

points like as we are"—and that He is able thus to succour them that are tempted. Oh the mystery of God manifest in flesh!—the great secret of Christianity, into which if angels desire to look, how much more those for whose sake "He took not on Him the nature of angels, but took on Him the seed of Abraham," and was "in all things made like unto His brethren"!

JOSIAH GILBERT.

THE WORK OF BIBLE REVISION IN GERMANY.

II.

CRITICAL PART.

BEFORE we attempt to put the English reader in a position for estimating the worth of the so-called "Probibibel," we give, on behalf of those who wish for more precise information, a list of the most important critiques, which have appeared in a pamphlet form—thus not, or not merely, in magazines.

Plitt, *Die Revision der lutherischen Bibelübersetzung und die Halle'sche Probibibel von 1883*. Karrlsruhe, 1884; pp. 39.

L. Krummel, *Die Probibibel*. Heidelberg, 1885; pp. 70.

H. Opitz, *Zur Revision der Luther'schen Uebersetzung des neuen Testaments. Ein Urtheil über die Probibibel*. Leipzig, 1884; pp. 69.

E. Walter, *Die sprachliche Behandlung des Textes in der Probibibel*. Bernburg, 1885; pp. 16.

E. Walter, *Die Sprache der revidirten Lutherbibel*. Bernburg, 1885; pp. 58.

O. H. Th. Willkomm, *Was ist von der beabsichtigten Revision der Luther'schen Bibelübersetzung zu halten?* Zwickau, 1884; pp. 24.

E. Haack, *Wider die Hallesche Probepibel. Auch ein Appell an die lutherische Kirche.* Leipzig, 1885 ; pp. 34.

E. Haack, *Noch einmal pro domo und contra Schlottmann in Sachen der Probepibel.* Leipzig, 1885 ; pp. 25.

Th. Hossbach, *Die revidierte Lutherbibel.* Berlin, 1884 ; pp. 16.

M. Schwalb, *Kritik der revidierten Lutherbibel.* Berlin, 1884 ; pp. 36.

E. Zittel, *Die Revision der Lutherbibel.* Berlin, 1885 ; pp. 47.

P. de Lagarde, *Die revidierte Lutherbibel des Halleschen Waisenhauses.* Goettingen, 1885 ; pp. 40.

The majority of the strict Lutherans are on principle opponents of the work of revision. Luther's version, say they, is the property of the German Lutheran Church, and must not therefore, save as regards single, trifling, and not startling amendments, be altered. By important alterations not only would great offence be given to the simple Bible-believing reader, conversant with the words of Luther's Bible, but likewise not a few German hymns would be deprived more or less of their Biblical support. The main exponents of this tendency are Chr. E. Luthardt in Leipzig, and Th. Kliefoth in Schwerin (Mecklenburg), comp. *Allgemeine Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirchenzeitung*, Nos. 2 and 15 ; as, moreover, E. Haack. Such a clinging to the letter of Luther's work is, however, neither according to the mind of the great Reformer nor according to the mind of all true Lutherans ; the subsequently renowned Klaus Harms, in the year 1817 (when he was archdeacon in Kiel), laid down the following theses among others :

" 53. A translation, however, into a living language, must be revised every hundred years, that it may continue in life.

" 54. It has been a hindrance to the influence of religion that this has not been done. The Bible Societies ought to prepare a revised Lutheran Bible-translation."

In life it often happens that extremes meet; so also in the rejection of the work of revision, adherents of two otherwise diametrically opposite theological tendencies are agreed. The reasons adduced, however, by the spokesmen of the left are, without doubt, the much more valid and important ones; and only the disparaging tone in which these men frequently express their judgment on the laborious work of the Revisers, and the fact that they pay no regard, or no sufficient regard, to the feelings of the believing laity and the practical requirements of the Church, have occasioned that their statements have made less impression than they might otherwise have made (comp. *e.g.* Schwalb). Particularly harsh, and sometimes very unjust, is the judgment of P. de Legarde.

If we would rightly appreciate the work of revision, as respects the correction of Luther's version, we have first to ask: What was the task assigned to the revisers? The Eisenach Conference had resolved in the year 1863, that "the comparatively few [!] passages, in the first place of the New Testament, whose alteration, in other words correction, might appear necessary and unobjectionable [!] in the interest of the understanding of Scripture, should be restored in a manner faithfully according with the sense, and as far as possible from the linguistic treasure of the Luther Bible, in conformity with the original text." These terms were essentially satisfied by the New Testament which appeared in 1870, wherein the translation of about eighty passages had been corrected; and the Commission appointed for the Old Testament has done considerably more than was enjoined on it, for the canonical books of the Old Testament show about three thousand real alterations, the Apocrypha about one thousand.

The matter wears another complexion, however, when it is asked: Was the task rightly defined? and is that which has been rendered to be characterized as objectively good,

as satisfying all legitimate claims? To this question we must, alas! return answer in the negative.

Considering the high estimation in which Luther's translation is held among all believing Protestants of German tongue, it is certainly justifiable that, in connexion with every work of revision, the effort should be made to preserve for the German Bible as far as possible the impress of Luther's spirit. Absolute verbal exactness need not be striven after, nay, ought not to be striven after; for often a somewhat divergent German turn reproduces the sense much better for the German reader than a slavishly verbal translation of the original text. Particularly in those passages which have become familiar and endeared to the layman owing to their employment in worship and in the Church's hymns, one must be cautious in making alterations. On various grounds (that of attachment, history of exegesis, history of the German language) it is necessary that the original form of Luther's work be not lost, but retained for all time.

The translation of Luther, however, must not occupy the same position which the Vulgate does with the Roman Catholics, but must in such wise be revised from time to time, on behalf of those to whom the immutable, and alone authentic, original texts are inaccessible, that it shall admit the certain and acknowledged results of advanced science, and so, as far as possible, afford a substitute for the originals. So soon as the *that* (the *öri*) of the corrections is resolved on—and the opposition in principle to corrections is, as we have mentioned, unprotestant—we must also be consistent and expunge all that is really incorrect. Where the erroneousness of the rendering is beyond doubt, but there is a want of unanimity as to that which is to replace it, the course which commends itself is to indicate the other possibility (possibilities) on the margin. It is no harm if the layman also is reminded here and there that the

investigation of Holy Scripture is no light undertaking. Unhappily the revisers, feeling themselves bound by the resolution of the Eisenach Conference, were not self-consistent; they have, it is true, made many amendments, particularly in the Old Testament and the Apocrypha, but likewise left many errors untouched. 2 Kings vii. 5, 7, *nèsheph* denotes not "diluculum," but "crepusculum." Ps. i. 2, *jèhge* is not "redet" (speaks), but "nachsinnt" (meditates); cf. Josh. i. 8, where the same verb is more correctly rendered "betrachte." Ps. xxii. 17 [16], "Sie haben meine Hände und Füße durchgraben," does not stand in the original text; *kaäri* signifies "wie ein Löwe" (as a lion). Ps. xxix. 6, *r'em* is not "Einhorn" (*μονόκερωσ*), but "Büffel" (buffalo). Numerous other instances are to be found in several of the above-mentioned pamphlets.

The mode of procedure adopted with regard to Textual Criticism is altogether unsatisfactory. Luther translated the New Testament from the second edition of Erasmus (1519). The verdict of Professor Edward Reuss of Strassburg on this text is, that it was "more of a mercantile business than a scientific undertaking, and was got up (bearbeitet) hastily and with very inadequate aids." And Franz Delitzsch has shown that the concluding part of the Apocalypse was translated by Erasmus, who had no Greek manuscript for these verses, out of the Vulgate into the Greek (cf. Delitzsch, *Handschriftliche Funde*, i., Leipzig, 1861). And this text has been in substance retained by the revisers of the New Testament, and only amended by them in a few places (cf. *Probebibel*, p. liv.). The fruits of the labour of J. Mill, Albr. Bengel, J. J. Wetstein, J. J. Griesbach, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Westcott and Hort have been left unturned to account. There is thus much still printed in the "Probebibel" as the word of God, which exists in none of the earliest manuscripts, nor is to be found with any of the earliest Church Fathers. I do not

need to prove that Luther's version, even on this account, must once more be submitted to a thorough revisal. The textual criticism of the Old Testament has not made such great advances; as for Luther, so also for the present day, the main demand in a translation is that the Massoretic text be accurately rendered. Now it not rarely happens that this text is corrupt; in many passages it stands so that the undoubtedly correct reading may be discovered from a parallel passage, from the context, or from the ancient translations, in others so that nothing certain is to be determined regarding the emendation to be made. In regard to neither case is the procedure of the Revisers either clear or consistent. Many deviations from the original text have not been indicated at all, in the case of others square brackets have been employed; on more than one occasion manifestly false readings have been left without the sign of corruptness being added (*e.g.* 1 Sam. xiii. 1; 2 Sam. xv. 7). The square brackets [] serve often as a sign that something is to be expunged, as 1 Sam. vi. 12; often as a sign that something has been added, as 1 Chron. vi. 61 (Hebr. text, vi. 46).

The Treatment of the Language has given very great offence, particularly in pædagogic circles, and with good reason. The German language is a living tongue, one undergoing constant further development and mutation. How greatly the German language has changed within the last three centuries and a half is seen upon a mere cursory glance at the work of Bindseil, to which I have alluded in the first article. The language of the printed Bible has, specially under the influence of Diekmann and the Halle Institute, been gradually modernised, made to approach more nearly to the present of a particular time; this modernising, however, has been carried out neither in a skilful nor in a consistent manner, so that a thorough revision of the linguistic garb of the Luther-bible was

called for. What demands, then, have we to make upon such a revision? It is self-evident that the language of the Bible must in itself produce upon the reader the impression that he has before him an extraordinary book. Many an archaic form, therefore, may be retained in the word-treasure and in the constructions. But these archaisms must neither be unintelligible nor too startling. In consequence of the rhyme and rhythm archaisms are easily preserved in the Church's hymns; what has in this way, or by means of proverbs and the like, been prevented from entirely disappearing from the mind of the people, may still be retained, notably in so far as it is yet to be found in recent editions of the Luther-bible. But it is an error artificially to preserve in the Bible archaisms which have become altogether foreign to the people, and to render them in some measure intelligible only by means of a glossary bound up with the text; and a yet greater error to attempt to recall such archaisms to life, after they had already disappeared from the editions of the Bible now in use. Unhappily the "Probibibel" is not free from these mistakes; cf. Zittel, p. 22 sqq.; de Lagarde, p. 3 sqq.; Plitt, p. 15 sqq. (who says that the language of the Proof-bible is in many places partly unintelligible, partly inelegant), and others. Dr. Frommann (Nürnberg), who was charged with the shaping of the linguistic garb, is a learned Germanist, and in particular the best living connoisseur of the language of Luther, and he has without doubt acquired great merit by the removal of many errors which had crept in; but his labour must be subjected to a thorough super-revision at the hands of men experienced in teaching, in order that it may become of use, *i.e.* intelligible, for the laity, and more especially for the school.

Of comparative insignificance are the remaining *desiderata*, to which I have to give expression with regard to the "Probibibel." The Transcription of the Proper Names

leaves much to be desired, by the further particularising of which here nothing is to be gained. Yet for English readers, no less than Germans, the following proposal will be of interest. Several kings of Judah and Israel notably bear the same name. Professor Kamphausen has recommended that for the kings of Judah the fuller form be everywhere employed (Ahazyahu, Yehoram, Yehoash, Yehoahaz), for the Israelite kings the shorter form (Ahazya, Yoram, Yoash, Yoahaz). The understanding of the Old Testament history would be essentially facilitated by compliance with this advice; we recommend, therefore, that the example set by Kamphausen be followed throughout.

The Division into Chapters in the different impressions of Luther's Bible frequently deviates from the division in the editions of the Hebrew Old Testament. In a few cases the Revisers have brought about an identity, in others not. Certainly the division in the Hebrew impressions is in many places an awkward one; nevertheless it must be retained, and where wanting restored, in order that it may be possible at once to consult all citations at pleasure, whether in the original or in the translation.

In the Historic Books the traditional dates have been added to the names of the kings in the superscriptions of the sections. It has been proved, however, notably by the results obtained by the exploration of the cuneiform inscriptions, that these dates are in part incorrect; only it is not yet known what are the true years. For this reason there should be given, at a suitable place, instead of these dates, a list in double columns of the rulers of the two kingdoms, wherein the fully assured synchronisms are indicated.

In the above report on the Bible Revision in Germany, I have dwelt almost exclusively on the imperfections of the work, in the hope of thus affording so much the greater incentive to the readers of *THE EXPOSITOR*. In conclusion,

however, I will not omit emphatically to state that the "Probibibel" possesses very great excellences in comparison with all other editions of Luther's Bible. We should deeply lament it, if the Revisers were to suffer themselves to be deterred by the severity, and even acrimony, with which the Proof-bible has been assailed on many sides, from testing the substance of the objections raised, and so far as possible paying regard to them. The removal of the incongruous archaisms would in itself suffice to render the Proof-bible a work of which the universal introduction and recognition were desirable. Notwithstanding, since every fresh revisal of the Bible must deeply stir the minds of believers, we would fain give expression to the urgent wish that the Revisers may persevere for the sake of the kingdom of God, until such time as their labour shall be brought to a completion which shall afford a lasting satisfaction. Unhappily there is reason to fear that the multitude of faults found, the contradictory views expressed in the critiques, and the opposition of the extreme parties, will exert a discouraging, nay deterrent effect upon the Revisers. God grant that this toilsome labour may, nevertheless, bring forth abundant fruit.

HERMANN L. STRACK.

Berlin.

GOLD, BEDOLACH, AND SHOHAM STONE.

A GEOGRAPHICAL AND MINERALOGICAL STUDY OF
GENESIS II., VERSES 10 TO 14.

THE site of Eden and the identification of its rivers have been among the most vexed questions of Biblical geography; and while the most extravagant hypotheses have been put forward with much ability and learning, many of the more