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- ART. I.—1. *The English Bible.* A sermon by the Rev. John W. Nevin, of the Western Theological Seminary. Published in the Presbyterian Preacher for Jan. 1836.
2. *The History, Character, and Importance of the received English version of the Bible.* A sermon by the Rev. William Adams, New York. Published in the National Preacher for Oct. 1835.

IT is now three centuries since Miles Coverdale completed his great plan of translating and publishing the entire Bible in the English language. The sermons before us are in commemoration of this interesting event. They are sensible, well written discourses, on an important topic, and richly merit the pains that have been taken to give them an extensive circulation. From the celebration of the first English version, the authors have taken occasion to direct the attention of the public to the history and merits of the one now in use. Though very unlike in their style, they are equally admirers of this noble monument of the learning and piety of our fathers, and have done a valuable service to the cause of truth by presenting in such a forcible manner its claims to the confidence of the community. The ripe scholarship evinced by one of these sermons, the earnestness of the other, and the good sense and piety of both, will cause them, we

trust, to be very generally read, and thus to be the means of correcting the erroneous opinions that are prevalent to some extent on the subject of which they treat.

These sermons are the more acceptable at this time, because a disposition has been manifested of late to disparage the received translation of the scriptures. From a contemporary journal\* we learn that the Rev. Dr. Jonathan Homer, of Newton, Massachusetts, has been some forty years "seeking to improve the text of the common version." We are not entirely certain that we understand what is meant by this *improved text*. In the ordinary acceptation of that term, a perfect text of any author is one which gives the ipsissima verba of the original autograph. In no department of letters have more acuteness and industry been displayed than in the collation, for this purpose, of different editions of ancient authors sacred and profane. Labours of this kind are of the utmost importance, especially in sacred literature; and their necessity has by no means ceased since the introduction of the art of printing. The utmost vigilance cannot prevent some misprints from creeping into a work that has gone through so many hundred editions as our common version of the Bible: and each mistake of this kind is not confined, as in transmission by manuscript, to a single copy or to the few which may be transcribed from it, but is perpetuated through many thousands of copies. To remedy this evil, Dr. Blaney undertook near the close of the last century to publish a text which should be perfectly accurate, and might be safely followed, in all future editions, as a standard. This was issued in 1769 under the direction of the Vice-Chancellor, and delegates of the Clarendon press, at Oxford. But notwithstanding the extreme care and labor bestowed upon this edition, there have since been discovered in it no less than one hundred and sixteen errors, some of them of importance. The most perfect edition of our translation is said to be that given in 1806 by Eyre and Strahan, printers to his Majesty. But one erratum has as yet been discovered in it. It is, therefore, probably the nearest approximation that will ever be made to an *immaculate text*.

\* In the Biblical Repository for 1835, is an article on the subject of English versions of the scriptures generally, to which is appended an extract of five or six pages with the following notice by the editor, "At the close of this article, we are happy to present the following communication from the Rev. Dr. Jonathan Homer, of Newton, Massachusetts, a gentleman who has given long and indefatigable attention to this subject, and who is more intimately acquainted with it, than any other individual in the country."

If, however, Dr. Homer has authenticated copies of all the principal editions, and has in other respects the means and the abilities for giving a more thorough revision than that of Dr. Blaney, or a more accurate print than that of Eyre and Strahan, we would be the last in the world to discourage him from his long cherished purpose of "improving the text of our common version."

But, if we may judge from the materials which he has collected for his work, this is not precisely what he contemplates. His attention has been directed not to the collecting of different editions of the common version, but of copies of the different versions. Those to which he has had access, as detailed by him through several not very intelligible pages, are Matthew's Bible of 1537, Cranmer's of 1539, the Great Bible of 1541, a New Testament dated 1552, a Coverdale's Tindal of 1551 or 1561, the Bishops' Bible of 1568, and the common version made in 1611. Each of these versions, he says, renders particular passages correctly, and in accordance with the views of *the great modern critics*. His plan, therefore, appears to be, to select from each version those passages which have been rightly translated, and to combine them in one perfect whole which shall throughout express the exact meaning of the original, and be in good English idiom. That this is what he means by "seeking to improve the text of the common version" will be manifest from the concluding paragraph of this remarkable communication.

"Each translation has *its special good renderings, corresponding with the best modern critics*. The Bible of 1537, best agrees with Gesenius, Stuart, and the richest portions [those taken from other authors?] of Rosenmüller. It was executed by the three first Hebrew, Greek, and English scholars, and thorough Germans, ever known among the several translators. The New Testament of Rogers' Bible 1537, and Coverdale's Tindal 1551, and Tindal's first Testament of 1526, are in English idiom, and they are executed most in conformity to the latest and best biblical critics. *From the whole, with the consulted aid of more than two hundred critical works, including the sources of each translation, I have long been seeking to improve the text of the common version.*"

What Dr. Homer proposes, then, is not by a collation of the different editions of our translation to give an improved text of the same, but, by comparing different translations and by various other "consulted aids," to give *a new improved translation*. The ground for this bold attempt, as well as the manner in which it has been conducted, will be evident from the following passages.

"I have employed myself, for a portion of eleven years, in collating and comparing each of these Bibles and Testaments with each other, with the originals, with the principal versions and comments and lexicographers of the three last centuries, to the present date. *I have compared them also with the notes which*

*I began to collect, at the age of seventeen, from the books of Harvard College library, and which have been accumulating for fifty-eight years, following my collegiate course.* Prompted by the conscientious religious motive of the venerated, learned and indefatigable German, Bengel (obit 1752), for about forty years, I have paid critical attention to various readings in both Testaments, of Hebrew and Greek text, and of ancient respected versions, and have examined the authorities for and against them individually. I have endeavoured, particularly, to mark those in which the old English versions and the orthodox, or those of James's creed among the learned are agreed, with few or no exceptions. I have found as the result, that the Cranmer Bible, the Bishops' Bible, and the King James's Bible were not independently rendered. . . . . King James's Bible was under the control of the very arbitrary King James and his Pimote, men of strong prejudice and of no Hebrew, if any Greek learning—mere Latin scholars. **IT IS THROUGHOUT A VERSION DRAWN FROM OTHER VERSIONS AND COMMENTS, NOT EXCEEDING TWENTY.** It was carried on with the felt early loss of their two greatest scholars, Hebrew Professor Lively, and the President Dr. Reynolds. . . . . These two Bibles [the Cranmer Bible, and the Great Bible] differing little from each other, I have also collated in all their parts, and traced them successively to their sources—*other than the original.* *So I affirm of King James's Bible, THIS IS IN NO PART A NEW TRANSLATION TAKEN DIRECTLY FROM THE ORIGINALS.* Those parts of King James's Bible, which were drawn from Luther, were not taken by them from the German Bible, but by the early translators, from whom they borrowed the English version. This I have every where traced to the English, French, Latin or German versions, which preceded it. *This circumstance I found proved by a full exploring of the New Testament in 1828.* It has since been confirmed in every book of the Old Testament."

When such statements as these are sent forth to the world as the oracles of wisdom, when Dr. Webster's *expurgated* edition is recommended to the public by the high authority of the Faculty of Yale College, when even the Temperance Society cannot be advocated or the gospel preached without such constant parade of modern criticism and such frequent corrections of the received translation as to shake the confidence of the people in its accuracy, we hail with pleasure the publication of these sermons by Mr. Nevin and Mr. Adams, and hope they will go far to counteract what we cannot but consider erroneous and dangerous opinions.

We had supposed the masterly discussions consequent upon the publication of the extravagant assertions of Mr. John Bellamy in 1818,\* and the overwhelming array of

\* The sources of information on this subject, and on the subject of English translations generally, are Fuller's Church history of Great Britain; Lewis's history of English Biblical translations, prefixed to his folio edition of Wickliffe's New Testament, 1731; Johnson's historical account of the several English translations of the Bible, originally published in 8vo. 1730, and reprinted in the 3d vol. of Watson's Theological Tracts; Newcombe's View of the English Biblical Translations 1792; Horne's Introduction, vol. 3d; Mr. John Bellamy's new Translation and notes, 1818—21; London Quarterly Review, vols. xix and xxiii: Eclectic Review, vol. 10, N. S.; Antijacobin Review, vol. liv; Todd's Vindication of our authorized Translation, and Translators, 1819;

evidence internal and historical then brought forward by Whittaker, Todd, Lee, Hurwitz and Townley, and by repeated articles in the London Quarterly, Antijacobin, and Eclectic Reviews, had put the question of the competency and fidelity of King James's translators forever at rest. We are not a little surprised then at such an unqualified impeachment of both by one who is introduced to the public as better qualified to speak on the subject than any other individual in the country, and who from his tone and manner evidently would not think the eulogy misplaced. Our translators themselves say of their version that it is "translated out of the original tongues." But, Dr. Homer has discovered that this is a falsehood—that our version was drawn from "sources other than the original"—that it "*is in no part a new translation taken directly from the original.*" He is so certain of this that he has even given the precise date of the discovery, "in a full exploring of the New Testament in 1828." And he not only affirms that their work was not as they say, "translated out of the original tongues," but argues that it is impossible it should be so, they being "under the control of the very arbitrary James and his Primate, men of strong prejudice, and of no Hebrew, if any Greek learning—mere Latin scholars." That is to say, the translators have published a deliberate falsehood on the very title-page of their great work: and either falsehood, or less information concerning them than we now possess, must be charged upon those of their contemporaries who have represented them as the most learned, pious, and venerable company that were ever united in any one great literary undertaking. The more we consider these assertions, the greater is our amazement. There is no fact in history better ascertained than, that the men called upon in 1607 to translate the Holy Scriptures were men eminently qualified for their task, and that they did translate directly from the original Greek and Hebrew. Where they found any passages already correctly translated in any of the existing versions, conveying the exact idea of

Whittaker's Historical and Critical Inquiry into the Interpretation of the Hebrew Scriptures 1819, and supplement, 1820; Prof. Lee's Letter to Mr. Bellamy, 1821; Hymen Hurwitz' *Vindiciae Hebraicae*, 1821. All these between 1818 and 1821 were called forth by the misrepresentations in the Introduction and notes of Mr. Bellamy's translation. For information respecting the particular lives of the different translators, the reader is referred to Townley's *Illustrations of Biblical Literature*, and Chalmers' *Biographical Dictionary*, unless he is disposed to glean for himself from Fuller, Camden, Antony Wood, &c.

the original, and in good English, they did not of course wantonly change the phrase, and thus give unnecessary offence to the people, all whose prejudices would be in favour of that to which their ears had been accustomed. We have always admired the wisdom of that part of the King's instructions relating to this subject. The translation then most commonly in use was to be followed with as little alteration as was consistent with fidelity to the original. When it was found to vary from the original, and the true meaning had been expressed by any one of the earlier translations which were still in use, they were then to adopt its phraseology. Their compliance with this part of their regulations contributed we doubt not in no small degree to that unparalleled popularity which this translation almost immediately received, and has to this day retained; a popularity so great that all the preceding translations, though of acknowledged excellence, have gradually passed into disuse, and are now so rare that the possessor of some four or five of them trumpets it over the land as a literary curiosity. In adopting this course, those men did what any man of sense would now do who should attempt to give a new translation of the Bible. They did precisely what Dr. Homer himself proposes to do. They adopted the "special good renderings" of each existing translation, and where they found none such they made one. This was, in full justness of speech, giving a new translation; and so is what Dr. Homer calls "seeking to improve the text of the common version." The thing aimed at in both cases is precisely the same. The only difference is, that in the present case, it is one, irresponsible, unknown individual who takes upon himself the important office, without any urgent necessity, unsolicited by any public body, and untrammelled by any established rules. In the other case, it was a numerous body of the most illustrious scholars, maintained at the public expense, enjoying the public confidence, and summoned to the work by the Head of a mighty nation hungering for the pure word of God.

The translation of the Scriptures is not a work to be entrusted, except from imperative necessity, to any one man however gigantic may be his attainments or his genius. *Dormitat aliquando Homerus.* Though he may give a "special good rendering" in one place, he may give a special bad one in another. Hence the number of translators employed by King James adds greatly to the authority of their work. What is overlooked or omitted by one, may be ob-

served or supplied by another. Although fifty-four men who knew nothing of Greek or Hebrew might not have the authority of one who did; yet when, as in the case of our translators, all of them were men of learning and ability, and some of them pre-eminently and proverbially so, the largeness of the number does give a security from mistake which nothing else can. Every one has his peculiarities of character and opinion which fit him for some particular duty and disqualify him to a certain extent for every other. The man best suited to translate the Psalms of David would not be the one we should select to translate Paul's Epistles, nor either of these to translate those parts relating to the details of Solomon's temple, or of the Levitical ritual. Great attention was paid to this in allotting to the several translators their respective portions, each receiving that for which he was best qualified. By this means all the advantages, arising from division of labour in the execution of the details, were secured; while by another admirable regulation, by which each man's work when finished had to be submitted to the inspection and judgment of all the rest, individual peculiarities were prevented from running into extravagance, and harmony preserved throughout the whole.

The time in which our translation was made, was peculiarly fitted to secure one which would become, as it has, a common standard. At the first outbreak of the reformation, the errors of the church of Rome were not all immediately dissipated. Like the mists of the morning, one error after another gradually disappeared before the steadily increasing light of day. It was a century at least before the Reformed Churches were fully purified from that polluting superstition which had equally defiled the doctrines, the rites, and the language of religion. The exasperation, likewise, consequent upon the first separation from the Church of Rome, was exceedingly great on both sides, and did not soon subside. Had our version, then, been made at an earlier period it could not so admirably have escaped the opposite dangers, of being in some parts unintentionally tinctured with anti-Papal prejudice, and of savouring in others of the still existing leaven of Mother Church. The agitated waters of the Reformation had subsided, and the pure fountain of truth was left undefiled by the pollutions both of its turbid and its stagnant state.

It was too that precise time when the zeal of Protestants had ceased to be zeal against the Pope, and had not begun to

be zeal against each other. Protestantism was still to a great extent one and homogeneous. The different sects into which it was divided were sufficiently jealous of each other to prevent the improper favouring of any one set of opinions, and yet not so widely apart as to forbid all co-operation or concurrence. The lines of demarcation were not so strong and well defined, nor the barriers so impassable as they have since become. The work, therefore, is not sectarian in its origin or its character. It is in the strictest sense a national translation. It is the acknowledged and established standard of every denomination except the Roman Catholics and some few Unitarians. No translation now made could ever become this. The Presbyterians, the Associate Reformed, the Dutch Reformed, the Lutherans, the Congregationalists, the Methodist Episcopalians, the Protestant Episcopalians, the Baptists, and the Quakers, of this country; the Church of England; the Church of Scotland; and the various bodies of dissenters in Great Britain, and elsewhere, speaking the English language, will assuredly never unite for this purpose; and a new translation put forth by any one denomination will never be adopted by the rest. If Dr. Homer thinks that all these will lay aside their sectarian jealousies, and that more than thirty millions of people will free themselves of their deep-rooted prejudices in favour of Bible phrases to which their ears have been accustomed, out of respect to his select "special good renderings," his opinion differs greatly from ours, as to the attractiveness of an "improved text of the common version." We cannot persuade ourselves that any such improvement would gain the public confidence, even though made from the accumulated "notes" of fifty-eight years "with the consulted aid of more than two hundred critical works," and agreeing "with Gesenius, Stuart, and the richest parts of Rosenmüller."

The age in which our translation was made, was pre-eminently a learned age. In science and the arts, that in which we live is, we admit, greatly beyond its predecessors. But so far as learning and scholarship is concerned, we do affirm there never has been an age equal to it. There never was an age distinguished by so many illustrious scholars in every department of classical and biblical learning. Where do we go for profound original information on Latin, Greek or Oriental Literature? Where are the great storehouses from which our modern bookmakers draw their Lexicons, their Grammars, their Commentaries? Was Melancthon "a mere



Latin scholar?" Did Roger Ascham know nothing of Greek? Were Erpenius, and Golius, and Pococke, unacquainted with Arabic? Was Hebrew a dead letter to such men as Buxtorf, Morinus, Pagninus, Arias Montanus, Tremellius, Junius, Beza, Castell, Walton, and Pool? Where is the public Library three-fourths of whose volumes on sacred philology are not dated in the 16th and 17th centuries? We find in this period among the magnates of Oriental and Classical learning, besides those already mentioned, such names as Budaeus, Erasmus, Turnebus, the Scaligers, P. Manutius, Aldus Manutius, the younger Casaubon, Fagius, the Morels, Gesner, Fabricius, Morus, Glass, Capellus, Grotius, Usher, Lightfoot, Montfaucon, Vossius, Heinsius (father and son), Bochart, Meursius, Robert and Henry Stephens, all of them scholars of the very highest order; to say nothing of the incomparable divines, and illustrious authors of every sort and in every nation who flourished during the same period. Now though all these were not living at the time our translation was made, yet a majority of them were contemporary with the translators; and they show the general character of the age, that it was the age of great men, especially of great scholars. The eighteenth century excelled it in science and works of taste. But for men of profound erudition, beyond all contradiction there never was such a period since the foundation of the world. The turn which the Reformation took, and the great controversies between the Papacy and its opposers, appealing at every step to the original languages of scripture, made Greek and Hebrew what politics is now, the great absorbing topic of the world. Critical editions of the Bible and of Classical authors were published on a scale and in a style utterly unparalleled. The immense Thesaurus of the Greek language by Henry Stephens, the Rabbinical Lexicon of Buxtorf, the Arabic Lexicon of Golius, the Hierozoicon of Bochart, the twelve folio volumes of Meursius on Grecian Antiquities, are but specimens of the thorough-going manner in which the scholars of that day handled every subject which they attempted. It is impossible even to glance at their productions without a profound admiration of their scholarship, only equalled by our amazement at the effrontery which would call it in question. Their very printers were learned men. Even their books of devotion are so crowded with Greek and Hebrew that many a sciolist of these days could not read a page in them without his Lexicon and Grammar, who yet would not blush to call

himself a scholar, or to attempt with some "consulted aids" to make a new translation of the Bible.

In England especially the learned languages became so much a matter of universal concern, that acquaintance with them was considered one of the accomplishments of the drawing-room. Fuller tells us it was one of the elegant pastimes of fashionable ladies, and of the daughters of the principal nobility to translate select passages from the original scriptures for the inspection of their friends. Queen Elizabeth we know spoke familiarly Greek and Latin. And it is said, though we know not on what authority, that some of the old Puritan divines were accustomed to use their Hebrew Bibles and Greek Testaments at their family devotion morning and evening.\* Indeed so proverbial were the leading Reformers in Great Britain, whether conformists or non-conformists, for their learning, that the Romanists, when no longer able to compete with them, endeavoured to ridicule them as mere scholars. Dr. George Hakewell, a contemporary, in a work first published in 1627, says "This latter age hath herein so far excelled, that all the great learned scholars, who have of late risen, especially if they adhered to the Reformed Churches, have been by friars and such like people, in a kind of scorn termed *grammarians*. But these grammarians are they who presented us with so many *exact translations out of Hebrew and Greek into Latin*, and

\* This was originally the custom in Harvard College. "The President inspected the manners of the students thus entertained in the College, and unto his morning and evening prayers in the hall, joined an exposition upon the chapters which they [the students] read out of Hebrew into Greek from the Old Testament in the morning, and out of English into Greek from the New Testament in the evening." . . . . "The Fellows resident on the place became Tutors to the several classes, and after they had instructed them in the Hebrew language, led them through all the liberal arts." "When he [Mr. Nathaniel Mather] was but twelve years old, he was admitted into the College by strict examiners: and many months after this passed not, before he had accurately gone over all the Old Testament in Hebrew, as well as the New in Greek. . . . . He commenced bachelor at the age of sixteen, and in the act entertained the auditory with an Hebrew oration, which gave a good account of the academical affairs among the ancient Jews. Indeed the Hebrew language was become so familiar with him, as if (to use the expression which one had in an ingenious elegy upon his death) he had apprehended it should quickly become the only language." When he took his second degree three years afterward, besides more than ordinary attainments in other branches of learning, "he had likewise made no small proficiency in Rabbinick learning; and the questions referring unto the scriptures, which philology is conversant about, came under a very critical notice with him." He died shortly after, aged but nineteen years and some months. See Cotton Mather's Magnalia, Vol. II. pages 9 and 133 of the Hartford Edition.

again out of Latin into other languages. To which may be added the exquisite help of Dictionaries, Lexicons, and Grammars, in this latter age, beyond the precedent, not only for the easier learning of the Western languages, Latin, Italian, Spanish, and French; but especially *the Eastern, the Hebrew, the Chaldee, the Syriac, the Arabic.* Of all the ancient Fathers, but only two (among the Latins, St. Jerome, and Origen among the Grecians) are found to have excelled in the Oriental languages; *this last century having afforded more skilful men in that way than the other fifteen since Christ.*" Now is it probable that, only twenty years before this testimony was written, the monarch of an enlightened nation, himself proud of being thought a learned man, and ambitious to effect a version of the scriptures that might be quoted as the great glory of his reign, should not be able, out of fifty-four of the principal scholars in the kingdom, including the Hebrew and Greek Professors of the Universities and the most distinguished heads and fellows of the several Colleges, to obtain any learned and honest enough to "translate directly from the originals?" But laying aside all probabilities, what are the known facts of the case as recorded by unquestioned contemporary historians? Who were the venerable men called by King James to this celebrated undertaking? Many of them, it is true, with the unobtrusiveness of genuine scholars never pushed themselves much into public notice; and the most we know of their individual history is a mere catalogue of their works, and their preferences, gathered from public records, and from the incidental notices scattered through the authors of that period. But of others we have full and detailed information. And of all, we know enough to be fully borne out in the assertion before made, that a more learned and pious assembly the world never saw united in any one literary undertaking.

Some of the names about to be introduced are so familiar to scholars, that it would seem necessary to apologize for dwelling upon them at all. The extracts, however, which we have given from one "who is more intimately acquainted with the subject than any other individual in the country," show that a somewhat detailed account of these men is not, as we had supposed, entirely a work of supererogation.

WILLIAM BEDWELL, was one of the most eminent orientologists of his time. His fame for Arabic learning was so great that he was resorted to by Erpenius, during his residence in England in 1606, for directions in his oriental stu-

dies. He was Arabic tutor also to the great Dr. Pococke. He commenced the preparation of a general Arabic Lexicon in 3 vols. folio, and having proceeded in the work for several years, he went to Holland for the greater perfection of it by a collation of the papers of Joseph Scaliger who had made a collection of twenty thousand words in that language. In consequence of the vastness of the design, and the slowness with which he proceeded in it, he was anticipated in the publication by the Lexicon of Golius, the completeness of which made his labours abortive. Eight or nine volumes of the manuscripts of this great work were employed by Castell in the compilation of his unrivalled Polyglot Lexicon. Bedwell also commenced a Persian Dictionary which he did not live to complete. He published an edition of all the Epistles of John in Arabic with a Latin translation, which was printed in 4to in 1612 at the press of Raphelengius. In 1615 he published another work entitled "a discovery of the importance of Mahomet and of the Koran;" to which is appended a very curious illustration of oriental etymology and history called "the Arabian Trudgman." He left at his death many Arabic manuscripts to the University of Cambridge with numerous notes upon them, and a fount of types for printing them.

MILES SMITH is remarkable as having been the penman of the "Translators' Preface." Such was his profound knowledge, especially of the languages, that he was called "a very walking Library." He applied himself from early youth with great assiduity to the reading of the classics, and was very extensively read in the Greek and Latin Fathers. He was accurately versed also in Hebrew, Chaldee, Syriac, and Arabic; and was well acquainted with Rabbinical literature generally. Having taken successively the several Academic degrees at the University of Oxford, he was finally promoted, as a reward for his eminent services in the translation of the Bible, to the see of Gloucester, which he continued to adorn till his death.

RICHARD BRETT "was," says Anthony Wood, "a person famous in his time for learning as well as piety, skilled and versed to a criticism in the Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Chaldaic, Arabic, and Ethiopic tongues. He was a most vigilant pastor, a diligent preacher of God's word, a liberal benefactor to the poor, a faithful friend, and a good neighbour."

JOHN BOYSE was the son of a clergyman, by whom he was taught the first rudiments of learning, particularly of He-

brew. His mother, whose memory he greatly venerated, appears to have been a woman of piety and information. At the beginning of a Common Prayer Book he wrote: "This was my mother's book; my good mother's book. She had read the Bible over twelve times, and the book of martyrs twice, besides other books not a few." With an excellent capacity, and under such parents, his progress in knowledge was considerable, and before he was five years old he had read the whole of the Bible; and before he was six could write Hebrew in an elegant hand. At fourteen he was admitted of St. John's College, Cambridge, where he distinguished himself by his knowledge of Greek; and applied so diligently to his studies, that we are told he would go to the University Library in summer, at four o'clock in the morning, and remain till eight in the evening without intermission. Happening to have the small-pox when he was elected Fellow, to preserve his seniority he caused himself to be carried, wrapped up in blankets, to be admitted. He was ten years chief Greek lecturer in his College, and read every day. He voluntarily read a Greek lecture for some years at four in the morning in his own chamber, which was frequented by many of the Fellows. Having received several ecclesiastical preferments, he died in 1643 in the 84th year of his age, leaving behind him a great many manuscripts, some of which were afterwards printed.

SIR HENRY SAVILLE was a learned man and a great benefactor of learning. Born to an ample fortune, he spent it all (upon the loss of his only son) in the advancement of knowledge. He founded two Professorships at Oxford which are still called by his name. He published at vast expense many valuable works, among others the splendid edition of Chrysostom's Works of 1613, in 8 vols. folio, which alone cost him no less than eight thousand pounds. His various contributions of money, of rare books and manuscripts, of founts of type to public presses and Libraries, caused him to be considered as the great Maecenas of the age. He was at one time Greek Tutor to Queen Elizabeth; and James had such a regard for him, that he would have given him almost any preferment. Saville however declined, accepting only the honour of knighthood. He was Fellow, and for thirty years Warden of Merton College, in which station he acquired great reputation. He was afterwards chosen Provost of Eton College, and greatly increased its fame by the learned men with which he filled it. The kind of scholarship which

he aimed at and patronized may be judged of from this: "Give me" he used to say "the *plodding student*. *If I would look for wits, I would go to Newgate. There be wits.*"

ANDREW DOWNES was one of the learned men whose notes accompany Sir Henry Saville's famous edition of Chrysostom's works. He was Regius Professor of Greek in Cambridge University, and was accounted one of the best scholars of his time.

LAUNCELOT ANDREWS made such early proficiency in knowledge as secured for him promotion almost immediately after his entrance as a student at Cambridge. When thirty-four years of age he was chosen Master of Pembroke Hall, in which station he continued for sixteen years. After that he was made successively Bishop of Chichester, Ely, and Winchester. He took a conspicuous part in the conference at Hampton Court; and was remarkable for the seriousness of his manner, "his gravity awing King James, who refrained from that mirth and liberty, in the presence of this Prelate, which otherwise he assumed to himself." He was a most indefatigable student. The annual visit which he paid, while at the University, to his parents at Easter, was always spent in the acquisition of some new language or art with which he was previously unacquainted. By his unremitting attention to study he rose to be one of the most distinguished scholars of his age. Fuller says of him: "The world wanted learning to know how learned this man was; so skilled in all (especially the Oriental) languages, that some conceive he might, if then living, almost have served as an interpreter general at the confusion of tongues."

JOHN LAIFIELD. "Being skilled in architecture, his judgment was much relied on for the fabric of the Tabernacle and Temple."\*

RICHARD KILBYE was educated in Lincoln College, where he was successively Fellow and Rector, and after some ecclesiastical preferments was appointed Hebrew Professor in the University of Oxford. He was at one time Tutor to the celebrated Bishop Sanderson; and Izaak Walton, in his life of that distinguished Prelate, relates an interesting anecdote of him. "Dr. Kilbye, an excellent critic in the Hebrew tongue and Professor of it in the University, a perfect Grecian, and one of the translators, going into the country, took Mr. San-

\* Fuller's Church History.

derson to bear him company. Being at church on Sunday, they found the young preacher to have no more discretion than to waste a great part of the time allotted for his sermon in exceptions against the late translation of several words, (not expecting such a hearer as Dr. Kilbye) and shewed three reasons why a particular word should have been otherwise translated. The preacher in the evening was invited to the Doctor's friend's house, where after some other conference the Doctor told him, he might have preached more useful doctrine, and not have filled his auditors' ears with needless exceptions against the late translation: and, for that word for which he offered that poor congregation three reasons why it ought to have been translated as he said, he and others had considered all of them and found thirteen more considerable reasons why it was translated as now printed."\* To how many of this day might it be said, *mutatis mutandis, de te fabula narratur.*

WILLIAM SPENCER, Greek Lecturer in Trinity College, and afterwards chosen to be Professor of Divinity in Gresham College, London, on the recommendation of the Vice Chancellor and several Heads of Colleges at Cambridge, several of the nobility, and of King James himself who thought it a suitable recommendation for one of the translators of the Bible.

JOHN HARMAR was Regius Professor of Greek in the University of Oxford, for nine years Chief Master of Winchester School, and seventeen Warden of the College there. He translated Beza's Sermons into English, and several of Chrysostom's works into Latin. He was well read in the Fathers and Schoolmen, so that he held public disputations with some of the celebrated Catholic Doctors during his travels on the Continent.

THOMAS HOLLAND took his degrees in Exeter College, Oxford, with great applause, at the age of fifty was appointed Regius Professor of Divinity in the same, and three years after elected Master, "being accounted a prodigy in almost all kinds of literature." He appears to have been a man as eminent for his piety as his learning. Towards the close of life he spent a great part of his time in meditation and prayer. "Come, O come, Lord Jesus, thou bright morning Star! Come, Lord Jesus: I desire to be dissolved and to be with thee," was the dying exclamation of this aged servant of God.

\* Johnson's Historical Account.

JOHN REYNOLDS. "His memory was little less than miraculous, he himself being the truest table to the multitude of voluminous books he had read over, whereby he could readily turn to all material passages in every leaf, page, volume, paragraph, not to descend lower to lines and letters."\* He was originally a Papist, and his brother William a Protestant; but engaging in disputation they mutually converted each other, which gave rise to the following distich.

Quod genus hoc pugnae est? ubi victus gaudet uterque,  
Et simul alteruter se superasse dolet.

He was selected for his great abilities as the Protestant Champion in the famous dispute with the Popish controversialist Hart, whom he obliged to quit the field. In 1603 he was nominated one of the Puritan divines to attend the Conference at Hampton-Court; and afterwards, because of his uncommon skill in Greek and Hebrew, one of the translators of the Bible. Before the completion of this laborious undertaking he was siezed with the disease of which he died. He continued his assistance however even to the last. During his sickness, his learned coadjutors in Oxford met at his lodgings regularly once a week to compare notes. As he approached his end his whole time was spent in prayer to God, in hearing persons read, or in conferring with the translators. He died at length in the 68th year of his age, a man greatly venerated for his learning, piety, humility and disinterestedness.

MR. EDWARD LIVELY, Regius Professor of Hebrew in the University, and said to be profoundly learned in the Oriental languages, also died before the completion of the great work.

LAURENCE CHADERTON was of a Popish family, and by turning Protestant so enraged his father, that he not only disinherited him, but "sent him a poke with a groat in it to go a begging." Dr. Chaderton declining from his great modesty the mastership of Emanuel College then about to be founded, Sir Walter Mildmay the donor from his great esteem of the man said, "If you will not be *master* of the College, I will not be its *founder*." He resigned the mastership after having held it with credit thirty-eight years. He was strongly opposed to Arminianism, and was one of the Puritan divines nominated by King James to attend the

\* Fuller.



Hampton-Court Conference. Chaderton was noted for his strictness in the observance of the sabbath. He would never allow his servant to be detained from public worship to cook victuals. "I desire as much," said he, "to have my servants know the Lord, as myself." Being once on a visit to his friends in Lancashire, he was invited to preach; and having proceeded in his discourse full *two hours* he paused and said, "I will no longer trespass on your patience," upon which all the congregation cried out, "for God's sake go on, go on." He died at the extraordinary age of 103 years, and could read without spectacles to the last.

Those who wish to follow out this subject will be abundantly gratified by a reference to the works mentioned in a previous note. We had intended to give a similar brief sketch of each of the translators, but are obliged to desist. Suffice it to say, that of the twenty-five employed in translating the Old Testament, it is matter of record that thirteen were men eminently skilled in the Hebrew and Oriental languages, including six who were or had been regular Hebrew Professors in the Universities. Of the translators nearly all had received Fellowships in early life because of their great proficiency in learning. There were among them fifteen who were or had been Heads of Colleges, five Vice Chancellors of the Universities, three regular Greek Professors in the Universities, seven Divinity Professors, one Archbishop and seven Bishops. They were remarkably aged men. One venerable father was 80; others were upwards of 70; and indeed the average age of all of them, so far as ascertained, was considerably more than 60. This fact is worthy of observation as leading us to understand more fully the peculiarly venerable impress which is stamped upon every lineament of their work. This would be still farther explained, could we enter into more full details illustrating their eminent piety and heavenly mindedness. But our limited space will not permit us to dwell longer on this subject. Enough has been said surely to show the egregious mistake of those who call in question the qualifications of those great men, and represent our version as the antiquated relic of an unenlightened age.

The internal evidence that this translation was made directly from the originals, that, namely, resulting from a careful examination of the work itself, is a part of the subject upon which it does not seem necessary now to enter. The fact is so clearly established, and the misrepresentations of

those who have denied it have been so frequently exposed, that it seems hardly worth while to revive objections merely to answer them. Dr. Homer does indeed profess to have made some recent discoveries, having proved the contrary "by a full exploring of the New Testament in 1828." But as he has given no intimation of the proofs which led him to this conclusion, we must decline adopting or even discussing it, although supported by the authority of one "more intimately acquainted with the subject than any other individual in the country."

The history of our version is soon told. The idea was first suggested at the Hampton-Court Conference in 1603. Dr. Reynolds, being of the number opposed to conformity, who were summoned to attend, among other things giving us a high opinion of his piety, said: "May it please your majesty that the Bible be new translated, such as are extant not answering to the original," and he instanced three particulars. Bancroft, Bishop of London, objected. "If every man's humour," said he, "might be followed, there would be no end of translating." The King, however, seemed pleased with the suggestion of Dr. Reynolds, and said, "I profess I could never yet see a Bible well translated in English, but I think, that of all, that of Geneva is the worst. I wish some special pains were taken for an uniform translation; which should be done by the best learned in both Universities, then reviewed by the Bishops, presented to the Privy Council, lastly ratified by royal authority, to be read in the whole Church, and no other."\*

James seems to have formed very just notions of the greatness of such an undertaking, and the deliberation and care with which it should be conducted. The first step after the conference was to designate fifty-four learned men upon whom the execution of it should devolve. By whom the selection was made does not clearly appear. The persons thus chosen were divided into six companies, two of which were to meet at Cambridge, two at Oxford, and two at Westminster. The work did not actually commence till 1607, the intervening four years being spent in settling preliminaries and making all the necessary preparations. That they might give themselves wholly to the business, it was necessary that they should be released as far as possible from all other engagements, and that ample means for their support

\* Fuller.

should be provided in places affording the greatest facilities for the consultation of men and books. To this end the King wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury early in 1604, urging him to make every suitable provision for the translators; and requiring that the Prelates should inform themselves of such learned men in their several dioceses as had knowledge of the Hebrew and Greek tongues, and had made the scriptures a special study, and signify to them, the King's pleasure that they should send their observations to one of three persons appointed for that purpose.\* He gave similar instructions to the Vice Chancellors and heads of the colleges in the Universities, that if they knew of any other fit translators they should add them to the number; and that the translators should be admitted and entertained without expense, should receive kind usage, and while engaged in the work should be exempt from all academical exercises. On the 31st of July,† of the same year, the Bishop of London was directed to write to that part of the translators who were to assemble at Cambridge, expressing the King's acquiescence in the selection that had been made, and his desire that they should meet and begin their work with all possible speed; that his majesty was not satisfied till it was entered on; and that his royal mind rejoiced more in the good hope which he had for its happy success, than for the peace concluded with Spain. A letter was addressed the same day to the Governors of the University, pressing them in the strongest manner to assemble the translators, and to further the work. Also the Prelates, Deans, and Chapters, were recommended in the King's name to raise money among themselves to defray the expenses of the translators.

As an additional safeguard against mistake, discrepancy or failure, and to secure to this work every advantage which the kingdom afforded, certain rules were prescribed by the King, which were to be very carefully observed.

1. The ordinary Bible read in the Church, commonly called the Bishop's Bible, to be followed, and as little altered as the original will permit.

2. The names of the prophets, and the holy writers, with the other names in the text, to be retained as near as may be according as they are vulgarly used.

3. The old ecclesiastical words to be kept, as the word *Church* not to be translated *congregation*, &c.

\* Lewis.

† Lewis.

4. When any word hath divers significations, that to be kept which hath been most commonly used by the most eminent Fathers, being agreeable to the propriety of the place, and the analogy of faith.

5. The divisions of the chapters to be altered either not at all, or as little as may be, if necessity so require.

6. No marginal notes at all to be affixed, but only for the explanation of the Hebrew or Greek words, which cannot without some circumlocution so briefly and fitly be expressed in the text.

7. Such quotations of places to be marginally set down, as shall serve for the fit reference of one scripture to another.

8. Every particular man of each company to take the same chapter or chapters; and having translated or amended them severally by himself where he thinketh good, all to meet together, confer what they have done, and agree for their part what shall stand.

9. As any one company hath despatched any one book in this manner, they shall send it to the rest, to be considered of, seriously and judiciously; for his majesty is careful on this point.

10. If any company, upon the review of the book so sent, shall doubt or differ upon any plans, to send them word thereof, note the plans, and therewithal send their reasons; to which, if they consent not, the difference to be compounded at the general meeting, which is to be of the chief persons of each company at the end of the work.

11. When any place of special obscurity is doubted of, letters to be directed by authority, to send to any learned [man] in the land, for his judgment in such a place.

12. Letters to be sent from every bishop to the rest of his clergy, admonishing them of this translation in hand; and to move and charge as many as, being skilful in the tongues, have taken pains in that kind, to send his particular observations to the company, either at Westminster, Cambridge, or Oxford.

13. The Directors in each company to be, the Deans of Westminster and Chester, for that place; and the King's Professors in the Hebrew and Greek, in each University.

14. These translations to be used when they agree better with the text than the Bishops' Bible; viz. 1. Tindal's; 2. Matthewe's; 3. Coverdale's; 4. Whitchurche's; 5. Geneva.

“ Besides the said directions, three or four of the most

ancient and grave divines in either of the Universities, not employed in translating, to be assigned by the Vice Chancellor, upon conference with the rest of the Heads, to be *Overseers* of the translations, as well Hebrew as Greek, for the better observance of the fourth rule above specified.”\*

The portions allotted to the different translators were as follows.

*Pentateuch to the end of 2 Kings*, to Andrews, Overall, Saravia, Clarke, Layfield, Tighe, Burleigh, King, Thompson, Bedwell; to meet at Westminster.

*The rest of the historical books, and the Hagiographa, viz. Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Canticles, Ecclesiastes*, to Lively, Richardson, Chaderton, Dillingham, Harrison, Andrews, Spalding, Bing; to meet at Cambridge.

*The four Greater Prophets, with the Lamentations, and the Twelve Lesser Prophets*, to Harding, Reynolds, Holland, Kilby, Smith, Brett, Fairclowe; to meet at Oxford.

*The prayer of Manasses, and the rest of the Apocrypha*, to Duport, Branthwaite, Radcliffe, S. Ward, Downes, Boyse, Ward (of King's College); to meet at Cambridge.

*The four Gospels, Acts of the Apostles, and the Apocalypse*, to Ravis, Abbot, Eedes, Thompson, Saville, Peryn, Ravens, Harmar; to meet at Oxford.

*The Epistles of Paul, and the Catholic Epistles*, to Barlow, Hutchinson, Spencer, Fenton, Rabbett, Sanderson, Dakins; to meet at Westminster.

The number originally designated was fifty-four. But these forty-seven are those actually engaged in the translation. The other seven either were prevented from some cause not recorded; or, as is likely, included the four overseers before mentioned, and three other persons who assisted in the work, viz. Bishop Bilson who aided in the final revision, and Doctors Aglionby and Hutton who were employed in the latter stage of the business, though in what capacity is not entirely certain.

All things being now ready, in the spring of 1607, the translators set themselves to the work with the zeal and industry of men knowing the importance of the labours in which they were engaged. The premature death of Mr. Lively somewhat retarded their undertaking. “Nevertheless,” says Fuller, “the rest vigorously though slowly proceeded in this hard, heavy, and holy task, nothing offended

\* Fuller.

with the censures of impatient people, condemning their delays, though indeed but due consideration, for laziness." They were engaged in the translation nearly three years. Of the manner in which they proceeded they have given the following account in their preface. "Truly, good Christian reader, we never thought from the beginning, that we should need to make an [entirely] new translation; nor yet to make of a bad one a good one . . . . but to make a good one better, or out of many good ones, one principal good one, not justly to be excepted against: that hath been our endeavour, that our mark. To that purpose there were many [translators] chosen, *that were greater in other men's eyes than in their own*, and that sought the truth not their own praise. Again, they came or were thought to come to the work, not *exercendi causa* (as one saith) but *exercitati*, that is learned, not to learn . . . . Therefore such were thought upon as could say modestly with Saint Jerome: "*Et Hebraeum Sermonem ex parte didicimus, et in Latino pene ab ipsis incunabilis detriti sumus.*" *Both we have learned the Hebrew tongue in part, and in the Latin we have been exercised almost from our very cradle . . . .* And in what sort did these assemble? In the trust of their own knowledge, or of their sharpness of wit, or deepness of judgment, as it were in an arm of flesh? At no hand. They trusted in Him that hath the key of David, opening and no man shutting; they prayed to the Lord, the Father of our Lord, to the effect that St. Augustine did: "O let thy Scriptures be my pure delight, let me not be deceived in them, neither let me deceive by them." In this confidence, and with this devotion did they assemble together; not too many, lest one should trouble another; and yet many, lest many things haply might escape them. If you ask what they had before them, truly it was the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, the Greek of the new. These are the two golden pipes, or rather conduits, where-through the olive branches emptied themselves into the gold. Saint Augustine called them precedent, or original tongues; Saint Jerome, fountains. The same Saint Jerome affirmeth, . . . . that *as the credit of the old Books* (he meaneth of the Old Testament) *is to be tried by the Hebrew Volumes, so of the new by the Greek tongue*, he meaneth by the original Greek. If *Truth* be to be tried by these tongues, then whence should a *Translation* be made, but out of them? These tongues therefore, the Scriptures we say in these tongues, we set before us to translate, being the

tongues wherein God was pleased to speak to his church by his Prophets and Apostles. Neither did we run over the work with that posting haste that the Septuagint did, if that be true which is reported of them, that they finished it in seventy-two days: neither were we barred or hindered from going over it again, having once done it, like St. Jerome, if that be true which himself reporteth, that he could no sooner write any thing, but presently it was caught from him and published, and he could not have leave to mend it: neither, to be short, were we the first that fell in hand with translating the Scripture into English, and consequently destitute of former helps, as it is written of Origen, that he was the first in a manner, that put his hand to write Commentaries upon the Scriptures, and therefore no marvel that he overshot himself many times. None of these things: the work hath not been huddled up in seventy-two days, but hath cost the workmen, as light as it seemeth, the pains of twice seven times seventy-two days and more: matters of such weight and consequence are to be speeded with maturity; for in a business of moment a man feareth not the blame of convenient slackness. Neither did we think much to consult the Translators or Commentators, Chaldee, Hebrew, Syrian, Greek, or Latin, no, nor the Spanish, French, Italian, or Dutch; neither did we disdain to revise what we had done, and to bring back to the anvil that which we had hammered; but having and using as great helps as were needful, and fearing no reproach for slowness, nor coveting praise for expedition, we have at length, through the good hand of the Lord upon us, brought the work to that pass that you see.”\* When the whole was finished, three copies of it were sent to London from the three places of rendezvous, Cambridge, Oxford, and Westminster. Two persons also were chosen from the translators assembled in each of those places, to review and polish it. These six met daily in Stationers’ Hall, London; where in nine months they completed their task, receiving each of them thirty pounds by the week while thus engaged. “Last of all, Bilson, Bishop of Winchester, and Dr. Miles Smith, who from the beginning had been very active in this affair, again reviewed the whole, and prefixed arguments to the several books; and Dr. Smith, who for his indefatigable pains taken in this work was soon after the printing of it made Bishop of Gloucester, was ordered to write the preface.”†

\* Translator’s Preface.

† Lewis.

“And now [1611] after long expectation and great desire, came forth the new translation of the Bible (most beautifully printed) by a select and competent number of divines appointed for that purpose, not being too many lest one should trouble another, and yet many lest in any, things might haply escape them. Who neither coveting praise for expedition, nor fearing reproach for slackness (seeing in a business of moment none deserve blame for convenient slowness) had expended almost three years in the work, *not only examining channels by the fountain, translations with the original (which was absolutely necessary); but also comparing channels with channels, (which was abundantly useful) in the Spanish, Italian, French, and Dutch languages.* So that their industry, skilfulness, piety, and discretion hath therein bound the church unto them in a debt of special remembrance and thankfulness. Leave we then these worthy men, now [1655] all of them gathered to their fathers and gone to God, however requited on earth, well rewarded in Heaven for their worthy work. Of whom, as also of that worthy King that employed them, we may say “wheresoever the Bible shall be preached or read in the whole world, there shall also this that they have done be told in memorial of them.”\*

Considering the attainments of these men, their high standing, their learning, piety, and indefatigable zeal, and the peculiarly favourable circumstances in which they were called to the work, it is not surprising that they should have been enabled to produce a translation which has received the decided approbation of almost all men of learning and taste from that day to this.

“The last English translation made by divers learned men at the command of King James, though it may justly contend with any now extant in any other language in Europe, was yet carped and cavilled at by divers among ourselves; especially by one,† who being passed by and not

\* Fuller.

† This was Hugh Broughton, “a learned man, especially in the Eastern languages, but very opinionative,” says Fuller, with his usual comprehensive brevity. Lightfoot, so pre-eminent for his Hebrew and Rabbinical learning, used to say “that Broughton has more Hebrew in his little finger than I have in my whole loins.” He was greatly chagrined at not being chosen one of the translators. In consequence of his dissatisfaction, and having in vain attempted to shake the credit of the new translation, he went abroad, when it was wittily said of him that “he had gone to teach the Jews Hebrew.” If they could afford to spare such a man, merely because he lacked judgment, learning could not have been such a scarce commodity among them as some people seem to imagine.



employed in the work, as one, though skilled in the Hebrew, yet of little or no *judgment* in that or any other kind of learning, was so highly offended that he would needs undertake to show how many thousand places they had falsely rendered, when as he could hardly make good his undertaking in any one." Walton.

"*The vulgar translation of the Bible is the best standard of our language.*" Lowth.

"When the translators in King James the First's time began their work, they prescribed to themselves some rules, which it may not be amiss for all translators to follow. Their reverence for the sacred Scriptures induced them to be as literal as they could, to avoid obscurity; and it must be acknowledged that they were extremely happy in the simplicity and dignity of their expressions. This adherence to the Hebrew idiom is supposed at once to have enriched and adorned our language; and as they laboured for the general benefit of the learned and the unlearned, they avoided all words of Latin original, when they could find words in their own language; even with the aid of adverbs and prepositions, which would express their meaning." Horsley.

"The style of our present version is incomparably superior to any thing which might be expected from the finical and perverted taste of our own age. It is simple, it is harmonious, it is energetic; and, which is of no small importance, use has made it familiar, and time has rendered it sacred." Middleton.

"The highest eulogiums have been made on the translation of James the First, both by our own writers and by foreigners. And indeed if accuracy, fidelity, and the strictest attention to the letter of the text, be supposed to constitute the qualities of an excellent version, this of all versions must in general be accounted the most excellent. Every sentence, every word, every syllable, every letter and point, seem to have been weighed with the nicest exactitude, and expressed either in the text or margin with the greatest precision. Pagninus himself is hardly more literal; and it was well remarked by Robertson, above a hundred years ago, that it might serve for a Lexicon of the Hebrew language, as well as for a translation." Dr. Geddes.

"The highest value has always been attached to our translation of the Bible. Sciolists it is true have often attempted to raise their own reputation on the ruin of that of others;

and the authors of the English Bible have frequently been calumniated by charlatans of every description: but it may safely be asserted, without fear of contradiction, that the nation at large has always paid our translators the tribute of veneration and gratitude which they so justly merit. Their reputation for learning and piety has not descended with them to the grave, though they are there alike heedless of the voice of calumny, and deaf to the praise which admiring posterity awards to the great and the good. Let us not therefore too hastily conclude that they have fallen on evil days and evil tongues, because it has occasionally happened that *\*an individual as inferior to them in erudition as in talents and integrity, is found questioning their motives, or denying their qualifications for the task which they so well performed.* Their version has been used, ever since its first appearance, not only by the church, but by all the sects which have forsaken her; and has been justly esteemed by all for its general faithfulness, and the severe beauty of its language. It may be compared with any translation in the world, without fear of inferiority; it has not shrunk from the most vigorous examination; it challenges investigation; and in spite of numerous attempts to supersede it, has hitherto remained unrivalled in the affections of the country.” Whitaker.

John Taylor of Norwich, an Arian in sentiment, but a very learned man, and author of an excellent Hebrew and English Concordance, bears a still more striking testimony. “In the space of one [two] hundred years, learning may have received considerable improvements; and by that means some inaccuracies may be found in a translation more than a [two] hundred years old. But you may rest fully satisfied, that *as our translation is in itself by far the most excellent book in our language, so it is a pure and plentiful fountain of divine knowledge, giving a true, clear, and full account of the divine dispensations, and of the gospel of our salvation, insomuch THAT WHOEVER STUDIES THE BIBLE, THE ENGLISH BIBLE, IS SURE OF GAINING THAT KNOWLEDGE AND FAITH, WHICH, IF DULY APPLIED TO THE HEART AND CONVERSATION, WILL INFALLIBLY GUIDE HIM TO ETERNAL LIFE.*”

“That these [Lowth, Blayney, Horsley, and Newcome] and other sound scholars have materially assisted the cause,

\* The italics are not ours.

and produced many valuable elucidations of particular passages, is gratefully acknowledged by all who are acquainted with their works. Yet with all the respect which we feel for their labours, we venture to express a doubt whether any new translation of even a single book of Scripture has appeared since the publication of the authorized version, which taken as a whole has come up to its standard, either for the general fidelity and correctness with which it conveys the sense of the original, or the dignity, simplicity, and propriety of language in which that sense is conveyed." London Quarterly.

"Those who have compared most of the European translations with the original, have not scrupled to say that the English translation of the Bible, made under the direction of James I., is the most accurate and faithful of the whole. Nor is this its only praise: the translators have seized the very spirit and soul of the original, and expressed this, almost every where with pathos and energy. Besides, our translators have not only made a standard translation; but they have made their translation the standard of the language. The English tongue in their day was not equal to such a work; but God enabled them to stand as upon Mount Sinai, and *crane* up their country's language to the dignity of the originals, so that after the lapse of two hundred years the English Bible is, with very few exceptions, the standard of the purity and excellence of the English tongue. *The original, from which it was taken, is alone superior to the Bible translated by the authority of King James.*" Adam Clarke.

"It is a striking beauty in our English Bible, that though the language is always elegant and nervous, and for the most part very harmonious, the words are all plain and common; no affectation of learned terms, or of words of Greek and Latin etymology." Dr. James Beattie.

"Equally remarkable for the general fidelity of its construction, and the magnificent simplicity of its language." Dr. Gray.

"We are yet disposed to object to that part [of this classification] which represents the first *introduction of soft, graceful, and idiomatic English as not earlier than the period of the restoration. It is as old at least as Chaucer. The English Bible is full of it*; and it is the most common, as well as the most beautiful, of the many languages spoken

by Shakspeare." *Edinburgh Review, no partial witness surely.\**

"General fidelity to its original is hardly more its characteristic than sublimity itself . . . it is still considered the standard of our tongue . . . The English language acquired new dignity by it." Dr. I. White, Regius Professor of Hebrew in the University of Oxford.

"The language of our present version has the full tide of popular opinion strongly in its favour; it exhibits a style appropriately Biblical, and is distinguished by a general simplicity of expression, which the most uncultivated mind may comprehend, and the most cultivated admire."†

To these numerous, but we trust not uninteresting testimonies, we will merely add one of cis-Atlantic growth. It is that of Fisher Ames; than whom a better writer of English has never appeared in this country. In an essay of his, urging the importance of using the Bible as a school book, he says, "In no book is there so good English, so pure and so elegant; and by teaching all the *same* book, they will speak alike, and the Bible will justly remain the standard of language as well as of faith. A barbarous provincial jargon will be banished, and taste, corrupted by pompous Johnsonian affectation, will be restored."

The want of pure English idiom then is still less apparent than the want of fidelity to the original. The Koran has not been a more acknowledged classic among the Arabs, nor Luther's Bible among the Germans, than has the English Bible been in English literature. It has done more for the English language than the whole French Academy, with their incomparable Dictionary, can ever do for the French. "It is impossible," says a sensible writer in *Blackwood's Magazine*,‡ "to reflect upon the incalculable influence which the free use of this noble version by a great nation in an affectionate and thankful spirit for centuries must have had upon the character of both people and literature; and further upon what would have been the diminished value of the boon, even for those who might have enjoyed it, had it been delayed to a much later period; without acknowledging a providence in the choice of the time when, and the instruments

\* October, 1835, page 121, American Edition.

† From an exceedingly able Tract in the first volume of the former series of this work, on the subject of a new translation of the Bible.

‡ November, 1835, page 676.

by whose means, this benefit was conferred. As yet the language was in a gradual process of formation. Ductile, various, and manly, confined within no acknowledged rules and checked by no fear of criticism, it was in a state admirably fitted to become the faithful mirror of the national character, which the publication of that great work was calculated so deeply to effect." Indeed when we reflect that it has been regarded as a model of correct expression by the ablest critics, that it has been more read than any other English book, that the nature of its subjects and the character of the people have given it more than any other book a hold upon the imagination and the feelings, we do not wonder at the extent to which its language has become the basis both of prose and verse, and even to some extent of common conversation. The Bible is not subject to the fluctuations of taste. Shakspeare may become unfashionable, as Milton is now except in theory. But the Bible will always be read, and read by the multitude who are the great corrupters of language. Its words will always be those most upon the popular lip. Not only therefore will it remain "a well of English undefiled," but there is a certainty that its pure waters will be resorted to by all the hundreds of millions who shall be born within the reach of British and American influence till the end of time.

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*Samuel Miller*

ART. II.—*Toleration : a Discourse delivered in St. John's Church, Brooklyn, on Thanksgiving day, December 10, 1835. By Evan M. Johnson, Rector. Published by request of the Vestry. New York: Protestant Episcopal Press. 8vo. pp. 16; 1835.*

WE seldom think it proper to take notice of single sermons, unless the subjects of them be peculiarly important, or their execution peculiarly able and happy. No one, however, who reads the discourse before us will imagine that we have been prompted to the present notice by either of these considerations. On the contrary, we have rarely had the misfortune to peruse a sermon more strongly marked by puerility and ignorance. But as it was delivered in a Church connected with a respectable denomination; as it was published by the request of the Vestry of that Church; as it has