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THE  
CHURCHMAN

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MARCH, 1881.

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ART. I.—REVISION.

FEW subjects are fraught with deeper interest to the English reader than is the history of the successive attempts which have been made from the earliest periods to place the inhabitants of the British Isles in possession of the inestimable privilege of reading the Holy Scriptures in their native tongue. In the Preface to Mr. Baber's edition of Wycliffe's "New Testament," the writer has carefully collected the principal facts which are known in respect of the early Anglo-Saxon versions of any portion of Holy Scripture; and Professor Westcott, in the chapter of his "History of the English Bible," which is entitled "The Manuscript Bible," making, as he informs his readers, free use of the labours both of Mr. Anderson, in his "Annals of the English Bible," and also of the "Historical Account" prefixed to the edition of the English "Hexapla," which was published by Mr. Bagster in the year 1841, has presented them with an admirable summary of the History of the English Bible up to the beginning of the sixteenth century. The same writer has examined with scrupulous care the existing records both of the external and internal history of the English Bible, from the earliest attempts of Tyndale to "cause a boy that driveth a plough to know more of the Scriptures than the Pope did," up to the completion of the so-called Authorized Version of the Old and New Testament, which was the result of a Royal Commission issued by King James in the year 1604, and which appeared from the press of Robert Barker in the year 1611. It is stated on the title-page of that volume (and the statement has been perpetuated from 1611 down to the present time) that this revision is "appointed to be read in Churches."<sup>1</sup> It is

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<sup>1</sup> It is not improbable that the printers took these words from the title of the Great Bible of 1540 and 1541, which has the words *This is the*  
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difficult to understand what interpretation ought to be assigned to this statement, inasmuch as, to adopt the words of Professor Westcott, "no evidence has yet been produced to show that the version was ever publicly sanctioned by Convocation, or by Parliament, or by the Privy Council, or by the King."<sup>2</sup> It is true, indeed, that this Revision carried with it the weight of the King's name, as having been executed in obedience to the King's desire, and inasmuch as the fifty-four learned men to whom the task of revision was originally assigned had been either expressly appointed, or had been approved, by King James. It does not appear, however, as far as any evidence has been hitherto produced, that the work, when completed, obtained any formal civil or ecclesiastical sanction. On the contrary, just as we find Bishop Gervase Babington, in the year 1591, quoting from the Genevan Bible, and even taking his text from it more than twenty years subsequently to the appearance of the Bishops' Bible, which was published in 1568, so we find Bishop Andrews, himself one of the Revisers of 1611, taking his texts, after that date, from the Genevan Bible, when preaching before King James I. at Whitehall, and continuing so to do for many years after the appearance of the Authorized Version.<sup>3</sup>

For a considerable time subsequently to the publication of the English Bible in 1611, no serious attempt was made to amend it; and although new editions of the Genevan Bible continued to be issued, and that version continued to be very generally used, nevertheless the superior excellence and accuracy of King James's Bible became at length so universally recognized, that before the middle of the seventeenth century it had practically superseded all other versions; and thus, as Professor Westcott has observed, "at the very time when the Monarchy and the Church were, as it seemed, finally overthrown, the English people, by the silent and unanimous acceptance of a new Bible, gave a spontaneous testimony to the principles of order and catholicity of which both were an embodiment."<sup>4</sup>

About this time—*i. e.*, on the 26th of August, in the year 1645, Dr. Lightfoot, the Master of "St. Catharine's Hall" (as it was then designated), preached a sermon before the House of Commons at

*Bible appointed to the use of Churches*, a note which does not appear in the Bishops' Bible of 1568. Or, it may be that it was assumed that the original design of King James was carried into effect, and that the new Revision was submitted to the "Bishops and the chief learned of the Church," from them "presented to the Privy Council," and last of all "ratified by his royal authority."

<sup>2</sup> See also Anderson's "Annals of the English Bible," p. 485. 1862.

<sup>3</sup> See Preface to Bishop Andrews's Sermons. Vol. i. p. 7. Oxford. 1841.

<sup>4</sup> "History of the English Bible," p. 158.

St. Margaret's, Westminster, in which he commended to the consideration of the members of the House the expediency of reviewing the Authorized Version of the Bible with the design of conferring upon "the three nations" the great advantage of possessing "an exact, vigorous, and lively translation."<sup>1</sup> In accordance with this suggestion, but not until eight years subsequently to it, and probably as the result of some other influence, the Tory Parliament, shortly before its dissolution, made an order (April, 1653) that "a Bill should be brought in for a new translation of the Bible out of the original tongues," but again nothing was done at that time in furtherance of the scheme. Three years afterwards it was again revived; and a Sub-Committee of the House of Commons conferred often, Whitelocke writes, at his house with the most learned men in the oriental tongues, and some of the latter made "excellent and learned observations of some mistakes in the Translation of the Bible in English, which yet was agreed to be the best of any translation in the world."<sup>2</sup>

In his interesting volume entitled "Our English Bible," Dr. Stoughton observes that some years ago his attention was directed by a friend, to a document in the State Paper Office, which proved to be a Draft Bill for the revision of the English translation of the Bible. Dr. Hill, it appears, had charged the translation of 1611 with making the New Testament speak a prelatial language, and the Bill was framed with a view to the reforming, rectifying, and repairing of the former injury to the new translation, and for preventing of such great inconveniences of such dangerous consequence, and for the furtherance (what in us lieth) and the benefit and education of many."<sup>3</sup>

Notwithstanding these various proposals for the emendation of the Authorized Version, nothing was done in the way of further revision during the Commonwealth, and with the exception of various corrections of typographical and other errors, and some changes in the running titles, marginal references, &c., which have been made at different times, as *e.g.*, by Dr. Scattergood in 1683, and by Dr. Blayney in 1769, the Bibles which are now in common use are printed in accordance with the Revision of 1611.<sup>4</sup>

Some important efforts were made in the course of the eighteenth century, with a view to the correction of the errors of

<sup>1</sup> "Works" by Pitman, vol. vi, p. 194. London. 1822.

<sup>2</sup> See "Whitelock's Memoirs," quoted by Professor Westcott in his "History of the English Bible," p. 160.

<sup>3</sup> "Our English Bible," by John Stoughton, D.D., p. 273. The Religious Tract Society.

<sup>4</sup> We may refer those of our readers who desire to become acquainted with the typographical changes which certain words in the 1611 edition of the Authorized Version have undergone, to the work put forth by the late

this Revision, and the production of more accurate versions of different portions both of the Old and New Testament. The general result of these efforts, however, was to bring into clearer light the vast superiority of the Authorized Version, when regarded as a whole, over every earlier or later translation or revision of the sacred text; and it was not till towards the middle of the present century that there appears to have been anything like a general *consensus*, either in regard to the necessity which existed for the rectification of the errors of the Authorized Version, or to the principles upon which a new Revision should be conducted.

One of the earliest, and one of the most important contributions to the work of Revision, was that of the late Professor Scholefield, the first edition of which appeared in the year 1832. In a short Preface prefixed to this work, the learned writer expresses his opinion of the extent to which the work of Revision, if taken in hand, should be carried, in the following terms:—

Justice, not only to King James's translators, but to a great mass of our population, who have nothing but the English Bible for the DAILY BREAD of their souls, would require that the alterations made in the text should be as few as possible, and that none should be made at all but what after full deliberation should be considered quite necessary.<sup>1</sup>

The same writer directs the attention of his readers to a point upon which a remarkable amount of unanimity has prevailed amongst the most distinguished scholars who have subsequently dealt with the subject of Revision, and that is the importance of preserving a greater amount of uniformity in the rendering of the same Greek words than was deemed necessary or expedient by the Revisers of 1611. "There is one point," he writes, "which would seem important to attend to, which indeed it may appear surprising that our translators attended to so little—uniformity; the uniform rendering of the same Greek word, as far as might be, by the same English word."<sup>2</sup>

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learned Bishop Turton, entitled "The Text of the English Bible as now printed by the Universities, considered." The second edition of this work appeared in 1833. J. W. Parker and Rivingtons.

<sup>1</sup> Preface to "Hints for an Improved Translation of the New Testament," by the Rev. James Scholefield A.M., Regius Professor of Greek in the University of Cambridge, pp. viii. ix., second edition, with Additions. Cambridge, 1836. It is interesting, in connection with the opinion thus expressed by Professor Scholefield, to compare with it the following extract from the Report of the Committee appointed by the two Houses of Convocation for the Revision of the Authorized Version, which was read on the 3rd of May, 1870, in the Upper House: "That in the above resolutions we do not contemplate any New Translation of the Bible, or any alteration of the language, except when, in the judgment of the most competent scholars, such change is necessary."

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* Preface, p. ix.

The appearance of the "Hints for an Improved Translation of the New Testament," naturally produced the impression that the author not only contemplated the possibility or probability that such a work might be taken in hand, but further that he himself was favourable to the undertaking. But public opinion was not yet ripe for the work; nor, even in the judgment of those best qualified to arrive at a just conclusion on such a subject, was it deemed desirable to embark at that time in so important and, it must be added, so perilous an enterprise. Accordingly, in his preface to the second edition of the "Hints," which was published in the year 1836, Professor Scholefield observes that in answer to the inquiry which had not unnaturally arisen whether he was really desirous that a new translation of the Greek Testament should be undertaken, he had uniformly replied that such was not the case, and that the real design of his work was "rather to assist towards the understanding of the old translation, than to supersede it by a new one."<sup>1</sup>

Our present limits will not admit of any lengthened remarks upon the merits or defects of this and other works, by which the way was gradually prepared for a complete and systematic Revision of the English text. It will be desirable, however, in order to bring into view the essential agreement of our most competent scholars and divines in many points of importance in connection with the work of Revision, that we should here briefly notice some of those to which Professor Scholefield directed the attention of his readers nearly fifty years ago.

And first in regard to the use of the article. It has been well observed by Archbishop Trench that our translators "omit it sometimes when it is present in the original, and where, according to the rules of the language, it ought to be preserved, in the translation; they insert it when it is absent there and has no claim to obtain admission from them."<sup>2</sup>

Professor Scholefield for the most part restricted his emendations to the former of these two classes. Thus, *e.g.*, in his note on St. Matthew iv. 21, "in a ship," he directs the attention of his readers to the fact that in the Greek the definite article is expressed; and that the rendering should be either, as Bishop Middleton has remarked, *in their boat*, or, as Professor Scholefield thought it a sufficiently accurate rendering, *in the boat—i.e.*, in their father's ship. A second example of this defect in the Authorized Version may be noticed, inasmuch as one of the numerous undesigned coincidences of Holy Scripture is thereby obscured. In Acts xxiv. 23, we read that Felix "commanded a centurion to keep Paul." Now at first sight it might appear either that this

<sup>1</sup> Preface to the second edition, p. xi.

<sup>2</sup> "On the Authorized Version of the New Testament," p. 132. Second edition. 1859.

portion of the narrative had no connection with the preceding chapter, or that it presented some inconsistency with it, inasmuch as we read in xxiii. 23, that the chief captain had committed the charge of St. Paul to *two* centurions. Bishop Middleton, however, "with his usual accuracy of investigation," as Professor Scholefield has remarked, not only solves the apparent difficulty, but points out the undesigned evidence of the truthfulness of the narrative which is here manifested, inasmuch as the two hundred soldiers who were in all probability under the command of one of the two centurions, had proceeded no farther than Antipatris (xxiii. 32), whilst the one remaining centurion was the commander of the horsemen who went on as far as Caesarea.

Another error of translation connected with the use of the Greek article, and one which applies to several passages, arose out of want of attention to a principle which is now generally understood—viz., that when the article is not repeated before the second of two nouns which are connected by the copula, the same person, not two different persons, is denoted. Professor Scholefield has noted this error in such passages as the following:—(1) Ephes. v. 5, which should be rendered "in the kingdom of Christ and God;" and (2) Titus ii. 13, which should be rendered "our great God and Saviour."

Another class of errors in the Authorized Version to which Professor Scholefield directed attention is that which arose from the imperfect acquaintance of the Revisers with the exact force of the Greek tenses.

Thus, for example, in their rendering of St. Luke v. 6, "their net brake," they failed to observe that the tense of the Greek verb denotes that the nets "were breaking," and not that they had actually broken. So again, in 2 Cor. v. 15, the words which are there rendered "then were all dead," should be rendered, "then (or therefore) all died." And, once more, in 2 Cor. xii. 2, 3, the verb which is rendered in the Authorized Version, "I knew," and which never admits of a past sense, should undoubtedly be rendered, "I know."

We find, in the Authorized Version, instances of one more class of defects which are noticed in the work of Professor Scholefield—viz., the inaccurate rendering of the Greek particles. Thus, *e. g.*, a direct blunder is introduced into St. Luke, iv. 26, 27, by the rendering there adopted of the  $\epsilon\iota\ \mu\eta\ \sigma\alpha\upsilon\epsilon$  and  $\sigma\alpha\upsilon\iota\upsilon\gamma$ . It was overlooked by our Revisers that  $\epsilon\iota\ \mu\eta\$  is used not only in the sense of *limitation*, but also in that of *exclusion*, and that the passages in question should have been rendered "unto none of them was Elias sent, *but* (or *but only*) unto Sarepta," and "none of them was cleansed, *but* (or *but only*) Naaman the Syrian."

Many other instances of defective or incorrect renderings

might be adduced under each of the heads to which reference has been made, about which no difference of opinion will be found to exist amongst competent scholars at the present time, as, *e.g.*, in regard to Heb. vi. 7, which should undoubtedly be rendered "meet for those *for* (not *by*) whom it is dressed." There are others, as, *e.g.*, St. Matt. xx. 23, where it is still a matter of doubt whether ἀλλ' οἷς should be rendered, as in the Authorized Version, "but *it shall be given to them* for whom" &c., or whether, omitting most of the words printed in italics, the rendering should be, "except to those for whom" and the passage thus brought into correspondence with Rev. iii. 21, "to him that overcometh will I give to sit with Me on my throne," &c.

Inasmuch as Professor Scholefield has abstained from formally laying down the principles on which, in his judgment, a revision of the Authorized Version should be conducted, we can only gather those principles generally from the manner in which he has dealt with particular passages. It appears, however, from the passage which has already been quoted from the preface to his work, that in regard to the very important question whether the same Greek word in the same context should be rendered by the same equivalent, or by some synonym, Professor Scholefield's views were in harmony with those of the most distinguished Biblical scholars of the present day, rather than with our Revisers of 1611, who advisedly and systematically adopted a different mode of procedure. Thus, *e.g.*, in his note on St. James ii. 2, 3, Professor Scholefield objects to the variation arbitrarily introduced into the Authorized Version in the rendering of the same Greek words by "goodly apparel," in verse 2, and by "gay clothing," in verse 3. He might have extended his objection to the threefold rendering of the same Greek word in the same context by three English synonyms—*viz.*, *apparel*, *raiment*, and *clothing*, variations which, it must be generally admitted, add nothing to the force of the Apostle's censure, whilst they place the English reader in the disadvantageous position of not knowing that the same Greek word is employed throughout both these verses.

But whilst it is satisfactory to mark the general agreement which exists between the earlier and the later works of competent Biblical critics in regard to some of the principles upon which a thorough revision of the Authorized Version should proceed, it is more important in regard to our present object, and in prospect of the early publication of the Revised New Testament, in which so large a number of our ablest scholars and theologians have been engaged during the last ten years, that we should notice not only the extent to which the principles adopted by earlier Revisionists have been subsequently carried, but also the important results of the

systematic study of the principles of textual criticism, which has made such rapid strides during the last half century.

It is impossible to take up such works as those of Archbishop Trench, of Bishop Ellicott, and more especially that of Bishop Lightfoot on the subject of Revision, and to compare their criticisms on passages of the Authorized Version of the New Testament which call for emendation with those of Professor Scholefield, and not to be struck with the great advance which has been made during that period in the science of Biblical criticism generally. But that which betokens even yet more plainly the vantage ground which Biblical scholars now occupy in regard to the long meditated Revision of the Authorized Version, is the increased facilities which are now afforded for ascertaining the true state of the original text, and the important results which have crowned the indefatigable labours of those who have devoted themselves to this study. The contrast which is presented in this respect between the work of Professor Scholefield and that, *e.g.*, of Bishop Lightfoot, is remarkable indeed.

In the former work we not only find no allusion made even to the spurious character of additions such as that which occurs in St. John v. 7, but further, in regard to some of the very passages which the learned Professor selected as instances of incorrect renderings, his criticism, whilst just as applied to the *textus receptus* which the Revisers of 1611 adopted, will not bear the test of comparison with the readings generally adopted by the ablest textual critics. Thus, *e.g.*, whilst Professor Scholefield's correction of the Authorized Version of St. John xviii. 15, "another disciple," for which he substitutes "the other disciple—viz., St. John," is amply justified on the assumption that the original Greek has the definite article, that criticism falls to the ground when it is observed that in the best MSS. the definite article is wanting.

Again, whilst in regard to some passages the force of the learned Professor's emendation is weakened or destroyed on a comparison of the *textus receptus* with the best MSS., there are other cases in which his "Hints" would have been of greater value had he possessed and employed the aids which are now within the reach of every Biblical student. Thus, *e.g.*, in his note on Col. ii. 2, he substitutes for the words, "of God, and of the Father, and of Christ," "of God and the Father, and of Christ." Professor Scholefield rightly observes that the *textus receptus* expresses clearly two persons, whilst the Authorized Version as clearly expresses three. He does not appear to have been aware that there is good authority for the reading, τοῦ Θεοῦ Χριστοῦ, of God, even Christ. Again, in his emendation of St. James iii. 9, "God, even the Father," for which Professor Scholefield substitutes "Our God and Father," it is evident that he was not

aware that the reading adopted by the best textual critics is, not τὸν Θεὸν καὶ πατέρα, but τὸν κύριον καὶ πατέρα, "the Lord and Father."

Our object in this Paper has been mainly to show, (1), that by the general consent of all competent judges, there is sufficient ground for a Revised Translation of the New Testament; (2), that there is a considerable amount of unanimity amongst our ablest critics in regard to the principles on which that Revision should proceed; and (3), that the rapid strides which have been made both in textual criticism and in Biblical criticism generally, warrant the expectation that in the forthcoming Revised New Testament, which will represent the fruits of the combined labours of a large number of the ablest English and American scholars and theologians, the English reader will obtain a clearer insight than has been hitherto within his reach into the true meaning of that volume in which God has been pleased to impart to mankind the richest treasures both of wisdom and of knowledge.

C. J. ELLIOTT.

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## ART. II.—THE CHURCH IN NORTHUMBERLAND.

THE Diocesan Conference held in the cathedral city of Durham in the autumn of 1880, under the presidency of the Lord Bishop, may be looked upon as inaugurating an era of renewed activity for the Church in the north-east of England. It would be difficult to speak too highly of the tact and judgment displayed by the President. The selection of readers and speakers reflected great credit upon the Committee of Management. The subjects treated were of a varied and useful character. They were assigned to clergymen and laymen thoroughly competent for the task; and while irritating questions were carefully avoided, discussion was lively and open. It is not too much to say that of the very large<sup>1</sup> assembly of members, no one had reason to regret that his time has been ill-spent, or his countenance afforded to the movement.

The subject of organized lay work in the Church occupied an important place in the first day's proceedings. The Diocese of Durham, from the immense population of its various parishes, is one in which such agency seems especially needed, and it was gratifying to hear no discordant note in the harmonious welcome

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<sup>1</sup>The platform was occupied by noblemen and gentlemen of the highest position in the two counties. His Grace the Duke of Northumberland supported the Bishop of the Diocese on the first morning of the conference. The Marquis of Londonderry was also present.