

World"; and all their successors retained this curious title, invariably giving it the first place. Where did it come from, and why was it so carefully retained? Most inquirers have derived it from Babylonia, but Dr. Winckler maintains that all efforts to localise it there have been failures, and once more suggests Haran, adducing in support of his conjecture the remarkable fact that Nabu-nahid uses this ancient title in only one inscription, the inscription in which he mentions the rebuilding of the temple of Sin, in the capital of Western Mesopotamia. (4) The variety of cuneiform writing known as "Assyrian" cannot, in the opinion of Dr. Winckler, have been a modification of the "Babylonian." Neither can it have been developed in Assyria itself. A letter written in this character has been brought to light

by the recent finds at Tell-el-Amarna, professing to emanate from the king of Mitanni. Now, Mitanni was a region to the west of the Euphrates. So we may reasonably look in Western Mesopotamia for the birthplace of the Assyrian cuneiform; and if so, what more likely city than Haran? The conclusions of Dr. Winckler will probably be modified in some respects by subsequent research, as is so often the case with the suggestions of Assyriologists; but it may be safely asserted that he has made out a strong case, and has placed in a new light the history of a city which must always be interesting to biblical students as one of the resting-places of the father of the faithful.

W. TAYLOR SMITH.

Manchester.

## The Revised Version: Notes and Criticisms.

I

BY THE EDITOR.

PROFESSOR ORRIS of Princeton contributes an article to the *Homiletic Review* for March, on the word "also" in the Revised Version of the New Testament. In the Greek, *καί*, when it is equivalent to "also" or "even," is *always*, he says, placed *before* the word or phrase which it is intended to emphasise. For example, 1 John iv. 21, "And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brethren also" (*καὶ τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ*); Acts xii. 3, "And when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to seize Peter also" (*καὶ Πέτρον*). Now there are not a few instances where this invariable rule has been quite overlooked by the Revisers. Take Matt. vi. 14, "If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you." The two words that here stand in antithesis in the Greek are not the acts of forgiveness, nor the agents, but the objects—"men," "you." Therefore the translation ought to be: "If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will forgive you also" (*καὶ ὑμῶν*). The looseness is the more extraordinary that from its position "you" is specially emphatic in the Greek.

But more objectionable is the rendering of Luke vi. 13, "And when it was day, He called

His disciples: and He chose from them twelve, whom also He named apostles." Possibly we know what is meant here from other facts, but as it stands the statement is misleading, for it reads as if Christ had already named some other persons apostles, and now these also He named apostles. It should be: "Whom He named *apostles* also" (*καὶ ἀποστόλους*). They were already named disciples; on choosing them, He named them apostles also.

A text in which the precision of the original is greatly lost is Heb. viii. 6: "But now hath he obtained a ministry the more excellent, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant." "I doubt," says Professor Orris, "if any one with a knowledge of the English only, and without direct or indirect help from one who knows the Greek, could say what office the 'also,' in the phrase 'by how much also,' performs, or should perform. But if the 'also' is placed where the *καὶ* is placed, so as to emphasise 'a better covenant,' as distinguished from 'a superior ministry,' the passage will need no commentary. 'But now hath he obtained a ministry more excellent? By as much as he is the mediator of a better covenant also' (*καὶ κρείττονος διαθήκης*)."

But the most notable passage dealt with is 1 Thess. iv. 14: "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

Whenever it is found that a doctrine is dependent for its existence upon a single text of Scripture, there is a suspicion raised not only of that doctrine, but also of the text on which it rests. Thus it has been said with much reason that the doctrine of Purgatory stands or falls with the passage in 1 Peter, about the preaching to the spirits in prison. And that is enough to make the rendering of that passage doubtful. Now this verse in 1 Thessalonians teaches, according to the Revised Version, that the resurrection of departed believers is conditioned on the belief of those who are alive. It says that on condition of our belief in the death and resurrection of Christ, God will raise up our friends who have fallen asleep in Him. But if that is the teaching of this verse, it is a doctrine which rests on this verse alone. And not only so, but it is a doctrine, as Dr. Orris points out, which is at variance with the teaching of our Lord Himself.

But what is the Greek? εἰ γὰρ πιστεύομεν ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἀπέθανεν καὶ ἀνέστη, οὕτω καὶ ὁ Θεὸς τοὺς κοιμηθέντας διὰ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἀξει σὺν αὐτῷ. Observe the place of the καὶ in οὕτω καὶ ὁ Θεός. According to the invariable rule, it should emphasise ὁ Θεός, "God." But that is manifestly impossible, for there is no comparison made between God and any other. The two elements brought into comparison are Jesus, and those who sleep in Jesus. Accordingly, Chrysostom and Theodoret boldly remove the καὶ, and place it in front of τοὺς κοιμηθέντας, "those that are fallen asleep." Our Revisers are better textual critics, but worse Greek scholars. They keep the καὶ in the place which overwhelming manuscript evidence gives it, but they then translate the sentence in a way that the Greek words so placed will not bear. The only possible view of the passage is to regard the "so also" as introducing, not the single word "God," but the whole clause. We have but to supply mentally "we believe that" from the first clause of the verse, and the whole difficulty is removed: "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, so also (we believe that) those who are fallen asleep in Jesus, God will bring with Him." The statement is exactly in a line with what the apostle has been saying. With the extraordinary translation the extraordinary doctrine also vanishes away.

## II.

By the Rev. J. E. C. WELLDON, M.A., Headmaster of Harrow School.

I gladly give you my experience of the Revised Version of the English Bible. It is used at Harrow in translation lessons all through the school, and masters are encouraged to dwell upon its relation to the original text and to the Authorised Version. It is not used in repetition lessons, for so long as the Authorised Version maintains its place in the affections and associations of the English-speaking world, I wish my boys to know it, and to know it even verbally.

## III.

By the Rev. Principal W. J. OLDFIELD, M.A., St. Paul's Missionary College, Burgh.

We use the Revised Version for everything except for reading the lesson at the services in the college chapel.

## IV.

By the Rev. C. L. FELTOE, M.A., The King's School, Chester.

You invite expressions of opinion from headmasters on the use of the Revised Version of the Bible in public schools; in answer, I can only say that since I came here in May 1888 I have insisted on its use throughout the school, and with, I believe, excellent results. In the Sixth and Fifth Forms we use it side by side with Dr. Scrivener's Greek text; in the other forms we use it in the edition which prints the version of 1611 parallel with that of 1881, when we are doing the New Testament. My instructions to form-masters are to make these two versions act and react on one another as commentaries, and, as far as possible, to do so without printed notes and school editions. Examiners have before now commented on the excellence of the results so obtained.

On the larger question of the Revised Version, I may add that, personally, as a clergyman, I invariably use it throughout my sermons and at family prayers. I much regret that its obvious, but more or less superficial defects (especially, of course, in the New Testament), have rendered its comparative failure hitherto so plausible.

## V.

By the Rev. H. C. BRIGHT, Heavitree Collegiate School, Exeter.

I beg to say that we have used the Revised Version in our morning and evening services in this school from the time it was published, as well as for use in our Divinity classes.

## VI.

By the Rev. SIDNEY W. BOWSER, B.A., Grange Road Baptist Church, Birkenhead.

I am very deeply interested in the question of the public and private use of the Revised Version. My own action has been determined solely by the consideration of its *greater faithfulness* as compared with the Authorised Version. In public reading and exposition of the New Testament and Old Testament, I have invariably used the Revised Version since the several dates of publication in 1881 and 1885; and the congregation (mostly working-class people) has given its hearty and unanimous approval to the practice. That approval has been gained by a process of careful education. Both *before* and after the publication of the Revised Version I took frequent opportunity of lecturing on the subject, with diagrams and lantern slides specially prepared for the purpose. In this way the congregation has become familiar with the *popular* aspects of such subjects as the following :—

(1) The history of recent proposals for and attempts at revision, and a detailed account of this latest revision.

(2) Some account of Biblical MSS., including the LXX., Early Versions, and Patristic Quotations.

(3) The Canons and Methods of Textual Criticism.

(4) The History of the printed Hebrew and Greek Text.

(5) The History of the English Bible in detail.

I have not hesitated to introduce the subject at our Mission Chapel near the Docks, and have been delighted at the interest shown. One old woman tells me that her Revised Version is as "good as a commentary," and she does but express the opinion of many.

I find copies of the Revised Version—especially the New Testament—in most Baptist pulpits in which I preach; but I am not sure that it is invariably used. I wish that the Baptist Union

would recommend its public use throughout the affiliated Churches; and that similar authoritative recommendations (*not orders*) could be made to the Churches in all the denominations.

The subject is a very tempting one; but I will only add that the public reading of the Revised Version demands very careful preparation *before-hand*, so as to prevent *lapsus linguæ* into the phraseology of the Authorised Version, and so bring out the fact that the Revised Version has a rhythm of its own, which is less familiar indeed, but scarcely inferior, to that of the Revised Version.

Doubtless the Revised Version is not absolutely perfect; but inasmuch as it is the truest approximation to a rendering of the *ipsissima verba* of the inspired writers, its use and circulation should be industriously promoted by every Christian minister from the pulpit and the desk.

## VII.

By the Rev. ARTHUR VAILE, M.A., Exning Vicarage, Suffolk.

My own opinion is that the Revised Version has been very helpful to the biblical student in *his private study* of the Word of God—especially useful for *reference* in the case of passages of difficulty. Take, for instance, Isaiah xix. 10 :

*The Old Version.*

"And they shall be broken in the purposes thereof, all that make sluices and ponds for fish."

*Revised Version.*

"And her pillars shall be broken in pieces, all they that work for hire shall be grieved in soul."

This is nonsense, though appointed to be read in church on 29th November in the morning (*Vide Churchman's Almanack*). I think the Revised Version would have become much more popular if it had been authorised to be read in church, especially the Old Testament. Why should we go on reading nonsense, simply because it has become familiar?

## VIII.

By the Rev. Professor ARCHIBALD DUFF, M.A., LL.D., The United College, Bradford.

The Revised Version is, I think, unquestionably a poor work, as compromises must be. In the margin you often get what the real scholars thought, but not always, I fear. As English it cannot well be equal to the glorious old classic Authorised Version. It lacks vigour. And so, worthily, it is

very far from dispossessing the old, very bad translation of Authorised Version. I find it in some pulpits, but few people know it I think. Besides, it is dear.

## IX.

By the Rev. W. J. WOODS, B.A., Secretary to the Congregational Union.

I am very far from regarding the Revised Version as a failure. In my private reading and in my public ministrations I habitually use it. It may not be unexceptionable—what revision could be?—but it is as good, and has been as generally appreciated, as was to be expected.

## X.

By CHARLES SHIRREFFS, Secretary Young Men's Christian Association, Aberdeen.

Since its appearance in May 1881, I have used the Parallel Bible in Bible classes and Fellowship meetings. The clear division into paragraphs and subjects, the helps in tenses, the definite article, the particles and prepositions, etc., to a half-informed person like me, are invaluable. At our Fellowship meeting last Saturday, we had 1 Thess. ii. 7-12. There are several changes I venture to think improvements, and at least three of them I reckoned worthy of notice. Then on Sabbath morning, when we had 123 present, the International Lesson furnished a little variety. At 3 P.M., we had Acts vi. 1-8, with another large class, and here again got distinct help. I am devoutly thankful for these aids.

## XI.

Rev. J. J. STRUTT BIRD, B.A., Colerne Vicarage, Chippenham, Editor of the *Homilist*.

The Revised Version is an utter and a grievous failure. It has failed in giving a closer interpretation of the original, it has failed in improving the lucidity of expression, it has failed in ennobling English literature.

This is the result of a most painstaking and unprejudiced investigation. A year or two ago I had the pleasure to prepare a Homiletical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Peter for the *Homilist*. In doing so I entered into a most minute criticism of the text, with the assistance of a most learned scholar, and the occasional suggestions of the late brilliant Dr. Young. I was, unfortunately, obliged, throughout the whole of those articles, to revert to glaring inconsistencies, mistranslations, some utterly misleading, glaring misrepresentations of tenses, moods, and relatives; a harshness of language, and, in several cases, a perversion of the original which no sophistry can alleviate.

There was too much cordiality among the Revisers to make the work a success. It was a continual "hobnailing" between brother this and brother that. A new translation must be *fought* out, worked on the anvil of burning thought and intense investigation. There must be fire, life, not dull timid toadyism and respectable smirking. Dr. Young's little book, *Hints on a Future Revision*, evidently points out what that unsurpassed scholar thought of the job.

## Mr. Halcombe on "The Historic Relation of the Gospels."<sup>1</sup>

By REV. G. H. GWILLIAM, B.D., FELLOW OF HERTFORD COLLEGE, OXFORD.

PERHAPS the reader of this paper will inquire at the outset, with some pardonable impatience, what is the advantage of spending time on yet another account of the interrelation of the Four Holy Gospels. It may be replied that Mr. Halcombe's is not "another account" in the sense which the

reader supposes. He claims to approach the problem from a point of view different from that of any of the scholars whose opinions are noticed and discussed in the ordinary *Introductions*. And even if his position be not absolutely novel<sup>2</sup> (and

<sup>1</sup> *The Historic Relation of the Gospels; an Essay toward re-establishing Tertullian's account*, by the Rev. J. J. Halcombe. Also, by the same writer, (2) *Gospel Difficulties due to the reversal of the two central sections of St. Luke*; (3) *A Plea for a Gospel Evidence Commission*; (4) "Science and the Gospels," a Letter to *The Guardian*, December 23, 1891.

<sup>2</sup> The opinion that the one-sidedness of the Synoptic Gospels is of itself a proof that *St. John* must have existed in some shape before the former were written ("Science and the Gospels") can hardly be called a confirmation of Mr. Halcombe's view, for he deals not with some hypothetical form of *St. John*, but with the Four Canonical Gospels, as they have come down to us.