

THE
PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

No. 7.—July, 1881.

I.

THE PLAN OF THE NEW BIBLE REVISION.

WITHIN a few weeks past there has appeared a volume which has for some time been looked for with great and growing interest. This is the New Testament as revised by a number of British and American scholars, which is now given to the world without waiting for the Old Testament, the completion of which is not expected for two or three years to come. In the next number of this REVIEW there will be a careful critical estimate of the characteristic features of this interesting and important volume. What is now proposed is to give some account of the origin and progress of the whole movement for revision, and to consider the plan upon which it has been and is to be conducted.

In regard to the authorized version there has been for a long time a substantial agreement among all the learned upon two points: first, that in point of fidelity and elegance, the English Bible, as a whole, is equal if not superior to any other version, ancient or modern; but, secondly, that in particular places it is defective, owing to the progress made in grammar, lexicography, exegesis, criticism, and archæology since the days of King James, and also to the inevitable changes in the meaning and use of many English words and phrases. Attempts, therefore, at a new version in whole or in

part have been constantly made from time to time. Some of these were simply ludicrous, as Harwood's (1768), which rendered the first verse of the pearl of parables thus: "A gentleman of splendid family and opulent fortune had two sons." This has been matched in another way by some writers of our own country and generation. Not many years ago, Miss Smith, of Glastonbury, Conn., published a new version of the Scriptures, of which these are specimens; Heb. i. 1: "God formerly multifariously and abundantly having spoken to the fathers in the prophets, at these last days spake, etc." Philip. iii. 14: "I pursue toward the scope for the prize of combat of the calling above of God in Christ Jesus." In the year 1875, O. S. Halsted, ex-chancellor of the State of New Jersey, issued a translation of the book of Job from the Hebrew, a work that in his judgment was "loudly called for," and which he undertook to prepare, "having been for near twenty years engaged in the study of the Scriptures in the languages in which they were written." The style and character of the book can be accurately estimated from the first verse of the first chapter. "Man was in land Uz, Job name of him, and was that man which be upright and just, and feared God, and turned aside from evil." Every page abounds with similar gibberish.* Far different from these wretched abortions was the work done by such writers as Bishop Lowth, Archbishop Newcome, Principal George Campbell, in Britain, or by Prof. George R. Noyes, in our own country. Yet, excellent in many respects as these scholarly productions were, they never attained more than partial or temporary success. Uniformly, after a time, the old version reclaimed its former position as the recognized English standard. Still less favor attended versions made in the interest of particular doctrinal or denominational views, such as the *Improved Version* (Unitarian) of the New Testament, published in England in 1808, or the Baptist Bible issued forty or fifty years ago by some American divines, or the various publications of the American Bible

* Such writers as these forget that if the first law of a translator is to be faithful, since otherwise he misrepresents his author, the second law and one equal to the first is that he be intelligible, since otherwise he does not represent his author at all, and the reader with the version in his hand is just as much in the dark as he would be with the unknown original.

Union in this city. Whatever merits these works possessed, they never attained any general or enduring circulation, nor gave promise of displacing the common Bible.

Still there was a growing conviction in the minds of those most conversant with the facts in the case, that it was very desirable that in some way the Christian public should be put in possession of the results of modern scholarship. The general interest in Biblical studies was continually advancing. The merits of our authorized version on one hand, and on the other the amount of improvement absolutely required, became more fully understood from year to year. So that for more than a generation the question of subjecting the work of King James' translators to a close re-examination has been agitated not merely among sciolists or fanatics or acknowledged errorists, but among men at once learned and devout, who had no private ends to seek, and no peculiar or pet notions to establish. Bishop Ellicott, in the preface to the translation annexed to his Commentary on Galatians, first published in 1854, remarked: "The subject of a revision of the Authorized Version is now becoming more and more one of the questions of the day"; and in his work on Thessalonians, published four years later, he said: "I trust that the revision of our Authorized Version may be undertaken in its own good time, and that that time is not indefinitely remote." In his next issue, on the Pastoral Epistles (1861), he devoted two pages to the consideration of the question, and classified the views which then prevailed concerning it in England. There were, he says, three parties; one, that wanted an absolutely new translation; a second, that desired only a revision of the existing version, although differing as to the extent to which this should go, and the principles on which it should be carried out; and a third, that deprecated any change of any kind, because likely to unsettle the religious belief of weaker brethren. The first party was the smallest and the most active; the third by far the largest; and the second small, but daily increasing. The learned commentator unreservedly gave in his adhesion to the second, justifying it by manly and forcible reasoning, and still more by the character of the translation which he appended to each of his exegetical works, of which, however, he speaks with great modesty. "The

time and pains I have bestowed on it are excessive, and yet in the majority of corrections I feel how little cause I have for satisfaction." The progress of opinion in the matter was greatly aided by the expressed views of various well-known scholars, such as Canon Selwyn, Dean Alford, Canon Lightfoot, Dr. Beard, and others. Much was gained by the very careful examination of the authorized version of the New Testament, published by Archbishop Trench in 1859, which pointed out in an admirable spirit and with much acuteness many of the features of the authorized version which needed amendment, and at the same time offered fruitful suggestions as to the best method of accomplishing it. But even more was gained by the scholarship and judgment shown in a "Revision of the Authorized Version by Five Clergymen," which appeared in successive years after 1857, taking up in turn the fourth Gospel and the longer Epistles of Paul (Romans to Colossians). The authors were Dr. Barrow, Dr. Moberly, Dean Alford, Mr. Humphrey, and Dr. Ellicott. Their work was especially useful as showing by actual experiment that it was possible to revise the version, and at the same time preserve the clear, pure, idiomatic English for which it was justly famous. Some censured their undertaking as "promising little and performing less," but without reason, for the authors united extensive and accurate learning with profound reverence for language, and so rendered a service for which every friend of Revision should be exceedingly grateful. The result of all these discussions and tentative movements was a general conviction that the time was ripe for a revision. Still there were voices in the opposite direction, among which were those of the learned Mr. Scrivener, Dr. McCaul, Mr. S. C. Malan, and Dr. Cumming. To these must be added the high authority of the Hon. Geo. P. Marsh, who in a valuable chapter of his "Lectures on the English Language," deprecated a revision as "not merely unnecessary, but wholly premature," although it is very doubtful if he holds that opinion now. For certainly not a few of the difficulties which he suggested have been shown by experience to be altogether groundless. But the opposition of these conservative men and of those who sided with them served a good purpose in preventing the movement from taking such an extreme and

radical form as would have been fatal to its success. The result was, that while men became more and more persuaded that some change was imperatively called for, they also felt assured that this change should not take the form of a new and independent translation, modern in its tone and vocabulary, but should be simply a revision of the existing version just as that had been a revision of the preceding English Bibles, and that the work should be made in some way to have a catholic or undenominational character. The efforts to reduce this conviction to practice were for years fruitless. In the year 1856 the subject was brought before the Lower House of Convocation of the Province of Canterbury, by the learned Professor Selwyn, but his proposals, though urged with earnest eloquence, met with little favor. Nor did endeavors with the legislature succeed better. The desirableness of the appointment of a Royal Commission on the subject was frequently pressed upon the House of Commons, but the inertia of conservatism resisted all argument and appeal.

But at last an effectual movement was made in what was the best of all places for such a matter to originate. This was the Upper House of the Convocation of the Province of Canterbury. On the 10th of February, 1870, Bishop Wilberforce submitted the following motion: "That a committee of both houses be appointed, with power to confer with any committee that may be appointed by the Convocation of the Northern Province, to report upon the desirableness of a revision of the Authorized Version of the New Testament, whether by marginal notes or otherwise, in all those passages where plain and clear errors, whether in the Hebrew (*sic*) or Greek text originally adopted by the translators or in the translation made from the same, shall on due investigation be found to exist." In the course of the discussion that followed, Bishop Ollivant proposed to include the Old Testament in the scope of the inquiry. His proposal was agreed to, and the original resolution thus enlarged, was unanimously carried. Eight bishops and sixteen members of the Lower House were appointed as the committee. They, however, did not obtain the co-operation of the Northern Province, owing, it is said, to the influence of the learned and excellent Archbishop Thompson. The Convocation of

York declined to concur in the movement, on the ground that "although blemishes existed (in the English Bible), such as had been from time to time pointed out, yet they would deplore any recasting of the text." They thought that the time was not favorable for revision, and that the risk was greater than the probable gain. This was a great disappointment, yet in spite of it the committee of the Convocation of Canterbury proceeded with their work. On the 3d of May, they laid before the Upper House a report which had been unanimously agreed to by all the members of the committee who were present. This report favored a revision not only in the shape of new marginal readings, but also in the insertion of emendations in the text where it might be found necessary, suggested the general principles which should guide the revision, and concluded with the suggestion that the Convocation should appoint a body of its own members to undertake the work, with liberty to invite the co-operation of any persons they saw fit, without respect to creed or race. The report was adopted without amendment, and it was at once resolved, *nem. con.*, to appoint a committee to consider and report to Convocation a scheme of revision on the principles now laid down. They also appointed eight bishops as their representatives on the committee, and requested the Lower House to appoint an equal number from their own body.

These resolutions were communicated to the Lower House on the same day; and the report and resolutions were discussed in that House on May 5th. Various amendments were proposed to the different sections of the report, but met with little support, and the report was adopted without change. There was, however, considerable opposition to the direction which fixed the representatives of the Lower House at the same number as those of the Upper. It was urged that the usual practice of convocation with respect to joint committees, according to which the Lower House is represented in the proportion of two of its members to one of the Upper, ought to be observed in this case. A resolution embodying this opinion was communicated to the Upper House, which, however, reaffirmed its judgment, still leaving to the Lower House the power of asking for a larger number of representatives, if after this second expression of opinion they thought it well to

do so. The subject was again debated in the Lower House, but it was finally decided by 27 voices to 25, to accept the number suggested by the Upper House. Thereupon the Prolocutor (Dr. Bickersteth), in virtue of his office, nominated seven others, who, with himself, were to constitute the committee, "it being judged necessary for the Prolocutor to be on the committee."

In the course of the debates some doubt was expressed as to the exact nature of the duty which was imposed upon the joint committee by the phrase "considering and reporting a *scheme of revision*." The phrase was interpreted by some as if it were equivalent to merely drawing up a plan for making a revision; but this interpretation was overruled. It was laid down that the scheme of revision necessarily included those changes by the adoption of which it was proposed that the revision should be carried out. At this point then the action of Convocation as to the work of revision was at least for the time ended. Thenceforward the joint committee had to carry out on their own responsibility the instructions they had received, and whenever the scheme of revision is completed, they will present it with their report to Convocation according to the laws of that body. It will then rest with the Convocation to adopt or reject or modify that which shall be offered to them. But in view of all the time and pains and money which have been expended upon the work, the report can hardly be more than a respectful acknowledgment to the body which initiated the proceedings and gave to them the sanction of its honored name. The action of the committee will be final, and the book will be submitted to the churches as it came from their hands. The people at large in all English-speaking countries will pronounce the judgment which is to determine the fate of the revision.

The committee of bishops and presbyters lost no time in getting to work. Their first meeting was held on the 25th of the month in which they were appointed. They proceeded to apportion the task among themselves, and also agreed upon the names of nearly forty other scholars whom they invited to join them. These belonged not only to the various schools of the Church of England, but also to Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists, Wesleyans, and, at least in a single case each, to

Hebrews, Romanists, and Unitarians. This was in accordance with the terms of their appointment which authorized them to obtain the help of "any eminent for scholarship, to whatever nation or religious body they may belong." The wide range of denominational relationship thus wisely introduced was still farther enlarged in the constitution of the American Committee, which contains a representative of the Society of Friends, and also one of the Lutheran body.

In the distribution of the work they determined that unlike King James' translators, who were divided into six classes, to each of which a sixth portion of the entire Scriptures was committed, there should be only two companies, one charged with the whole of the Old Testament, the other with the whole of the New, thus securing the requisite, or at least desirable, uniformity of phrasing in each portion. At the same meeting the general principles of the revision were settled for both companies, none of which have been reversed or modified. They are as follows :

"1. To introduce as few alterations as possible into the text of the authorized version consistently with faithfulness.

"2. To limit, as far as possible, the expression of such alterations to the language of the authorized or earlier versions.

"3. Each company to go twice over the portion to be revised, once provisionally, the second time finally.

"4. That the text to be adopted be that for which the evidence is decidedly preponderating ; and that when the text so adopted differs from that from which the authorized version was made, the alteration be indicated in the margin.

"5. To make or retain no change in the text, on the second final revision by each company, except two-thirds of those present approve of the same ; but on the first revision to decide by simple majorities.

"6. In every case of proposed alteration that may have given rise to discussion, to defer the voting thereon till the next meeting, whensoever the same shall be required by one-third of those present at the meeting, such intended vote to be announced in the notice for the next meeting.

"7. To revise the headings of chapters, pages, paragraphs, italics, and punctuation.

"8. To refer, on the part of each company, when considered desirable, to divines, scholars, and literary men, whether at home or abroad, for their opinions."

A complete list of the past and present members of the two companies is here given.

THE BRITISH REVISION COMMITTEE.

On the Old Testament.

Dr. THIRLWALL, Bishop of St. David's. *Deceased.*

Dr. OLLIVANT, Bishop of Llandaff.

Dr. HAROLD BROWNE, Bishop of Ely, (now of Winchester).

Dr. C. WORDSWORTH, Bishop of Lincoln. *Resigned.*
 Dr. A. C. HERVEY, Bishop of Bath and Wells.
 Dr. H. J. ROSE, Archdeacon of Bedford. *Deceased.*
 Dr. W. SELWYN, Canon of Ely. *Deceased.*
 Dr. J. JEBB, Canon of Hereford. *Resigned.*
 Dr. W. KAY, Chelmsford.

These were appointed by Convocation, and they invited the following scholars and divines to join them :

Dr. W. L. ALEXANDER, Professor of Theology, Congregational Hall, Edinburgh.
 Mr. T. CHENERY, Professor of Arabic, Oxford.
 Rev. F. C. COOK, Canon of Exeter. *Declined.*
 Dr. A. B. DAVIDSON, Professor of Hebrew, Free Church College, Edinburgh.
 Dr. B. DAVIES, Professor of Hebrew, Baptist College, Regent's Park. *Deceased.*
 Dr. P. FAIRBARN, Principal Free Church College, Glasgow. *Deceased.*
 Dr. F. FIELD, Editor of *Septuagint*, etc.
 Dr. GINSBURG, Commentator on Canticles, etc.
 Dr. F. W. GOTCH, Principal of Baptist College, Bristol.
 Rev. B. HARRISON, Archdeacon of Maidstone.
 Rev. STANLEY LEATHES, Professor of Hebrew, King's College, London.
 Rev. J. MCGILL, Professor of Oriental Languages, St. Andrew's.
 Rev. R. P. SMITH, now Dean of Canterbury.
 Dr. J. J. S. PEROWNE, Canon of Llandaff.
 Dr. E. H. PLUMPTRE, Professor King's College. *Resigned.*
 Dr. E. B. PUSEY, Professor of Hebrew, Oxford. *Declined.*
 Dr. W. A. WRIGHT, now Professor of Arabic, Cambridge. *Declined.*
 Dr. W. ALDIS WRIGHT, Bursar of Trinity College, Cambridge.

The following were afterward invited :

R. N. BENSLEY, Hebrew Lecturer, Caius College, Cambridge.
 J. BIRRELL, Professor of Oriental Languages, St. Andrew's.
 Dr. F. CHANCE, Editor of Commentary on Job.
 T. K. CHEYNE, Hebrew Lecturer, Balliol College, Oxford.
 Dr. G. DOUGLAS, Professor of Hebrew, Free Church College, Glasgow.
 S. R. DRIVER, Tutor of New College, Oxford.
 Rev. C. J. ELLIOTT, Fellow of St. Catherine College, Cambridge.
 Rev. J. D. GEDEN, Professor of Hebrew, Wesleyan College, Didsbury.
 Rev. J. R. LUMBY, Fellow of St. Catherine College, Cambridge.
 Rev. A. H. SAYCE, Queen's College, Oxford.
 Rev. W. ROBERTSON SMITH, Professor of Hebrew, Free Church College, Aberdeen.
 Dr. D. H. WEIR, Professor of Oriental Languages, Glasgow.
 Bishop BROWNE is Chairman, and Dr. W. ALDIS WRIGHT, Secretary.

On the New Testament.

Dr. S. WILBERFORCE, Bishop of Winchester. *Deceased.*
 Dr. ELLICOTT, Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol.
 Dr. MOBERLY, Bishop of Salisbury.
 Dr. E. H. BICKERSTETH, now Dean of Litchfield.
 Dr. STANLEY, Dean of Westminster.
 Dr. H. ALFORD, Dean of Canterbury. *Deceased.*
 Dr. J. W. BLAKESLEY, now Dean of Lincoln.

These were appointed by the Convocation, and they invited the following to join them :

Dr. J. ANGUS, President Baptist College, Regent's Park, London.
 Dr. J. EADIE, Professor Biblical Literature, United Presbyterian, Glasgow.

Dr. F. J. A. HORT, Fellow Emanuel College, Cambridge.
 Rev. W. G. HUMPHREY, Prebendary of St. Paul's.
 Dr. B. H. KENNEDY, Canon of Ely.
 Dr. W. LEE, Archdeacon of Dublin.
 Dr. J. B. LIGHTFOOT, now Bishop of Durham.
 Dr. W. F. MOULTON, Professor, Wesleyan College, Richmond.
 Dr. W. MILLIGAN, Professor of Divinity, Aberdeen.
 Dr. J. H. NEWMAN, now Cardinal. *Declined.*
 Dr. S. NEWTH, Principal New College, London.
 Dr. A. ROBERTS, Professor of Humanity, St. Andrew's.
 Dr. R. C. TRENCH, Archbishop of Dublin.
 Rev. G. VANCE SMITH, Carmarthen.
 Dr. R. SCOTT, now Dean of Rochester.
 Dr. F. H. SCRIVENER, Editor of *Codex Bezae*, etc.
 Dr. S. P. TREGELLES, Editor of Greek Testament. *Deceased.*
 Dr. C. J. VAUGHAN, Master of the Temple.
 Dr. B. F. WESTCOTT, Canon of Peterboro.

The following were afterward added :

Dr. DAVID BROWN, Principal Free Church College, Aberdeen.
 Dr. C. MERIVALE, Dean of Ely. *Resigned.*
 Dr. CHARLES WORDSWORTH, Bishop of St. Andrew's.
 The Very Rev. J. W. BLAKESLEY, Dean of Lincoln.
 Dr. EDWIN PALMER, Archdeacon of Oxford.
 Rev. J. TROUTBECK, Westminster.
 Bishop ELLICOTT is Chairman, and the Rev. J. TROUTBECK, Secretary.

The companies entered upon the work as soon as they were organized. The New Testament company met for the first time on June 22d, in the Jerusalem Chamber, Westminster Abbey ; the Old Testament company in the Chapter Library of the same venerable pile, on June 30th. From that time they continued their work regularly, except during the summer vacation, the Old Testament company in bi-monthly sittings of ten days, and the New Testament company in monthly sittings of four days each. Shortly after the work was commenced, negotiations were opened with the two universities of Oxford and Cambridge, the authorized publishers of the common version in England, on the subject of the right to print the results of the revision. These negotiations led to an arrangement in 1872 by which the Presses of the two universities undertook to provide a sum (said to be £20,000) which would probably be sufficient to pay the costs of the work (travelling expenses of the revisers, books of reference, printing, etc.), in return for which they were to be made the owners of the copyright. In this provision nothing is said of compensation to the revisers, for they, it is understood, offered their time and labor as a free

contribution to the great work. Canon Westcott remarks ("History of the English Bible," p. 347) that in these negotiations it was for the first time laid down that the Apocrypha should be included in the scheme of the revision, the two companies combining to produce this part of the work. But as we understand the facts, it is not the companies *ex officio* that have entered into this arrangement, but certain members of each. Nothing will be done, we presume, in the matter, until both Testaments shall have been completed and published. The usefulness of the Apocrypha, notwithstanding its uncanonical and uninspired character, makes it desirable that the English version should be brought up to the present standard of scholarship.

The desirableness of American co-operation has been said to have been an after-thought of the British revisers. If so, it was one that was entertained at a very early date, for not only was it included in the original instructions to the committee ("to whatever *nation*," etc.), but was also specifically referred to in a resolution of convocation, July 7, 1870. Indeed in that year a distinct invitation was sent to the Protestant Episcopal Church to join in the movement, but this overture was declined, because it came from the chairman of the committee, and not from the primate of the Anglican establishment. Perhaps it was well that this course was taken, for necessarily if co-operation should come it must be on a broad basis of equality in order to be successful, and this was ensured by keeping it entirely free from any ecclesiastical action whatever. As matters stand, no churches as such have anything to do with the work save the one which originated it, and to which on account of its age, history, character, and prestige, all are willing to defer. Hence while nearly all the larger religious bodies are represented in the lists of revisers, none of them have any responsibility for what may be done. Indeed, had they been officially consulted in the first instance, it is quite certain that no agreement could have been reached as to the details and proportions of the co-operation. Resort therefore was had to individuals. Advantage was taken of the fact that the Rev. Dr. Angus, President of Regent's Park College, London, was about to visit the United States in August, 1870, and he was entrusted by Bishop Ellicott, Chairman of the New Tes-

tament Company, with authority to institute measures for the formation of an American Committee. On his arrival, he communicated with Dr. Philip Schaff, already favorably known in Britain by his character and writings, who suggested the details of a plan of joint action, and furnished a list of names representing the best Biblical scholarship of the various churches in this country. These were afterward submitted to the British Committee, and substantially approved. Then followed an interesting official correspondence, conducted on behalf of the Committee by the Bishop of Winchester, the Dean of Westminster, the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, and Dr. Angus. The result was that Dr. Schaff was empowered to select and invite scholars from non-Episcopal bodies, to take part in the work, the nomination of members from the Episcopal Church being placed in the hands of some of its bishops. But as these declined the task, the whole duty fell on the one man who, from his catholic spirit and his close relations with the learned men of all denominations, was perhaps best adapted to do it successfully. In performing the delicate task of selection, he says that "reference was had first of all, to ability, experience, and reputation in Biblical learning and criticism; next, to denominational connection and standing, so as to have a fair representation of the leading churches and theological institutions; and last, to local convenience, in order to secure regular attendance." This last consideration led to the exclusion of all who lived remote from New York, whether in the West or the South. It was deemed indispensable that there should be constant personal conference so that conclusions could be reached through comparison of views, but this was obviously impossible in the case of those who lived many hundred miles from this city. Not a few distinguished scholars were therefore necessarily omitted. The selection that was made seems to have been generally approved. Some who were invited declined the invitation, but this was from personal reasons, and not from any hostility to the pending revision. On the 7th of December, 1871, a number of the American revisers met in New York for the purpose of effecting an organization. At this meeting, Dr. Howson, Dean of Chester, was present by invitation, and took part in the deliberations. After a full interchange of opinion, the

committee adopted the following constitution, which, with one or two exceptions of minor importance, has governed its proceedings up to the present time. On the evening of the same day the movement was publicly announced at a large meeting held in Calvary Church, at which addresses were made by Dean Howson and Drs. Schaff and Washburn.

"I. The American Committee, invited by the British Committee engaged in the revision of the Authorized English Version of the Holy Scriptures to co-operate with them, shall be composed of Biblical scholars and divines in the United States.

"II. This Committee shall have the power to elect its officers, to add to its number, and to fill its own vacancies.

"III. The officers shall consist of a President, a Corresponding Secretary, and a Treasurer. The President shall conduct the official correspondence with the British revisers. The Secretary shall conduct the home correspondence.

"IV. New members of the Committee, and corresponding members, must be nominated at a previous meeting, and elected unanimously by ballot.

"V. The American Committee shall co-operate with the British Companies on the basis of the principles and rules of revision adopted by the British Committee.

"VI. The American Committee shall consist of two companies, the one for the revision of the Authorized Version of the Old Testament, the other for the revision of the Authorized Version of the New Testament.

"VII. Each Company shall elect its own Chairman and Recording Secretary.

"VIII. The British Companies will submit to the American Companies, from time to time, such portions of their work as have passed the first revision, and the American Companies will transmit their criticisms and suggestions to the British Companies before the second revision.

"IX. A joint meeting of the American and British Companies shall be held, if possible, in London, before final action.

"X. The American Committee to pay their own expenses, and to have the ownership and control of the copyright of the Revised Version in the United States of America."

One of the exceptions referred to is contained in the last clause of the last section. It was found, on examination, that there would be great difficulty in obtaining an American copyright; and, besides, many felt reluctant to have the work come before the public in this country in a way which might give the impression that there were private pecuniary interests involved in its circulation. Accordingly, from the very beginning, the expenses of the Committee have been met by the voluntary contributions of individuals, or collections in churches, public meetings having been held in behalf of the work in New York, Providence, Boston, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, with a view to awaken a deeper interest in the popular mind. The amount of money received from a comparatively narrow field has proved sufficient so far, to meet all the necessary expenses. The gross sum from October, 1872, to March, 1881,

being over thirty-two thousand dollars. This part of the business since May, 1875, has been entrusted to a Committee of Finance, of which Judge Fancher is Chairman, and Andrew L. Taylor, Esq., Treasurer. The duties of the latter gentleman have been so many and perplexing, and at the same time so cheerfully and skilfully performed, as to call forth the repeated thanks of the Revision Committee.

At the first meeting of the Committee in New York, it was divided into two companies, each of which has its own chairman and recording secretary, while the body, as a whole, has its general officers. The latter were chosen at the first meeting, and continue unchanged: Dr. Schaff, President, and Dr. George E. Day, Secretary. Vacancies in the Committee were supplied, and new members added from time to time in subsequent years, but the list never attained so large proportions as that of the English Committee. The following catalogue gives first the original members and then those who were afterward elected, noting also such changes as were caused by death or ill health, or the pressure of private engagements:

LIST OF AMERICAN REVISERS.

THE OLD TESTAMENT COMPANY.

Prof. THOMAS J. CONANT, D.D.	Brooklyn, N. Y.
" GEORGE E. DAY, D.D. (<i>Secretary</i>).	New Haven, Conn.
" JOHN DE WITT, D.D.	New Brunswick, N. J.
" WILLIAM HENRY GREEN, D.D. (<i>Chairman</i>).	Princeton, N. J.
" GEORGE EMLEN HARE, D.D.	Philadelphia, Pa.
" CHARLES P. KRAUTH, D.D.	Philadelphia, Pa.
" JOSEPH PACKARD, D.D.	Fairfax, Va.
" CALVIN E. STOWE, D.D.	Cambridge, Mass.
" JAMES STRONG, S.T.D.	Madison, N. J.
" C. V. A. VAN DYCK, M.D.*	Beyrut, Syria.
" TAYLER LEWIS, LL.D.	Schenectady, N. Y.

Of these, Dr. Conant did not regularly attend, but occasionally communicated his views in writing; Dr. Stowe was not able to attend after the first year; Dr. Tayler Lewis communicated in writing, but was removed by death in 1877. The company afterward elected as additional members:

Prof. CHARLES A. AIKIN, D.D.	Princeton, N. J.
" CHARLES M. MEAD, D.D.	Andover, Mass.
" HOWARD OSGOOD, D.D.	Rochester, N. Y.
TALBOT W. CHAMBERS, D.D.	New York.

* Dr. Van Dyck, the distinguished translator of the Arabic Bible, was not expected to attend the meetings, but was to be occasionally consulted on questions involving a thorough knowledge of Shemitic languages.

THE NEW TESTAMENT COMPANY.

Right Rev. ALFRED LEE, D.D.	. . . . .	Wilmington, Delaware.
Prof. EZRA ABBOT, D.D., LL.D.	. . . . .	Cambridge, Mass.
Rev. G. R. CROOKS, D.D.	. . . . .	New York.
Prof. H. B. HACKETT, D.D., LL.D.	. . . . .	Rochester, N. Y.
“ JAMES HADLEY, LL.D.	. . . . .	New Haven, Conn.
“ CHARLES HODGE, D.D., LL.D.	. . . . .	Princeton, N. J.
“ A. C. KENDRICK, D.D.	. . . . .	Rochester, N. Y.
“ MATTHEW B. RIDDLE, D.D.	. . . . .	Hartford, Conn.
“ PHILIP SCHAFF, D.D., LL.D.	. . . . .	New York.
“ CHARLES SHORT, LL.D. (<i>Secretary</i>).	. . . . .	New York.
“ HENRY B. SMITH, D.D., LL.D.	. . . . .	New York.
“ J. HENRY THAYER, D.D. (<i>Secretary</i>).	. . . . .	Andover, Mass.
“ W. F. WARREN, D.D.	. . . . .	Boston, Mass.
Rev. EDWARD A. WASHBURN, D.D.	. . . . .	New York.
“ THEO. D. WOOLSEY, D.D., LL.D. (<i>Chairman</i>).	. . . . .	New Haven, Conn.

Of these Dr. Warren declined to serve; Dr. Crooks resigned the first year; Dr. Hadley was removed by death in 1872, and Dr. Hackett in 1876; Dr. H. B. Smith was compelled by ill health to resign after the first meeting, and Dr. Hodge, who communicated with the Committee by writing, died in 1878.

The Committee afterward elected the following:

Rev. J. K. BURR, D.D.	. . . . .	Trenton, N. J.
President THOS CHASE, LL.D.	. . . . .	Haverford College, Pa.
Chancellor HOWARD CROSBY, D.D., LL.D.	. . . . .	New York.
Prof. TIMOTHY DWIGHT, D.D.	. . . . .	New Haven, Ct.
“ A. C. KENDRICK, D.D., LL.D.	. . . . .	Rochester, N. Y.

A large part of the year 1872 was spent in correspondence and in a personal conference of Dr. Schaff with the British Committee during a visit to England. By these means some difficulties that stood in the way of co-operation were removed, and on July 17, 1872, the English revisers resolved to send over copies of the work they had done on the opening books of each Testament, to be submitted to the criticism of the brethren here, it being understood that these copies were only provisional and tentative, and that they were entrusted in strict confidence, in no way to be made public. In due time this was done, the copies arrived, and the American revisers commenced their work at a meeting in October, 1872, at the Bible House, New York, which continued to be the regular place of meeting to the end—a fact which, in some cases, gave rise to the opinion that the American Bible Society was in some way connected with the enterprise: an

opinion which it is hardly necessary to say had no foundation whatever. The central position of the building, and its quiet apartments opening on the inner court, made it a convenient and suitable place of meeting. The only exception to its use was in the summer vacation, when a four-days' session was held in some university town affording the conveniences of a library. The last Friday in each month, with the following Saturday, was appointed for regular monthly meetings; the two companies usually sitting in adjoining rooms, and therefore able without trouble to confer with each other as occasion required. Generally a fair representation was present, but of course there were interruptions by illness, and also by the pastoral or professional occupations of the members, only one of whom, the venerable ex-president Woolsey, was so situated as to have absolute command of his own time. Usually they were furnished with printed copies of the several portions of the Hebrew or Greek Scriptures as revised in Britain. These, after having been examined in private by each member, were carefully considered in general meeting. Whatever conclusions were reached on a second revision were forwarded to the English Committees, at first in manuscript, but afterward in print. When in due time the opinions of the transatlantic brethren upon these suggestions were received, there was fresh consideration of the subject. This was the course throughout, the British revisers taking the initiative, except in one or two instances, when the supply of copies from abroad having been for a time hindered, the companies on this side took up a book independently. This circumstance threw light upon the question how far the two bodies acting apart on the same book would agree. It was found that in a majority of cases both had harmonized in the character of the changes to be made. Of course in those as to which they differed there was subsequent conference. Nor was it an unfrequent occurrence that when an emendation was proposed on one side, and a different one offered in lieu of it on the other, both were finally rejected for the sake of a third, which met the views of all parties.

As appears by section IX. of the Constitution of the American Committee, provision was made for a joint meeting of the British and American companies in London before final

action. This, however, was not found to be possible. Accordingly the conferences were in writing, and this led to the delay in the appearance of the New Testament. It was deemed very desirable that there should be entire agreement among the brethren on both sides of the water, and accordingly, after the work was substantially finished, a considerable time was spent in successive revisions in order that thus at last a single text might be harmoniously agreed upon. And much was accomplished in this direction. Still there were some cases in which the American Committee could not yield their conscientious convictions, and hence the addition to the volume of an appendix containing their view of the method of translating these portions. It has sometimes been inconsiderately stated that this appendix represents the only contribution of the American company to the work. Nothing could be further from the truth. The whole of the revision has passed under the hands of both committees, and every page bears testimony to the more or less fruitful activity of both. The British company of course made the first revision, but the final result was reached through a course of continual conference and comparison of views, such as has been described. Whether the matters at issue were of such importance as to justify the insertion of the appendix is a question which the Christian public may be left to decide.

There are some features of the revision about which there could not be much dispute. One of these is the mechanical distribution of the matter into chapters and verses, which, however convenient for the purpose of a concordance, subjected the English Bible to a test at once most severe and most needless. All who have given attention to the subject agree that the matter of the different books should be arranged in paragraphs according to the sense and the connection. Of course there are cases in which the division of the paragraphs must have some effect upon the interpretation, and thus interfere with the duty of the revisers, whose sole function is to translate, and not to interpret. Still this risk does not occur often, and when it does, may well be encountered for the sake of the vast gain involved. Another matter of common agreement was the use of words in italic letters to mark the insertion of that which is not contained in

the original. These words were of two classes, one comprising those cases in which (*e. g.*, the substantive verb used as a copula) the unexpressed word is necessarily implied in those that are expressed. In such cases it is a mere affectation of fidelity to parade the English word in italics. The other class consists of those instances in which some additional words in English are needed to complete the sense. But as the sense may be conceived in different ways, no one of which can be claimed to be infallibly the right one, it is proper that this fact should be indicated by a change of type. Here all that can be asked is that these additions be omitted whenever possible, and if retained, be reduced to the smallest compass. To this matter a great deal of attention has been given, and it is hoped with considerable success. A similar point was that of printing the poetical portions in such way as to show the parallelisms of the original. This has been objected to on the ground that the English reader seeing what looks like versification, would naturally expect rhyme, or at least rhythm, and so be unpleasantly disappointed. But it seems now to be admitted that notwithstanding this obstacle, it is better that the reader should be made to see at once that what he has before him is poetry, not prose, and that he should be helped to observe the peculiar characteristic of the Hebrew poets, viz: thought or feeling given in a series of balanced sentences or propositions, each of which corresponds in some way to what precedes or follows. Accordingly the poetical parts of Scripture are printed in this manner. At times there is a difficulty in determining the proper division of the lines, the Masoretic accents, which usually are a safe guide to the traditional view of the meaning, being evidently in some cases inserted for the sake of euphony, and therefore no aid to the sense. Such cases, of course, must be left to the judgment of the revisers, aided by what has been accomplished by other scholars in this matter, as shown in their printed works. Another plain case was the correction of manifest and acknowledged errors in translation, such as "grove" in the Old Testament, which occurs scores of times where the true meaning is a particular form of idol or shrine, or "hypocrite" for a word meaning "ungodly," or the unmeaning utterance in Job xxvi. 5, "Dead things are formed from under the waters," or the harsh phrase

“too superstitious” for “very devout” in Paul’s address at Athens, or “devotions” in the same address for “objects of devotion.” The same may be said of terms manifestly obsolete and misleading, such as *prevent* for precede, *let* for hinder, *by and by* for immediately, *thought* for anxiety, *carriages* for baggage. In cases of this kind there is scarcely any room for difference of opinion. If any change at all is to be made, surely such constant sources of confusion and error should be eliminated.

In regard to the headings of the chapters, it was concluded to omit them altogether. Those which stand in the authorized version were not made by the body of the original forty-seven translators, but by one of their number and one other person, and were therefore not considered as forming part of the version. And they appear to have been extensively altered by Dr. Blayney, and by many anonymous editors. Besides, not only are they sometimes awkward, clumsy, confused, or erroneous, but also in not a few cases they interpret the meaning or the bearing of the passages or chapters to which they are prefixed. And although the interpretation is one in which most Christians would agree, yet all such explanations are outside of the proper work of a translator. There was little difficulty in coming to the decision to omit them altogether.

But there are other matters upon which it was not easy to come to a definite conclusion. One of these had reference to the text, especially that of the New Testament. There is no doubt entertained by any scholar now of the imperfection of the *Textus receptus*. It was adopted at such an early period, based upon so few manuscripts, and those of so late a date, and is so obviously deficient in many respects, that it has ceased to have any authority. But nothing has yet been provided to take its place—critical opinion being still unsettled and even contradictory, as is clearly shown by the fact that every fresh expositor of any portion of the Greek Scriptures constructs his own text according to his estimate of the materials at hand. The revisers, therefore, were shut up to the same course. They did not adopt the text of any one MS. or any one editor, nor did they agree upon any general rules of diplomatics, but left each case to be settled as it arose on its own merits, the only limitation being that, as the received

text had the ground, it should have the benefit of the doubt in cases where the evidence was evenly balanced. Of course it is not to be expected that the conclusions thus reached will commend themselves to the favor of all, but the consentient judgment of so many learned men of different training and associations in the choice of a given reading must be taken as assurance that such a reading has a powerful support. All candid persons surely admit that our Bible should contain all the revealed word of God, and nothing that is not such word. This it has been the aim of the revisers to secure as far as possible. The method they have taken may seem objectionable, but it is hard to see in what other way they could have proceeded with any degree of fidelity to the truth and to their own convictions of duty to the divine author of the Word.

The same difficulty occurred in many cases of lexicography, grammar, and English usage. If the aim of the persons employed had been to make as perfect a version as was in their power, the obstacles though serious would have been far less formidable. But their duty was to revise an existing translation, and not to make a new one. Hence there continually arose the perplexing question whether in any given case the alteration suggested either by uncial manuscripts, closer adherence to grammatical forms, new resources in lexicography, fresh archæological light, or by any other consideration, would be of sufficient value to compensate for the annoyance caused by tampering with what had been consecrated by the unbroken usage of more than two hundred and fifty years. This was a case not to be decided off-hand, but one requiring anxious and patient consideration. The rule under which the revisers worked was to "make as few changes as possible consistently with faithfulness." But what did "faithfulness" demand? How were the claims of usage and of truth to be mutually adjusted? So in regard to archaic words. It was not easy to determine whether obsolescent terms and phrases had so far receded from common use as to become obscure and unfit, or whether being retained they might not regain currency and still preserve the antique flavor which seems appropriate to a book confessedly the oldest in the world.

It is very clear from this statement of the case that the new revision cannot possibly suit everybody. Some will think that

the revisers have made far too many changes, others that they have made too few. Perhaps it will be found here, as elsewhere, that the middle ground is the safest. Were the whole tone and aspect of the book to be altered, it needs no prophet to say that it must inevitably fail. Were, on the other hand, only a few gross errors to be corrected, men would feel that the gain was not worth the trouble. What was wanted was to bring the version up to the present state of biblical learning and of our language, and yet preserve the rhythm, the flow, the dignity, and the simplicity which have made it such a classic hitherto. This is what the revisers proposed to themselves, and this is the end to which every energy has been directed. Nor has any sacrifice been made to undue haste. It was supposed at first that ten years would suffice for the accomplishment of the whole, but at the end of eleven years from the first meeting, only one part of the Bible, and that the smaller, has been given to the press. It will take from three to five years more to finish the revision of the Old Testament.

The enterprise started under such auspices as never before were seen since King James' translators concluded their labors. It was not an individual, a sectarian, a local, or a provincial affair. From the beginning it assumed an œcumenical aspect. The first step was taken by the oldest and largest ecclesiastical body in Great Britain, and yet at the same time no pains were spared to secure a representation from all other Christian bodies; and not only that, but to obtain the active co-operation of Christian people in America. A higher sanction could not be asked, nor could any work come with more authority before the general public. A few leading principles being settled, a body of men on both sides of the Atlantic, representing by their position and character the best scholarship of the age, were entrusted with the execution of the work, subject to no interference of any kind, or from any source. In the incipient stages of the movement a few voices were heard here and there in opposition, but these were hardly enough to make a ripple in public opinion. Indeed the attitude of the community, both here and beyond the sea, was for a considerable time one of indifference. Multitudes felt so little concern in the matter that they made no inquiries either as to the object in view or the means of attaining it. But in this country attention was

aroused by a series of meetings held in the larger cities, at which information was given by a number of those engaged in the work—the object being to obtain from persons present aid in defraying the expenses of the Committee. At one of these parlor meetings, held in Philadelphia, in April, 1878, a gentleman connected with the press was present, who conceived the plan of printing the substance of the addresses made. Afterward these were increased by contributions from other members of the Committee, which were printed at length in the *Sunday-school World*, and then collected into a volume entitled, “Anglo-American Bible Revision.” This was widely circulated in this country, and when it found its way to Britain, was republished there by two different houses; consequently there was a considerable stir in the public mind, and the more as it was announced that the New Testament was near completion, and that it would be published without waiting for the Old. In some cases in this country ecclesiastical bodies of their own motion took action in favor of the work; and the officers of the American Bible Society were for a time flooded with letters asking whether they would not issue the revised version. To these, of course, only one answer could be given, viz: that the Society was restricted by its constitution to the circulation of the common version, and could therefore take up nothing else unless this constitution was duly altered. Neither the Society nor the Board of Managers would make such an alteration unless the mind of the churches generally demanded it. But the number and urgency of these requests indicate the degree to which popular attention has been awakened. Nor can it be said that this it without reason. The question is of very grave importance. It touches the book of books, the most sacred and venerable of human possessions, that which is regarded as the final standard of faith and duty by millions upon millions of those in both hemispheres who speak the English tongue. The endeavor is to make the vernacular Bible a more exact representation of the divine original; to purify the text from corruptions, whether of excess or defect; to correct erroneous or inadequate renderings; to bring out the full meaning of words and phrases; to restore the form as well as the sense of the inspired authors, and as far as possible to put the English reader on a level with those to whom

the holy books were first given. If this attempt has met with a tolerable degree of success, then the revised Bible will prove to be the great event of the present century wherever the English language is spoken. It will give a new impulse to the study of God's most holy Word. It will scatter to the winds the difficulties ignorance has raised from the variations of manuscripts and versions. It will illustrate afresh the substantial oneness of English Christendom as to the meaning of the sacred Word, however they may differ as to its teachings. And it will continue to be, as it has been for centuries, the one sacred bond of union among Protestants who are divided upon so many other points.

It may not be amiss to conclude with a few general observations upon that portion of the Revision which has just appeared. It is very obvious that much earnest and faithful work has been done. Take, for instance, the settlement of the Greek text. The reader will look in vain for any important various reading which has escaped notice. The revisers may have erred in their conclusions, but certainly not from lack of consideration or any blind and unreasoning prejudice. The famous passage of the *Three Heavenly Witnesses* in 1 John is dropped without ceremony, and without even a reference to its former existence. The doxology of the Lord's Prayer, the striking words of our Lord's rebuke in Luke ix. 55, 56, the descent of the angel, John v. 4, and the question and answer in Acts viii. 37, are left out, with a marginal statement of the fact. The last twelve verses of Mark's gospel and the story in John of "the woman taken in adultery" are retained, but with explicit mention of the evidence against them. The deviations from the *textus receptus* are very many, averaging in the gospels five in every eight verses (although of course many of these are very slight), while in the Acts one of the revisers says there are sixteen hundred, the most of which, however, do not appear in the Revision. The work then may be fairly considered as exhibiting a faithful application of the principles of Biblical Criticism; and the result shown in its pages proves afresh the ignorance and the stupidity of the clamor which enemies of the truth have made about the various readings as if they impeached the authority of the sacred text. After all the thorough work

done by the committee, and it is very hard to see how it could have been more thorough, the New Testament as to essential contents and meaning is seen to be just what it was before ; and its integrity is confirmed rather than weakened by the experiment.

In the matter of translation the revisers have shown themselves much less conservative than was feared. They seem to have grappled with every case of error, ambiguity, or obscurity, and have done their best to give an exact representation of the original. The meaning of single words, the insertion or omission of the article, the difference of tenses, the use of prepositions, the force of the particles, have all been studied with diligence and large success, so as often by slight alterations to give new point and emphasis to clauses, sentences, and even whole paragraphs. And if this has sometimes been pushed to an extreme so as to render passages stiff or even pedantic, still it is a fault which leans to virtue's side, for one can better afford to sacrifice grace to truth than the contrary. A good deal of criticism has been expended on the rendering of Acts xxvii. 28, yet it is certain that the old rendering is simply an impossible one. Sad as it is to have struck away the underpinning of so many good sermons on the phrase, "the almost Christian," it is better to know exactly what the King Agrippa did say, than to read what some think he ought to have said.

One marked peculiarity of King James' translators has been utterly and justly repudiated. This is their unfortunate habit of varying the translation of a word, not simply when it was called for, as is sometimes the case, but when there was no necessity at all. They conceived that "uniformity of phrasing" savored more of curiosity than of wisdom, and besides, dealt unequally with good English words. Their successors on the contrary have taken especial pains always to render each Greek word as far as possible by the same English term, in order to aid the English reader in his endeavor to interpret Scripture by Scripture, or at least not to perplex him by leading him to think that there are differences where none really exist. It is understood that the revisers expended much time and labor in this matter of uniformity, and this fact accounts for a number of changes which other-

wise would be unreasonable, if not inexcusable. They have generally been successful in their dealing with archaisms. Such obsolete terms as *prevent* in the sense of "anticipate" and the like have disappeared, and yet the style of the old Bible has been preserved. Occasionally one meets with a word like *charger* in the sense of "dish," which now has lost that meaning entirely; but in these cases the connection is such as to guide the reader aright. The book is more intelligible to the unlearned reader, and yet preserves the antique flavor which so well befits its age and character. Of course there are many who will object to the continued use of *which* to denote persons, and *be* in the sense of "are," but this after all is a matter of taste, since the archaisms do not mislead anybody, and children do not read the Bible in order to learn modern grammar. On the other hand, some have denounced the changes which have been made as "frivolous and capricious." It is certain that this charge cannot be sustained. Caprice has had no hand in anything that has been done. The character of the revisers is sufficient evidence of this. They had a reason for whatever they inserted or omitted. The reason may have been insufficient, but in their view it was well grounded and adequate.

The appendix, containing a list of the readings and renderings preferred by the American members of the committee, is a pleasing evidence of the good sense, fidelity, and scholarship of our countrymen. In nearly every case, as we suppose, the public opinion of our land will approve the appendix in place of the text, and ultimately this will be the case in other lands.

Meanwhile, plain Christians everywhere are furnished with a volume which answers the purpose of a commentary in a great many respects, and will prove an admirable help to the understanding and appreciation of the Divine Word.

TALBOT W. CHAMBERS.