

COLOSSIANS II. 18.

A CRITICISM OF THE REVISED VERSION, AND AN EXPOSITION.

THE Greek Text here is, *Μηδεὶς ὑμᾶς καταβραβεύετω θέλων ἐν ταπεινοφροσύνῃ καὶ θρησκείᾳ τῶν ἀγγέλων, ἂ μὴ* [the Revisers, after Westcott and Hort and others, omit the *μὴ*] *ἑώρακεν ἐμβατεύων εἰκῆ φυσιοῦμενος ὑπὸ τοῦ νοῦς τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ, καὶ οὐ κρατῶν τὴν κεφαλὴν.* The A.V. renders: "Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding the Head." The R.V., omitting the *μὴ*, renders—the italics are mine—"Let no man *rob you of your prize* [*καταβραβεύετω*—one word—*rob of your prize*] *by a voluntary humility* [*θέλων ἐν ταπεινοφροσύνῃ*] and *worshipping* [*θρησκείᾳ*] of the angels, *dwelling in* [*ἐμβατεύων*] the things which he *hath seen* [*ἑώρακεν*], and not holding fast the Head."

I have on another occasion (EXPOSITOR, September, 1904) called attention to very grave errors of the Revised Version in its dealing with difficult passages; and I venture to say that this is another instance of its errors, and one of the most flagrant. There is error upon error. The renderings are utterly out of harmony with the context, destroy the argument, and render the passage senseless. Postponing to the last the question of the disputed Greek reading, *viz.* the retention or omission of the *μὴ*, *not*, before "*seen*," I will take the renderings of the various words and phrases seriatim. In considering them it will be

necessary to keep in mind the obvious fact that our verse 18 is an emphatic resumption of verse 16—the verse 17 being of the nature of a parenthesis—and that the whole of the verses 16 to 23 hang together in one argument. The verse 16, dividing the clauses as (a) and (b), runs thus : “ Let not any one judge you (a) in [*év*, sc. *in the matter of*] meat or in drink, or (b) in respect of a feast-day or a new moon or a Sabbath, which, etc.” It is evident that the reference is to *Jewish*, not *Gnostic* demands ; and that the resumption in verse 18 covers, in order, both the negative demand of the errorists of clause (a)—sc. not to eat and drink—and their positive demand of clause (b)—sc. to keep and observe. So much is clear. The difficulties that remain are possibly largely due to our ignorance of local circumstances well known to St. Paul and the Colossians.

The first error to be noticed is the rendering of *καταβραβεύετω*, “*rob of your prize.*” This is a double error (of which A.V. also is guilty, “*beguile of your reward*”), arising from a mistaken reference to athletic contests and the award of the prizes (*βραβεΐα*).¹ The context shows that, although St. Paul elsewhere refers to these contests, there is no reference to them here, but to the assaults of Judaizers on *Christian liberty*. In the compound Greek word the idea of *robbing* does not exist ; and all idea of *prize*, if it ever existed, has disappeared. It is a very rare word ; but the only two or three instances preserved of its occurrence prove that its signification in usage is that of *giving judgment against* or *condemning*, either as in a Court of Law (Dem. 545. 1), or generally (Eustath. *ad* Hom. *II.* i. 399 sqq. ; and *ap.* Euseb. *H.E.* 712 B). That this is, there-

¹ It is not unimportant to note that the verb *καταβραβεύετω* is in the *present*, not the *aorist* tense ; whereas “*rob*” rather implies a single act, not a line of conduct.

fore, the meaning here is the natural inference : it is confirmed by the “*judging*” of verse 16, of which it is the resumption : “Let not any one *judge* you (ver. 16) . . . let no one *condemn* you” (ver. 18). The Vulg. renders, *seducat* ; Augustine, *convincat*.¹ The Judaizers wished to set up their own standards of conduct for Church membership and, like a certain Diotrophes, excommunicate at pleasure those who refused to accept them (3 John 9, 10. Cf. Acts xv. 5, “It is needful to charge them (the Gentiles) to *keep the Law of Moses*”).

The next error is the change of the A.V. “*in,*” ἐν, into “*by*” ; introducing a new and false idea of *means* : the “*in*” is the resumption of the “*in*” of clause (a) of verse 16, “*in the matter of.*” There is further an error of transposition of the “*in,*” which in the Greek *follows* and does not *precede* the word rendered “*voluntary.*”

The next error concerns the treatment of θέλων, *volens*, *willing*, which is connected with “*humility,*” and rendered by “*voluntary.*” The connexion of the word may be disputable, but the signification depends upon the connexion, viz., whether it is to be connected with the preceding “*condemn,*” or with the succeeding “*humility.*” Zahn following Grimm and others, connects with the latter, and considers the expression, θέλων ἐν, *volens in*, a strong Hebraism for *delighting in*, as in the passages 1 Sam. xviii. 22, “the king *hath delight* in thee” ; 2 Sam. xv. 26, “I have no *delight* in thee.”² Other passages are 2 Chron. ix. 8 ; Ps. cxii. 1, cxlvii. 10. According to this view the rendering would be, “Let no one condemn you, *delight-*

¹ As the simple verb βραβεύω is used by Paul in the next chapter, iii. 15, for *rule*, “let the peace of God *rule* in your hearts,” the compound καταβραβεύω might here not unreasonably be rendered “*overrule,*” there being two other Greek words in N. T. for *condemn*.

² The Gr. and Lat. renderings are :—Θέλει ἐν σοί ὁ βασιλεὺς, *places regi* : οὐκ ἠθέληκα ἐν σοί, *non places*. And, in Ps. cxii. 1, ἐν ταῖς ἐντολαῖς αὐτοῦ θέλησει, *in mandatis ejus volet*.

ing in, etc.” But this is open to two strong objections. The Hebraism is foreign to Pauline and New Testament usage; and it does not appear that the motive of the Judaizers was a feeling of *delight*, but rather an affectation of *merit*. It seems necessary, then, to connect the idiomatic *θέλων* with the *preceding*—a connexion which makes excellent sense, and may be well illustrated by Jos. *Ant.* xx. 11, where its position is the same, *μηδείς ἄν ἕτερος ἐδυνήθη θελήσας*, “no one else could have done it *even had he willed*”; and Greg. *Orat.* 187, *ἀποκτείνει με οὐ δύνασθε βουλόμενοι*, “you are not able to kill me, *much as you may desire it*” (cf. 2 Peter iii. 5, where the same participle appears in Gr. in the same position, “this they *wilfully* forget.” Cf. also the *wish*, *θέλοντες*, of the Judaizers to be teachers, 1 Tim. i. 7–9). Accordingly the R.V. margin, “*of his own mere will*,” is much preferable to the R.V. text, and might be retained; but a still closer rendering is even better, “*at his will*”; thus: “Let no one condemn you *at his will*”; or, yet more briefly, “*at will*.” The apostle has in mind some one who would have his *will* to be *law*: “*Sic volo, sic jubeo, stet pro ratione voluntas*”; and in regard to whom Tertullian can exclaim, “What! Shall human *will* (*voluntas*) have more licence than divine command?” (*Jejun.* xiii.). This *θέλων*, *willing* or *wishing*, has no reference, as the A.V. and R.V. suppose, to the *ἑθελοθησκεία*, *voluntary religion*, of verse 23, which, as one of several words compounded with *ἑθελο-*, has its own special connotation, and does not glance back to this verse.

The next error is the rendering of *ταπεινοφροσύνη* by “*humility*.” Now, *humility* is a Christian virtue deserving of commendation; whereas the Apostle is stigmatizing something deserving of reprobation. The rendering, therefore, by “*humility*” cannot be right. There can be no reasonable doubt that Zahn (i. 477) correctly refers the

Greek word to its Old Testament (Gr.) usage and that of the early Church, in which both noun and verb have the signification of *mortification of the soul by fasting*, and simply of *fasting*, as if *νηστεύω, νηστεία*. Zahn (as Trom. *Conc. s.v.*) cites Lev. xvi. 29, 31, "Ye shall *humble* your souls" (*sc.* by *fasting*: A.V. here and elsewhere, *afflict*); Ps. xxxv. 13, "I *humbled* my soul with fasting"; Isa. viii. 3, "Wherefore have we fasted and *humbled* our soul?" Sirac. xxxi. 26, "If one fast for his sins, and sin again, what profit hath he from his having *humbled* himself?" Tertullian, *Jejun.* xiii., xvi., twice introduces the Greek word in the midst of his Latin, and refers it to *fasting*. Zahn adds other passages; but these suffice, and put the meaning, in the light of the context, beyond question. As no English word, however, connoting also *humility*, conveys the meaning here intended, the choice must lie between *mortification, abstinence, fasting*; and, upon the whole, although *abstinence* would be a good rendering,¹ the last (for general readers) is simplest and clearest: "Let no one condemn you at will in the matter of *fasting*." This is the clause of verse 18 answering to clause (a) of verse 16, the "*meat and drink*" clause.

The next error is the rendering of *θρησκεία τῶν ἀγγέλων*, "*worshipping of the angels*"—taking *τῶν ἀγγέλων* as the *objective* genitive, and implying angelolatry. This is impossible. (a) The reference to verse 16 shows that, as the *fasting* which precedes relates to the *meat and drink*, so the *θρησκεία* relates to the *feasts, new moons, and sabbaths* of the Mosaic Law; (b) there is no evidence of any cult of the angels among the Judaizers in St. Paul's day (see Zahn,

¹ I should like to use "*fasting or abstinence*," both terms together, as in the Ch. of Eng. Prayer Book 'Tables and Rules—*Days of Fasting or Abstinence*.' But "*abstinence*" alone is too wide and savours too much of later Gnostic doctrine.

i. 475 sqq., who discusses and shows the irrelevance of supposed allusions). It must be concluded, therefore, that τῶν ἀγγέλων, "of the angels," cannot be the *objective* genitive. Nor yet can it possibly be the *subjective* genitive, *worship rendered by the angels*.¹ For, (a) there is no trace of any such worship; (b) the idea is outside the argument; (c) the close linking of θρησκεία to the preceding "fasting" by the copula and the single preposition "in" would ascribe to the angels the practice of *fasting* as well as of *worship*; a conception which needs no refutation. What, then, is the explanation? Why are "the angels" introduced? The answer I believe to be this. Looking (a) at the reference to the latter clause of verse 16, the *ceremonial observance* clause; (b) to the proper meaning of the word θρησκεία, *viz.* the *cultus externus*, comprehending, as opposed to internal spiritual worship, all the *external* acts of worship, such as *temple-building, rites and ceremonies and celebrations* (Phil. J. i. 195 gives the concrete examples, contrasting it with *δσιότης, holiness of life*—a correct view which gives point to the use of the word in Jas. i. 26, 27); and (c) to the stress laid by the Rabbis upon the *mediation of angels in the giving of the Law*, and the thereby enhanced peril of disregard of its enactments—points certain to be urged by the Judaizers—I conclude that τῶν ἀγγέλων, "of the angels," is the genitive of *origin* (just as *of men*, and *of God*, in verses 19, 22, "increase of God," "doctrines of men," and as *of angels* in Acts vii. 53, "ordinances of angels"), and that on account of the Judaizing arguments on this head St. Paul employs the very word of the Judaizers, "of the angels," instead

¹ Euseb. *H.E.* uses the gen. both *subj.* and *obj.* after θρησκεία: e.g. x. 5, τὴν τῶν Χριστιανῶν θρησκείαν, *the religion of the Christians*, *sc.* practiced by the Christians; vi. 43, τὴν θρησκείαν τῶν δαιμόνων, *the religion of the demons*, *sc.* the religion in which worship was offered to the demons.

of his own ordinary word, τοῦ νόμου, “*of the Law.*” (So Jerome, *Ad Algas*, cited in note to Rheims Version; and so partly Theodoret, A.D. 450: see Zahn, i. 476). The veneration of the Law as the *ordinances of the angels* is beyond dispute: it is alluded to by St. Stephen, “ye received the Law as *ordinances of angels*” (Acts vii. 53, εἰς διαταγὰς ἀγγέλων); by St. Paul himself, “the Law *ordained through angels*” (Gal. iii. 19, διαταγείς δι’ ἀγγέλων); and by *Ep. to Heb.*, “the word *spoken through angels*” (Heb. ii. 2; cf. the frequent phrase, “spoken *through* the prophet,” Matt. i. 12, ii. 23, iii. 3, etc.; Rev. i. 1, “the Revelation . . . sent *through his angel* unto John”—as if *angels*, like *prophets*, were the mouthpiece of the Lord). The same point is in view in the arguments of Col. i. 5–18, and Heb. i. 1–14, emphasizing the superiority of Christ over the angels. The Judaizers urged the wrath of avenging angels to overawe non-conformists to the Law.¹ The rendering, then, will be such as this: “*Let no one at will condemn you in the matter of fasting and ceremonial religion of the angels*”; or, for most readers, to avoid misconception, “*ceremonial ordinances of the angels,*” the θρησκεία being the *observances* of verse 16b, viz. *observances of feasts, new-moons, sabbaths, etc.* (Cf. Aug., cited by Tdf., *religionem angelorum, quæ Græce Θρησκεία dicitur*. Vulg.: *religiones angelorum*; Rheims: *religion of angels*. Cf. also Gal. iv. 10, “Ye observe days, etc.: I am afraid for you.”

The next error of the renderings is the worst of all, viz., the rendering of ἐμβατεύων, “*dwelling in.*” And here I must be excused for avowing that it is perfectly inexplicable to me how the Revisers—eminent scholars as they were—

¹ It should be remembered that the Greeks regarded the δαίμονες, *demons*, as the Jews regarded the *angels*, as “guardians and overseers of human conduct” (Plut. i. 573, A, δαίμονες τεταγμένοι τῶν ἀνθρώπων πράξεω φύλακες τε καὶ ἐπίσκοποι): hence the appeal to superhuman powers would be expected to carry great weight with the Gentiles.

could have arrived at and adopted this rendering, and how any later scholars can have been found to support them. Yet the two most popular and estimable recent commentaries, the *Internat. Crit. Com.* and the *Century Bible*, both follow the R.V.; the latter, without adducing any authority, merely remarking, “*dwelling in* [sc. ἐμβατεύων] is a word that varies in its meaning, being rendered with equal accuracy [!] as in the text, or as in the marg. ‘*taking his stand upon*’ ”; and the former, “ἐμβατεύειν is properly to *step* or *stand on*” [two different things], adding, “So with gen., Soph. *Œd. T.* 845 (825): “hence [!] to *dwell in*, as Eur. *Heracl.* 875.” But this passage of Euripides has not this meaning: the meaning is to *enter upon*, not *dwell in*; so that even the solitary poetical instance adduced fails.¹ Similarly the use of the word for gods *haunting* a favourite resort gives no countenance to *dwelling in*. The fact is, there is always in the word the idea of *motion* to or on, never of *rest in*: and *in the whole range of extant Greek literature there is not one single instance of the meaning of “dwelling in.”* Nor, indeed, could there be. The literal meaning of the word is that of *setting foot on* (as, e.g., *going on board* a ship), *entering upon* a piece of property (rightly or wrongly, or after wrongful dispossession, as in the Eur. *Heracl.* passage, above), *invading* or *intruding* into the territory of another. Thus Josh. xix. 51 (Gr.), “they went to *enter on* the land,” after the allotment to the tribes; 1 Macc. four times, c. *eis*, *into*, of hostile invasions; Isæ. 74, “he *entered on* the property” (illegally). The metaphorical meaning follows the same lines—and in our verse the meaning is clearly metaphorical—it is that of

¹ The word is a favourite one with Euripides, occurring 6 times in his extant Plays and fragments; twice in the sense of *haunting* or *frequenting*; and four times in the sense of *entering upon*, *ingrediri*, *in possessionem ire*: never of *dwelling in*. In the passage from Sophocles, cited above, by the *Internat. Crit. Comm.*, the meaning is to *set foot on* (Jebb renders, *set foot in*).

going into a matter, entering upon an investigation, carefully or curiously *searching into*. Thus: 2 Macc. ii. 30, it is used of an architect *entering upon* the preliminary study of plans for his building. Phil. J. i. 341, of a scientist "*pur-suing his scientific investigations*;" the illustration being added of a man digging wells in *search* for water. So the Fathers: Chrys. *Op. Sel.* i. 264 (ed. Didot), "God who *searcheth into* hearts." Bas. i. 541, "Though ignorant of the nature of the earth, they make a brag of *investigating* the essence of God." Similarly Greg. Nys. ii. 944. Thus neither literally nor metaphorically is there the slightest foundation for the rendering "*dwelling in*." The examples given—and none exist to the contrary—have shown that "*searching into*" is the correct interpretation; and, as the *search* here intended is held up to condemnation, the A.V. "*intruding into*" may well stand. The Vulg. has *ambulans*; Augustine, *incolans*; but the A.V., even etymologically, is a felicitous rendering, which need not be dislodged; while, as regards the argument, it is an apposite description of the wild speculations of false teachers, the Jewish errorists, on the mediatorial and executive functions of angels in the government of the world and the maintenance of the Jewish Law.

The meaning of ἐμβαρύων being thus settled, it only remains to decide the deferred question of the correct Greek reading, ἃ ἐώρακεν, or ἃ μὴ ἐώρακεν that is, whether St. Paul wrote, as R.V., "*things which he hath seen*"; or, as A.V., "*things which he hath not seen*." The decision will depend on the strength of the *external* and *internal* evidence together: it cannot be decided by the *external* evidence alone. Indeed, where *external* evidence is in conflict, the *internal* evidence, if clear, must always prevail. First, then, as to the *external* evidence for the omission of μὴ, "*not*" (see it in Tisch. *apparatus*): it is entirely, or

almost entirely, African and Egyptian, and of untrustworthy character :—*sc.* three out of the four oldest extant Uncial MSS., *Vat.*, *Sin.* (originally), *Alex.*—all Alexandrian, Cent. iv. and v.—and *Bezae* (originally), Cent. vi. ; of the large number of Cursive MSS., three only ; of Versions, some African Old Latin (others on the contrary side), the Coptic and the Æthiopic ; and the African Father Tertullian, who is merely *Old Latin* over again. As to the old Greek Uncial MSS., Origen and Jerome and Augustine all testify to the existence of MSS. in their days with *both* readings. Now, without unduly anticipating the evidence on the other side (given below), it is important to remark here at once, in testing the force of the evidence, that *Vat.* and *Sin.* though alone extant of Cent. iv., have not of any necessity more value than other equally ancient Uncials no longer extant, but to whose existence there is ample contemporary, or nearly contemporary, evidence ; also that *Sin.* as originally written may be taken to be more or less balanced by *Sin.* corrected ; *Alex.*, Cent. v., balanced by *Ephraem*, Cent. v. ; *Bezae* original, by *Bezae* corrected ; the *Old Latins* on the one side by the *Old Latins* on the other. The evidence against the $\mu\eta$, so far as MSS. are concerned, is thus practically reduced to *Vat.* alone, or (making great allowance) to the concurrence of *Vat.* and *Sin.* ; and it is thus mainly on the concurrence of these two codices that nearly all the leading Textual critics (Tisch., Treg., Westcott and Hort ; Zahn, I regret, follows them), *omit* the “*not.*” But to estimate aright the value of their combination and decision, it must be remembered that, as Textual critics, they preferably exclude *internal* evidence (often the most decisive) from their purview : and, further, that they *all row in the same boat*, blinded to the luminous sum total of evidence by what has been well termed the “*idolatry*” of *Vat.* and *Sin.*

Now these two codices, though the oldest extant, Cent. iv., are yet nearly 300 years later than the date of St. Paul's letter, and cannot be shewn to be the best authority for Cent. i. : the one, the *Vat.*, very corrupt and remarkable for its omissions ; and the other, the *Sin.*, very careless and depraved. Years ago, as far back as A.D. 1875, I called attention to their abundant and glaring errors (my object prevented my adding others quite as glaring, e.g., Mark iv. 26, and, outside the Gospels, Acts iv. 25 ; xii. 25 ; Rom. v. 1), and protested against the overweening estimation of them by Westcott and Hort (whose method appeared to me radically wrong), urging that once more there must be a "call out of Egypt" (*New Testament*, vol. i. pp. xxx.-xxxiv.). Of this I am to-day more convinced than ever. As Nestle says, "This must now be asserted with far greater emphasis, that the concurrence of *Sin.* and *Vat.*, on which so much stress has been hitherto laid by almost all textual critics, *proves nothing at all*" (*Text. Crit.*, Eng. ed., p. 227). I am satisfied that, until we rid ourselves of this Alexandrian incubus of *Vat.* and *Sin.*, we shall never arrive at a satisfactory and stable settlement of the Greek text of the New Testament. I await von Soden's great work with interest and confidence.

Turning now to the external evidence on the other side, *viz.*, in favour of the *insertion* of the $\mu\eta$, "not," we find (a) a far larger number of the uncial MSS., including the valuable palimpsest *Ephræm.*, and the very ancient ones referred to by Origen and Jerome¹ and the corrected *Sin.* and *Bezæ* ; (b) the entire mass of the Cursive MSS., except-

¹ It must be remembered that Jerome, both in his famous "Preface" addressed to Pope Damasus, A.D. 383, as well as in his private letter to Marcella, lays great stress on the fact that he *corrects* the "errors" of earlier Latin versions due to "presumptuous empirics or sleepy copyists" of the Greek MSS., and of these the *ancient ones* : thus testifying to sundry ancient MSS. as old or older than *Sin.* and *Vat.*, having the $\mu\eta$.

ing three; (c) of Versions, two of the Old Latins, the Latin Vulgate, the two Syriacs, the Gothic, and the Armenian; (d) of the Fathers, Origen (partly), Jerome, Augustine, Chrysostom, Theodoret. In every direction, MSS., Versions, Fathers, the balance in favour of the "not" largely preponderates. To account for the omission of the "not" in our passage may be difficult, but it is difficult to account for scores of readings which, nevertheless, are confidently rejected (see e.g. Matt. xxvii. 49; 1 Cor. xv. 49, 52, where a "not" is omitted by *Sin.* before "sleep"). And I will add, what appears to me an independent strong argument in favour of the *μή*, viz., that, if St. Paul himself had not written it, no *interpolator* (and many such interpolators would have been needed) would have ventured upon it in such a position as before a perf. indic., *έώρακεν*—he would have supplied the usual *ούχ*, as in 1 John iv. 29 ("God, whom he hath not seen"), instead of the less usual *μή*, which implies an opinion, modest or otherwise, of the writer, and, as I believe in this verse, a Pauline sarcasm. The effect can best be given in English in such cases by inserting "I trow." (For this *μή* c. indic., cf. John. iii. 18; 2 Pet. i. 9, *lit.* "he to whom these things are not present"; and the *μηδείς*, instead of *ουδείς*, in Jos. Ant. xx. 11, above cited, "which no one else, I trow, could have done".)¹

On the external evidence, then, alone, the *μή*, "not," has far the higher claim on acceptance. But, turning to the internal evidence, the decision is as absolutely certain as any decision can be. It must be assumed that St. Paul wrote *sense*. He is condemning conduct which, he distinctly states, springs from two heinous faults, the one

¹ This subjective use of *μη* c. ind. is frequent in Plutarch, e.g. i. 470 C, *έν στρατηγή, κλαίων ότι μη ύπατεύει, και ύπατεύων, ότι μη πρώτος άνηγορεύθη.* 525 F, *άφαιρούνται άλλων οίς αυτοί χρήσθαι μη πεφόκασιν.* In 609 C he employs both *ού* and *μή*, but the latter with delicate refinement of meaning

positive, viz., intellectual pride; the other *negative*, “not holding fast the Head” (Christ). Now, if “not” be omitted, the passage will run like this, “*intruding into the things which he hath seen*, vainly puffed up by intellectual pride.” This, after Tertullian (*adv. Marc.* v. 19), is taken to refer to *angelic visions* claimed by the errorists. But (a) no evidence is forthcoming of such visions; (b) the *ἑώρακεν*, “*hath seen*,”—the word for *eye-witness* of fact (John i. 34; xix. 35, *al.*),—cannot be used of *visions* without a word for *visions*, *ὄπτασια*, *ὄραμα*, being either expressed (Luke i. 22; xxiv. 23) or distinctly referred to (Luke ix. 36, with Matt. xvii. 9; Mark ix. 9; of the Transfiguration Vision); (c) St. Paul would not have endorsed the reality of the visions by his use of “*he hath seen*”; it may be taken as certain that he would have written, “*things which he allegeth he hath seen*”; (d) there could be no *intellectual presumption* in investigating the meaning and directions of angelic visions, if any such had been vouchsafed; the investigation would have been praiseworthy. Accordingly, the words “*intruding into the things which he hath seen, being puffed up*,” etc., are so evidently void of argument and sense—and “*dwelling in*” would only make confusion worse confounded—that some critics and interpreters, strangely refusing the authentical “*not*,” have resorted to *conjectural emendations*; among which the *ἀέρα κενεμβατεύων*, *treading on empty air*, of Dr. Taylor, has the approval of Lightfoot, Westcott and Hort. Now, in the first place, this word *κενεμβατεύων* has no existence in the Greek language; and in the next place, if St. Paul really used the word, we should have the amazing result that the true reading has vanished, without a trace or a memory, from every single MS., every single Version, every single Father, East and West alike! Can any one believe this possible? It is absolutely incredible

and absurd. On the other hand, when we retain the "not," as thoroughly well attested by the preponderance of the *external* and the decisiveness of the *internal* evidence, the reasoning and severe censure of the Apostle, in view of the presumptuous incursions of the errorists into the spiritual world in support of their false teaching, become intelligible and lucid: "Let no one condemn you at will in, etc., rashly intruding into things which, *I trow*, he hath not seen, being puffed up by his carnal intellect" (*νοός*). (To avoid confusion with the "*carnal mind*" of Rom. viii. 6, 7—where there is the different Greek word, *φρόνημα*—it is necessary and more relevant here to render *νοός* by "*intellect*"; and the *εἰκῆ*, *at random, rashly* [R.V. *vainly*], is more suitably joined with the "*intruding*" than with the "*being puffed up*": but it may be taken either way.)

In conclusion, then, after a minute investigation, step by step, of the language and argument of the verse and context, the R.V. is seen to be in error throughout, and to give to the passage partly an entirely wrong sense, and partly no sense at all. The right reading and rendering of the verse will be as follows:—"Let no one condemn you at will in the matter of fasting and ceremonial religion [*or ordinances*] of the angels, rashly intruding into the things which, *I trow*, he hath not seen, being puffed up by his carnal intellect, and not holding fast the Head."

JOHN B. McCLELLAN.

THE ESCHATOLOGY OF THE GOSPELS.

IV. JESUS.

VARIOUS MODES OF UNDERSTANDING (St. John).

OUR investigation of the Gospel-tradition led us to the conclusion that there are different lines of thought, and various groups of sayings, which have each of them the