

urged him to revise the Latin Version, he refused, because if he changed anything the people would curse him, as it was their *Bible*. And when at length he yielded, he determined to change nothing save where fidelity to the original obliged him. And surely of all things the Lord's Prayer would be the last thing he would lay his hands on to change a word of it. Yet the doxology does not stand in the Vulgate, as it came out of Jerome's hands. And not only so, but Origen in the third century, the greatest biblical scholar of

his day, knew nothing of the doxology. For in his treatise on Prayer, he comments on every clause of the Lord's Prayer, and closes with "Deliver us from evil" without a word about a doxology following. As a prayer, of course, no one would utter it without a doxology. But our Lord needed not to prescribe any form for that, as the Old Testament and the Jewish prayers all end in such forms, and it gradually crystallised in the present form. Dr. Scrivener gave way, but not convinced.

Renderings and Readings in the Revised New Testament.

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THERE is reason to fear that, during the decade which has elapsed since the Revised Version of the New Testament was published, it has not risen in public estimation. This is very much to be regretted, as it undoubtedly contains many important improvements on the Authorised Version. But the sad fact exists, that probably no such lamentable failure of a literary kind is to be found in the annals of this century as is presented in the history and fate of the Revised Version. When we call to mind the years of patient labour which were spent over the work, and the names of those illustrious scholars (many of them now departed) who took part in it, language almost fails to express the sorrow which is felt on account of the little practical fruit which has resulted from so much learned and protracted toil.

Yes; it must be sorrowfully owned that the Revised New Testament is, to all intents and purposes, *dead*, if not buried. An occasional reference may be made to it in the pulpit, and it may sometimes be consulted in private devotional reading, but it has taken no hold on the popular mind, and has utterly failed to replace the imperfect, yet dearly loved, Authorised Version in the affections of the community. Let me give an illustration. I recently met with a very intelligent gentleman, who casually remarked that he had just bought a handsome copy of the New Testament; and, in answer to a question which I ventured to put to him, he added:

"Oh! it was the Old Version that I bought; I should never think of spending money on the new one." Cases of this kind abound throughout the country, and thus the Revised Version, with all its wealth of learned and important emendation, has been practically consigned to oblivion and neglect.

But, however much the fact referred to is to be deplored, it is nevertheless one which admits of a very easy explanation. The reason of it is, I believe, to be found in the vast amount of unnecessary change which was made by the Revisers. To ensure success for their work, not a word of the Authorised Version ought to have been altered, except under the pressure of a clear necessity. All the familiar rhythm and melody of the old translation should have been sacredly preserved, unless some very decided gain was to be made by a change of rendering, or faithfulness urgently demanded the adoption of a different text. But that plain principle has been violated over and over again in the Revised Version. The most finical alterations have been admitted, with no appreciable benefit, and simply to the irritation of the reader. Take the following out of many other examples. In the Lord's Prayer, as recorded by St. Matthew (vi. 13), instead of the words, "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil," we find in Revised Version, "And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil *one*," where, to say nothing of the substitution of "the evil one" for

"evil," we have the pedantic change of "bring us not into temptation," for "lead us not into temptation"—a change which can never commend itself to the English ear accustomed to the old form of the words. Again, at St. John vii. 19, for the rendering of the Authorised Version—"Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law?" we find in Revised Version—"Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you doeth the law?" where "doeth" is substituted for "keepeth," in the vain and useless effort to discriminate between two different Greek verbs, and with the result of introducing a very awkward English expression. Once more, we turn to St. John xvii. 24, and we there read as follows in Authorised Version—"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory;" and we find these supremely beautiful words altered in Revised Version, under the influence of a very dubious reading, into—"Father, that which thou hast given me, I will that, where I am, they also may be with me; that they may behold my glory." Truly, in all such cases, it may well be said with respect to the two versions—"The old is better"; and such has been the unmistakable verdict of all English-speaking people throughout the world.

But, as I have already said, it is deeply to be regretted that, owing to the disregard into which the Revised Version has thus fallen, its many merits should be lost sight of by the majority of Bible readers. In numerous instances its renderings are so marked an improvement on those of the Authorised Version, that the evil which, to some extent, necessarily attends all change of familiar words is much more than justified. To some of the weightiest of these alterations I propose turning attention in a few brief papers; and I shall thus endeavour to recall the minds of readers to the benefits conferred on the community by the labour of the Revisers in the course of eleven toilsome years.

I begin with a reference to Galatians v. 17. In the Authorised Version we there read—"For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Here, it will be observed, the "flesh" is represented as the conquering principle, inasmuch as it is spoken of as successfully hindering believers from doing those things which, under the

influence of the "Spirit," they would fain perform. But in the Revised Version the verse stands as follows—"For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other; *that ye may not do the things that ye would.*" By this rendering, undoubtedly the correct one, a totally different turn is given to the words. Instead of the "flesh," the "Spirit" is spoken of as the dominant power in the souls of believers, so that they are able to overcome those evil desires to which they would otherwise yield. This is in accordance with the whole teaching of Scripture. "Sin shall not have dominion (*οὐ κυριεύσει*, shall not act as lord) over you," is the great promise which announces and secures the triumph of righteousness in the hearts of all true followers of Christ. This comes out even in that sombre and apparently desponding passage (Rom. vii. 14-25) in which the Apostle speaks of himself as "carnal, sold under sin," and reaches at last what seems the very climax of despair, when he exclaims—"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? But, in spite of this, the shout of victory follows, and the sorely harassed saint announces the certain supremacy of grace over sin in his soul, when he adds—"I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Yes; let there, in the case of any one, be only "first the blade," and it is absolutely settled that there shall in due season be "the full corn in the ear"; for the words of St. Paul to the Philippians hold good with respect to all believers—"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

The emendation which has just been noticed has a very important practical bearing. As the words stand in Authorised Version, they seem almost to excuse, or apologise for, want of fidelity or progress in the case of believers—"so that ye *cannot* do the things that ye would." This view is not a little dishonouring to the Spirit of grace, and it is also fitted to encourage Christians in a somnolent, inactive life. But, as need hardly be said, Scripture constantly exhorts them to effort and progress. Growth in grace till absolute freedom from sin has been reached, is the lofty ideal which is set before them. The precept, repeated in many different forms, is that "ye abound more and more" and even that "ye sin *not*," perfect holiness being the attainment to be ever kept in view; and to

strengthen them in this arduous pursuit, they are assured in the passage we have been considering, when it is properly translated, of the power of the Spirit within them to subdue remaining depravity,—"that ye *may not* do the things that ye would."

I shall only notice at present one other passage in which the very slight change made in the Revised Version seems productive of much gain. The passage has not certainly either the practical or doctrinal bearing which belongs to that one which has just engaged our attention. Its interest is simply historical, but is not on that account to be overlooked. I refer to 2 Peter i. 14, where we read in Authorised Version—"Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me." The

verse stands in the Revised Version as follows—"Knowing that the putting off of my tabernacle cometh swiftly, even as our Lord Jesus Christ signified unto me." And who can read the passage, as thus amended, without being reminded of the scene so graphically described in St. John xxi. 15-19? The mere rendering of the Aorist (*ἐδήλωσεν*) by its proper English equivalent gives a historic colouring to the verse, and naturally transports the mind to the lake of Galilee. It may be added that the existence of such a subtle *nexus* between the two passages, when brought out as it is in the Revised Version, seems far beyond the power of any one personating the Apostle, and thus tends to strengthen our belief in the authenticity of the epistle.

The International Lessons.

I.

December 6.—John xix. 17-30.

CHRIST CRUCIFIED.

THERE are a few points which may be explained as the lesson is read.

1. "Golgotha." The same word in its Latin form is Calvary. It means "a skull," and the name seems to have been given to a hillock from its shape. But where the hillock was, we do not know. For the last twenty years it has been located near the Damascus gate, just outside the (supposed) old wall of Jerusalem. But there are signs of a return to the traditional site, where the Church of the Sepulchre stands. See *Murray's Magazine* for November 1891. All we know for certain is that it was then outside the city (Heb. xiii. 12), and yet "nigh to the city" (John xix. 20).

2. "Four parts, to every soldier a part" (ver. 23), so that there were four soldiers. But some writers think that there were four to each cross, twelve in all.

3. "His mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene" (ver. 25). Were there three or four women near the cross? It is impossible to say. The punctuation given here would make four, placing a comma after "sister." But there is no punctuation in the Greek MSS. The reading "His mother's sister Mary the

wife of Cleophas," would make only three, but the objection to it is that thus His mother and His mother's sister would have the same name, Mary. Probably, then, there were four, the unnamed being Salome, the mother of John.

4. "The disciple whom He loved" (ver. 26). John never names himself; and perhaps it was the same modesty that prevented him naming his mother above.

Now for the explanation of the lesson. We must look upon John's narrative always as supplementing that of the other Evangelists. But to make his story complete, he briefly relates the same incidents, especially at the end of Jesus' life. So that here we have a short account, though with some additional touches, of what is more fully related in the previous Gospels.

The procession started. In front went a man with a white board, on which was written the supposed crimes for which Jesus and the other two had been condemned. Then came the three, each carrying his own cross, and the soldiers following close. Usually they proceeded through the most crowded streets of the city, but perhaps, this being a feast day, they did not do so this morning. It was nine o'clock. They had not gone far when Jesus began to faint. At that moment a Jew of Cyrene met them as he returned to Jerusalem from the country. He was seized by