably weigh down the soaring pinions of his soul; but the boy's mind was fixed, not on the outward circumstances of his life, but on things unseen, and from his earliest years his visions were more real to him than any natural objects. Coming home one day from a walk to Dulwich, he told his father that he had seen “ a tree filled with angels, bright wings bespangling every bough like stars ”; and when in 1771 he was apprenticed to James Basire, the engraver to the Society of Antiquities, the boy of fourteen, being sent to make a drawing in Westminster Abbey, “ suddenly saw the aisles and galleries filled with a great procession of monks and priests, choristers and censer-bearers, and his entranced ear heard the chant of plain-song and chorale, while the vaulted roof trembled to the sound of organ music.”

Such fancies have been shared by many precocious children, but Blake's artistic career was characterized by one peculiarity which is probably unique. “ I assert for myself,” he says, “ that I do not behold the outward creation, and that to me it is a hindrance.” Natural objects stood, as it were, between him and their spiritual essences, which alone he desired to express. “ What ? ” he says, “ it will be questioned, when the sun rises do you not see a round disc of fire, somewhat like a guinea ? Oh no, no ! I see an innumerable company of the heavenly host, crying Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty ! I question not my corporeal eye, any more than