THE NEW BIBLE.[1]

I BELIEVE I shall be doing a service to the readers of THE EXPOSITOR by calling their attention to this work. Two of the editors, the Rev. T. K. Cheyne and Mr. Driver, are members of the Revision Committee of the Old Testament, but they are careful to distinguish between the object of the larger revision and that on which they have been engaged. Their work will doubtless tend to prepare the way for the Revised Version. It is, indeed, just one of those *Vorarbeiten* which are especially needed to prepare the way for it. At the same time it is at once wider and less authoritative in its scope. It presents not results, but the materials which go to form the results. It is not a single authoritative text, but a collection in the briefest and most compact form possible of the opinions of the best commentators and critics, by reviewing which that text will be formed. And it also presents, so far as the limits of the work admit, an outline of the external evidence on which the text must be constructed.

It is well known that the defects of the Authorized Version are derived from these two main causes: on the one hand, faulty translations of a correct Greek or

[1] "The Holy Bible," Edited, with Various Renderings and Readings from the best authorities, by the Rev. T. K. Cheyne, M.A., and S. R. Driver, M.A., and by the Rev. R. L. Clarke, M.A., and A. Goodwin, M.A. London. Eyre and Spottiswoode. 1876.

Hebrew text; and, on the other hand, correct translations of a text in itself faulty. In both these departments great advances have been made since the year 1611. Our modern revisers have probably inherited only a small portion of the poetry, the genius, the glow and inspiration, of the original translators; but they are indisputably superior in science and scholarship, and they have access to much fuller and better materials. Whereas the text of the Greek Testament which was taken as the basis of King James's Version was derived from some five manuscripts, only one of which reached even the second rank of excellence, the manuscripts now available may be counted by hundreds, some of them of the very highest value; and the best of these have now been accurately collated or edited, and their contents scientifically weighed and classified. Nor has the advance in grammatical and philological knowledge been less. Marked in Greek, it has been even more marked in Hebrew; and it seems hardly too much to say that the discovery of the true sense of many an obscure passage of the Old Testament has been reserved for the present century.

The editors have done well in keeping quite clear and distinct the two classes and kinds of correction that the Authorized Version needs. They have printed this version in full just as it stands, and the corrections are indicated by a system of foot-notes. In these the division is carefully observed between those which are due to defective rendering of a given word or sentence in the Greek or Hebrew, and those which are due to the substitution, in accordance with the critical evidence, of different Greek or Hebrew

words. In the first instance the opinions quoted are those of the principal commentators; in the second instance, those of the leading textual critics, along with the evidence of the five or six most important authorities (in the New Testament manuscripts, in the Old Testament chiefly versions) by which the question has to be decided.

A system of abbreviations is used to represent the names of the different commentators and editors, and these abbreviations are explained by lists which are given in the introduction—lists which will have an additional value, as shewing the opinion of competent scholars as to what names are really to be trusted, and what are not. The opinions are summarized, so far as I can judge, with much skill and success. The names are grouped together as much as possible; and where a single translation does not represent quite exactly the views of several commentators, some qualifying expression ("nearly," "practically," "perhaps") is introduced.

The words or clauses for which various renderings are given in the notes are indicated in the text by letters; those for which a different reading is to be substituted, by figures; the method being very similar to that employed in the margin of our reference Bibles. The references are just a degree harder to trace, partly from the double use of letters and figures, and partly because the foot-notes are printed continuously, and not in breaks like the marginal references. It will need some little practice before the reader becomes quite accustomed to the system, but, once familiar with it, he will recognize its advantages.

It is strange what an amount of comment it has

been found possible to compress even into the narrow limits of space allowed. This is especially noticeable in some of the Epistles, where the commentary is frequently sufficient to enable the reader to thread his way through the main difficulties. Often, too, we are struck by the extent to which the slightest alteration throws light upon what is otherwise obscure. Thus in that very unintelligible Psalm (as it stands in our Bibles), the eighty-seventh, in the clause, "I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to them that know me," we are told first that Rahab stands for Egypt ("lit. 'pride.' Comp. Isa. xxx. 7, li. 9"), and then to substitute "as" for "to." This slight change brings order into chaos. "I will make mention of Egypt and Babylon *as* them that know me," *i.e.*, "I will reckon them among my own people," thus giving us one of those "evangelical" prophecies which point to the ultimate inclusion of the Gentiles.

The class of people to whom it would seem that this annotated Bible will be of most use, is the *homo unius libri*. Where only a single commentary or some two or three commentaries—perhaps not always of the highest value—are used, this work will supply a check upon them. The reader will have sufficient acquaintance with the questions raised to understand the hints that are given him, and he will be able to compare his own commentary with the views, neatly and accurately formulated, of the best scholars. The misfortune has hitherto been that in this country the general reader is apt to come too little into contact with really scholarly opinion. The scholars have held aloof and worked on in their own lines, leaving the general public to take care of itself.

The consequence has been a complete confusion of authorities, with no sort of discrimination between bad and good. Men like Meyer have been put on the same level with Scott and Barnes; or, rather, Scott and Barnes have been read while Meyer has been neglected. The work before us should help greatly to remedy this. The reader will find from it, that while no one name is to be followed absolutely, there will gradually emerge a group of authorities to which he will be inclined to pay the most respect.

There are two points that perhaps ought to be noticed. One is, that the manuscripts quoted on the New Testament really only give a very rough idea of the balance of authorities. The versions and patristic readings are most important items in the evidence. Still, the great uncials, Vaticanus, Sinaiticus, Alexandrinus, Ephraemi, Bezæ, do represent approximately the history of the text. The other is, that among a list of authorities which is in general very complete, there yet appear to be some omissions. One cause of this is that the work has evidently been some time in hand. It is not easy for those who are without experience of work of the kind to appreciate the amount of minute and careful labour which this volume represents. Hence it would seem as if some portions of it had been struck off at a date considerably before the publication of the whole. We should be inclined to account in this way for the absence of any reference to McClellan upon the Gospels. This is the more to be regretted, as Mr. McClellan is the most formidable opponent of the views now most in the ascendant as to the criticism of the text; and though in the judgment of the present

writer, at least, he is in the main wrong, still his opinions are always ably stated, and where, as is not seldom the case, he goes over to the other side, his accession is of great, if not decisive, importance. Indeed, it is just this inconsistency (which a work like this annotated Bible would shew very clearly) which proves the absence of definite scientific principle in a writer otherwise of marked ability. We miss, again, Dr. Vaughan on the Romans, in its later editions, a finished and valuable commentary, which might have been used with the more advantage, as it is particularly happy in translations. But the strangest omission, and one for which we find it most difficult to account, is Dr. Lightfoot's Commentary on the Galatians—one of the very classics, not only of English but of all theology—which has now been several years before the public. On the other hand, the Commentary on the Colossians, though so recent, is included. We have also to be thankful for the collation of several commentaries which are less well known in England, such as Bouman, Kern, Holtzmann, Züllig, not to speak of names like those of Fritzsche, Rückert, Wiesinger, Harless, &c. On the Old Testament, much of the matter will be entirely new to the English reader.

W. SANDAY.

II.

THE REASONABLENESS OF PRAYER.

"EVERY one that asketh, receiveth," affirms the Son of God. "Nay," reply certain of our modern teachers, "no one who asks, receives." If we inquire on what the first affirmation is based, the Lord Jesus virtually