

THE EXPOSITOR.

CRITICAL REMARKS ON THE TRANSLATION OF THE REVISED VERSION.

THERE are certain Greek constructions which still remain mysteries and challenge solution. Nor should this create surprise; for although principles of language have repeatedly been formulated in rules of grammar ever fashioned anew, nevertheless of these rules a few only are cardinal and serviceable, while of the rest some are quite useless, others obstructive and misleading, many even more obscure than the principles they profess to formulate. To the earnest student a modern syntax looks like a pathless forest, a tangle of despair. To rearrange and simplify these rules, a gifted grammarian would just now be a great boon. A few stars in philology appeared in the beginning of this century, such as Porson and Hermann and Buttman; men so keen of insight in the laws of language as to deserve the title of legislators in scholarship. A like power of intuition must have marked some of the first translators of the New Testament, a work admirably done; at any rate they appear in their renderings of certain texts to have seen, by a shrewd instinct, what their modern successors have failed to see by trained scholarship.

As one reads the Revised Version, there grows upon the mind an impression that it exhibits in its translations more labour than genius, more learning than judgment. Too often the noble forest cannot be seen for the particular

trees ; minute precision excludes vigorous intuition, and rigid grammar displaces common sense. This absence or scantiness of fine discernment both in linguistic principles and in rhythmical rendering appears to be a constitutional defect in the new translation ; a serious blemish it is, marking many of the thousand and one alterations that have been made. This lack of strong grasp and of fine taste may be just now exemplified in two instances out of many ; one a sample of awkward and ungainly English : “ I am not *sufficient* that thou shouldst enter under my roof ”—why not *meet* for *ικανός*, if indeed *worthy* must be altered?—the other a specimen of bewildering wordiness in the sentence (Acts xxvi. 16) : “ To appoint thee a minister and a witness both of the things wherein thou hast seen me, and of the things wherein I will appear unto thee.” This last instance seems to be a very frolic of verbiage ; moreover, as to the inner meaning, it may perhaps be fairly asked—How can a *person* be said to appear or be seen in a *thing*, and that twice over ? Nevertheless, it must be owned the Greek here is difficult. But notwithstanding this characteristic feebleness, numerous texts have in the Revised Version been retranslated for the better, and some of them very well done. If, therefore, the new translation shall by competent judges be pronounced a positive improvement upon the old, it will at the same time be designated an improvement that leaves large room for further improvement. In the hope of contributing somewhat to this “ further improvement ” the following paper is written. Its main object is to draw attention to certain principles of construction in Greek, which seem to have escaped the notice of scholars in general, and of the Revisers in particular. This necessitates a critical examination of certain renderings.

Unquestionably some half-dozen constructions of prime consideration have met with what may be termed summary treatment ; such, for instance, as relate to participial tenses,

or to obstinate nouns in $\mu\alpha$, or to the elastic middle voice, or to the accommodating $\acute{\iota}\nu\alpha$, or to the unobtrusive $\acute{\omega}\sigma\tau\epsilon$. Let the construction of the last-named $\acute{\omega}\sigma\tau\epsilon$ come first under review, as it is a quiet and unambitious particle, one that seems to care as little what verbal mood it ushers in as the Revision itself seems to have cared—in some prime instances at least.

It appears that Matthiæ could never “satisfy himself whether any or what difference exists between the construction of $\acute{\omega}\sigma\tau\epsilon$ with an infinitive and with an indicative.” And in fact, the cloud, which full fifty years ago enveloped these two constructions, leaving them an undistinguishable one, is even now slow to melt, slow to roll away; a certain haze still lingers about them, and many scholars do but dimly discern that the two eminences as they come to view are parted from each other by a deep depression between them. The difference is as great as the difference between $\omicron\upsilon$ and $\mu\acute{\eta}$, and much the same. It may be said that $\acute{\omega}\sigma\tau\epsilon$ with the indicative points to something *actual*, with the infinitive to something *contemplated*. This “something” is often, not always, a *result*. The first of these two may be called the *objective* use of $\acute{\omega}\sigma\tau\epsilon$, the second the *subjective*. And yet this distinction, broad as it is, would be hardly correct, because it is evident that the particle is in itself quite indifferent, by its own confession perfectly neutral and equally flexible to either mood, ever ready to fingerpoint alike the steady indicative or the airy infinitive. The real difference, therefore, between the two constructions resides in the mood of the verb that happens to follow $\acute{\omega}\sigma\tau\epsilon$: and if the indicative mood may be termed objective as denoting what is actual, and the infinitive mood subjective as denoting what is mental or contemplated,—in that case certainly this or that use of $\acute{\omega}\sigma\tau\epsilon$, being determined by the nature of the mood that follows it, may be called its objective or subjective use. It is in the mood, therefore, and not in the

particle, that the idea of what is actual and of what is conceptual resides.

If the above theory is true, we cannot in propriety render ὥστε τινὰ θαυμάσαι "so that some one wondered," any more than we can render in an apodosis τινὰ θαυμάσαι "some one wondered." The Greek for "so that some one wondered" is ὥστε τὶς ἐθαύμασεν, and for the precise reason that τὶς ἐθαύμασεν by itself means "some one wondered."

On this principle let us proceed to examine a certain text, 1 Corinthians v. 1, ὥστε γυναικὰ τινα ἔχειν, where the translation in the Authorised Version "that one should have his father's wife" has been altered into "that one of you hath his father's wife." Is this new rendering grammatically possible on the principle stated above? Just as grammatically possible as to translate ἔχειν in apodosis "he hath" is grammatically possible. For it has been shewn that ὥστε has in itself no governing power, is in itself but an index, a mere fingerpost or stepping-stone conducting to some verb or other beyond it, whether to ἔχει or to ἔχειν or to ἔχοι or to ἔχοι ἄν, what cares ὥστε? The particle is supremely indifferent, probably quite unconscious, neither knowing nor caring to know whether it guides the reader to an infinitive or to an indicative or even to an optative with or without ἄν. Hence it appears that the ἔχειν in this text is not at all governed or controlled by ὥστε, but simply indicated by it. The infinitive, in fact, if an infinitive which denotes what is conceptual and not what is actual can be said to stand at all, stands by itself. That the ὥστε and the ἔχειν are in construction independent of each other, may be further shewn by the frequent absence of this particle before the infinitive, for instance κλύειν or μαθεῖν, just as in English to wit.

Possibly in this text (1 Cor. v. 1) the infinitive in its true idea would be better satisfied, if it were represented thus in the whole passage rendered thus: "Absolutely (ὄλως) it

is reported that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not among the Gentiles; namely, for a man to have his father's wife." And no doubt ὥστε likewise, as a sign pointing *forward*, would be well content to be represented by *for*. Nevertheless this suggested rendering would be no improvement upon that of the Authorised Version. Why so? Because in the latter the words *that one should have* really make the general and subjective idea of the clause just as prominent as do the words *for one to have*. For the *subjunctive* and *infinitive* are both alike moods of conception or contemplation, precisely as the *indicative* is the mood of action. The truth of the matter is, if we must sound this construction to the very bottom, the rendering "for one to have" is more *literal* and closer to the Greek ὥστε τινα ἔχειν, whereas the Authorised rendering, "that one should have," is more *idiomatic* and less close to the Greek. The proper Greek for the translation *that one should have* would be ἵνα τις ἔχη. But in a sentence of this form, with *τοιαύτη* in the apodosis, what is the difference between ὥστε τινα ἔχειν and ἵνα τις ἔχη; Just none at all. This might be shewn at length, did space permit. If then the Authorised idiomatic and the suggested literal forms of rendering are equivalents, each yielding the same sense in substance, which is to be preferred here? The idiomatic one of the Authorised Version. Why so? Because it fits in better with what goes before; because it goes along in easy continuity, running in harness and in harmony with its leader. In fact, the translation of the Authorised Version can hardly be improved. And yet it has been expunged in the Revised Version, and replaced by a new rendering that simply rends the grammar, confounds mood with mood, identifies objective with subjective: that is, of course, if the theory propounded in the outset is true. Moreover the inserted genitive *of you* in italics is a somewhat solid importation.

But supposing for a moment the new rendering were grammatically possible, would it on *ethical* grounds be probable? Far from it: quite alien to St. Paul's tender consideration for others would be such a direct personal allusion as is couched in the phrase "that one of you *hath*." It would almost cast a slur on the Apostle's characteristic courtesy and gentle method of dealing with a lapsed Christian. Whereas if we translate *that one* or *any one should have his father's wife*, or perhaps more accurately still, *should have for wife his father's*, according to this rendering St. Paul is made to put a particular case in general terms, covering the *individual* offender with the broad screen of a possible *class* of such offenders. Just as when a member of a Corporation by ill advice misleads the rest, the individual shielded by the Society escapes the scornful pointing of the public finger.

Akin to this error in 1 Corinthians v. 1, and a member of the same family, is another error, one of omission in this instance, not of commission as in the former. In 1 Corinthians i. 7, the Greek *ἐβεβαιώθη ἐν ὑμῖν, ὥστε ὑμᾶς μὴ ὑστερεῖσθαι ἐν μηδεὶν χαρίσματι* is translated in both Versions "was confirmed in you: (why so big a stop as a colon here?) so that ye come behind in no gift." It may be remarked that if this English were turned into good Greek, the *ὑμᾶς* would be changed into *ὑμεῖς*, *μὴ* into *οὐχ*, *ὑστερεῖσθαι* not into *ὑστερεῖσθε* but into *ὑστερεῖτε*: for *ὑστερεῖτε* means *ye come behind*, *ὑστερεῖσθε* *ye feel behindhand*. In this one clause there are two mistakes made in the Authorised Version and neither of them unmade in the Revised Version. It is at once evident from the subjective form of the construction that the Apostle does not mean to declare as an objective fact that the Corinthian converts were not inferior to other Christian communities in respect of charismata or gifts bestowed: rather he appeals to their *consciousness* of equality with any other Church in all

spiritual endowments. He appeals to this consciousness of equality as a felt result and, it may be, as an internal evidence of their confirmation in the faith. This more correct view of the clause may be expressed in the following retranslation: "The testimony of Christ was confirmed in you, *causing you not to feel behindhand* in any one gift." It may be added that the subjective negative *μή* serves to corroborate, what needs no corroboration at all, namely the subjectivity of the infinitive *ὑστερεῖσθαι*, making the objectivity of the whole clause, impossible before, more impossible still.

"But," some one will say, "it may be all quite true—this distinction of yours between the two constructions of *ὥστε*. No doubt the theory fits in well enough with the foregoing texts, and with others besides, it may be: nevertheless, there are numerous texts in which this theory can hardly hold good, for instance St. Matthew xii. 22, 'and He healed him, *insomuch that* the dumb man *spake* and *saw*': where the Greek is *ἔθεράπευσεν αὐτόν, ὥστε τὸν τυφλὸν λαλεῖν καὶ βλέπειν*. Surely you must allow that the rendering of this clause in both Versions is a good one." Answer to the objection: It is true that the rendering of the *ὥστε* clause, common to both Versions, gives the sense well enough, and perhaps the Revisers were wise in leaving the English text undisturbed, simply on the principle of *μή κίνει Καμάριναν*. Nevertheless, though it may stand on moral grounds, it cannot stand at all on grammatical. For consider: if *ὥστε* is a facile particle, as it is, passive, ductile, ready to point at any time to any of the four moods, then *λαλεῖν* to *talk* or *βλέπειν* to *see* is no more affected by the particle than the wind is by a weathercock. In fact, the Infinitive is inexorable in its mood, and will not condescend to stand like the Indicative on the *terra firma* of objectivity (as in *he spake and saw*), but insists on floating in the buxom air of subjectivity (as in *to talk* and *to see*).

“But,” comes again the voice of the objector, “what *does* it matter? In spite of subjectivity and objectivity and similar flashes of inventivity, surely the plain meaning is given in the plain English *insomuch that he spake and saw*. The pure gold of sound sense is here: why gild it? The lily of truth is here; why paint it? The grammar may be quite wrong, but the logic is all right.” Answer: No doubt the sense given is sound enough, although the grammar be rent in twain; but are you so sure about the *logic*? Consider: in the rendering *insomuch that* (a big word for modest ὡστε) *he spake and saw*, which of the two comes most to view, the effect or the cause? Clearly the effect. The effect of what cause? As clearly, the effect of the inward cure wrought by the Lord. Unquestionably the plain meaning, as you call it, of the clause is given in both Versions, for the simple reason that it is obvious from the context or circumstances or nature of the case, that such effect of speaking and of seeing must follow such cause, namely, a thorough cure of a man dumb and blind. For that the cure was thorough, and wrought from within before the effects were seen from without, is patent from the aorist tense of ἐθεράπευσεν. But notwithstanding the sufficiency of the received translation for the ordinary reader, it is a thing to be well noted that the structure of the clause in Greek, while it makes apparent the outward effects or visible fruits of the inward cure, at the same time makes more conspicuous the inward cure as cause of such effect. For this reason it seems that the grammar would be more correct, and the logic more perfect, and the sense more true, and the “gold” more refined, if the clause in question were rendered, “And he healed him, causing the blind man to speak and to see,” or more simply “making him talk and see.” In this suggested rendering the cure, as cause, is made more prominent; in the received one the talking and seeing as effects. It may be remarked by the way

that *θεραπεύειν* means *to cure*, *ἰᾶσθαι* *to heal*; while *λαλεῖν* often, not always, means *to talk*, and *λέγειν* *to speak* or *say*.

“But,” again is heard the voice of one complaining, “there are so many other texts, sir, in which *ὥστε* occurs with the infinitive, where—but no doubt what you said just now about *ὥστε* with the indicative is all correct, for I have just glanced through all the instances of Bruder’s Concordance. But what have you to say now about a text like this (Matt. xiii. 32): ‘But when it is grown, it is greater than the herbs, and becometh a tree, *so that* the birds of the heaven *come* and *lodge* in the branches thereof’? What now becomes of your theory of cause and effect? Can you without affectation, sir, speak of any tree *causing* any fowl to come and lodge in its branches? Where is now your ‘buxom’ subjectivity, as you are pleased to call it? It melts into the air, in which you say it floats! For my part, being a plain scholar, I much prefer the downright, straightforward, manly objectivity of the Revised Version, sir! Give me the *terra firma* of plain sense level to an honest mind. To achieve this end, why should not two moods be fused and melted into one, if the solution comes out clear? Why should not infinitives on the wing (if I may pluck a plume from your own figurative style) be identified sometimes with indicatives on the tramp? Or, better still, why should not the eagle of subjectivity soaring in the air be now and then taken for the lion of objectivity roaring in the plain? What after all if your finespun subjectivity, sir, is but the homespun of your imaginativeness, sir? Excuse this bluntness of speech: I may have overshot the mark, but you will allow at least there is a difficulty here.” Answer: As to my style, I find it difficult in dealing with abstractions to avoid the use of metaphor. No doubt there is, as you say, a difficulty here; yet a difficulty, I venture to think, not insurmountable. But in solving it we must, I fear, again plunge into the mazes

of subjectivity. And the clue to this labyrinth is the language again of metaphor. For the bearings of abstract principles are best elucidated by the application of familiar images. The question just now before us is, whether the clause *ὥστε ἐλθεῖν τὰ πετεινά κ.τ.λ.* rendered "so that the birds come and build" invalidates the theory propounded above, of the broad difference between *ὥστε* with the indicative and with the infinitive. In other words, can this clause be fairly and honestly so re-translated as not to shake that theory? Nothing easier: for if the severe objectivity of a clause with the indicative may be compared to a rigid stump bare of boughs, the pliant subjectivity of a clause with the infinitive may be likewise compared to a facile stem spreading into branches. This image will facilitate the solution of the seeming difficulty. Flexible subjectivity puts forth several branches, all akin to one another in substance but differing in form: and their substance is mental conception. Now two or three of these branches of the contemplative, all of them *ὁμόριζοι* have already appeared in clauses already discussed; for instance *that one should have his father's wife*, or (a distinction without an appreciable difference) *for one to have his father's wife*; and again *causing or inspiring you to feel behindhand in no one gift*. And what if another branch should shoot forth *ὁμόριζος* from the same stem of fertile subjectivity? And another after that? Are there not passages to be found in the Greek Testament similar in structure to (Ædip. Col. 969)—

*ἐπεὶ διδάξον, εἴ τι θέσφατον πατρὶ
χρησμοῖσιν ἰκνεῖθ', ὥστε πρὸς παίδων θανεῖν?*

What does the *ὥστε* clause mean in these lines? Aught objective or actual? Or does the eagle of the air scorn to be identified with the lion of the plain? The bird contemns the beast. Certainly the subordinate *ὥστε* clause here

serves to specify the contents of the oracle of Apollo; and so the passage may be translated, *If there came to a father an oracle in lays* (to the effect) *that he should die by a son*. But this quotation from Sophocles merely by the way, to shew that in all clauses with ὥστε and the infinitive the real difficulty lies in determining the special line on which the mental conception moves. Starting always from the same station of subjectivity the conception takes the line sometimes of *design* or *intent*, as in ὥστε ὁρᾶν *for to see*, or of what is akin to this idea the line of *contemplated result*; sometimes again that of *definition* or explanation in detail of something general that has gone before, sometimes again of *degree* or *extent*—not actual, of course, but potential or viewed as a natural or possible consequence.

Perhaps the above classification might be simplified and reduced to fewer lines. But it is sufficiently obvious from all that has been said, that in all these instances of ὥστε with the infinitive the context, the preceding context, alone determines the precise shade of meaning, alone determines what particular direction the conception may take on leaving the station of subjectivity; in other and more accurate language, alone determines with what specific circumstantial sense the essential sense (always an invariable quantity and in these instances pure *mental conception*) may choose to clothe itself.

In the text St. Matthew xiii. 32, extent or degree or capacity is the particular result contemplated, and the passage may be rendered, "The mustard seed becomes a tree *allowing* the birds of the air to come and lodge in its branches," that is, a large tree, making it possible, or a tree big *enough* for the birds to build therein. This again may be improved and simplified into "becometh a tree *for* the birds to come and build in its branches." (No need of any punctuation after the word "tree.") One more instance may be added, involving an ambiguity which neither grammar nor con-

text can solve. From the *ὥστε πλανῆσαι* of St. Matthew xxiv. 24, are we to infer that the magicians of the last days will work stupendous miracles “*enough to lead astray the elect*” or “*for to lead astray the elect*”? Does the Greek clause denote a result contemplated as possible or natural by spectators from the outside, or does it point to design and purpose conceived by the magicians themselves? That seems to be a question which remains to be settled by the context of future history.

It may be added, in conclusion, that the above stated theory seems *elastic enough to suit* (*ὥστε συναρμόττειν* I dare not say *ὥστε συναρμόττει* so elastic that it does suit, any more than I dare translate *ὥστε τινα ἔχειν* that one has) most, if not all, of the *ὥστε* clauses in the Greek Testament. The theory not only insists upon a radical difference between the objective use of *ὥστε* with the indicative and its subjective use with the infinitive, but also maintains that, while the former is rigid and uniform, the latter is pliable and manifold, not a *platanus cælebs* or stately bachelor, but a ramifying paterfamilias. If the principle is a true one, it would have been better, more edifying even for the ordinary reader, had it been more frequently applied by the learned Revisers. It remains an open question whether it was worth while to make alterations in a large class of texts wherein the sense is sufficiently given in the Authorised Version, albeit given at the cost of much grammar and some logic. One sample of this class is 1 Thessalonians i. 7, where the proper Greek for the retained rendering *so that ye became an ensample*, would of necessity be *ὥστε ὑμῖν ἐγένεσθε τύπος*. Here, however, it is possible that the principle of “let well alone” might well apply, lest what had been made by alteration grammatically and logically better, might prove, because of alteration, morally worse, in disturbing the cherished associations of time-hallowed phrase.

The construction of *participial tenses* comes next under review. In this branch of scholarship imperfects and aorists alike seem to have been treated in the Revised Version with a lack of diagnosis sometimes disastrous, in a few cases fatal to the true idea.

But its examination may furnish material for another Article. Meanwhile some light food for critical rumination is provided in the rendering of *εἴπερ* and *εἴγε*. These significant particles appear in the Revision to have met with much the same treatment as *ὥστε* with its two moods, or as the participles with their two or three tenses. They are simply undifferentiated. The rendering of both *εἴπερ* and *εἴγε* in the New Version is one and the same: it is *if so be that*. This bracketing of inequalities serves to demolish the true idea in a few texts, for instance, 2 Corinthians v. 3, where see Mr. Waite's note of explanation in the "Speaker's Commentary."

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THE SECOND PSALM.

THE second Psalm has many and distinguished claims on our regard. No other psalm is so frequently quoted in the New Testament. It is the most dramatic, as it is also one of the most beautiful, lyrics in the whole Psalter. It is rife with Messianic indications. It is one of the earliest, heartiest, and most re-assuring proclamations of that final and complete triumph of good over evil in which Christ has taught us to hope.

On all these grounds, then, the Psalm claims and commands our attention. And yet we know, and can know, absolutely nothing whether of its date, its occasion, or its authorship. It "rings with the tramp of gathering armies and notes of lofty challenge." It seems to have been