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NUMBER I.

THE HYMNS OF THE FIRST CHAPTER OF LUKE

The outward form of Lk i. 5-ii. 52 invites investigation of sources. The prologue of the Gospel (Lk i. 1-4) is a genuine Greek period, clearly indicative of the literary culture of its author; yet it is followed by one of the most Hebraistic portions of the New Testament. Lk i.5-ii.52 exhibits throughout a marked affinity for the better portions of the Septuagint; while in the brief compass of the prologue there are no less than five words¹ that do not occur at all in the Septuagint, and six others that occur only rarely.² No greater contrast in style could be imagined than that which exists between Lk i. 1-4 and the passage which immediately follows. The contrast has usually been explained by supposing that the author of the Gospel is closely following a source in Lk i. 5-ii. 52. The prologue represents Luke's own style; the following passage represents the style of one of his sources.

In recent years this conclusion has been disputed by Holtzmann,³ by Dalman,⁴ and especially by Harnack.⁵ Harnack

¹ ἐπειδήπερ, ἀνατάσσομαι, ἀντόπτῃς, καθέξῃς, κατηχέω.

² ἐπιχειρεῖν occurs about twelve times, of which seven fall in the literary Greek of 2, 3, 4 Maccabees; διήγησις occurs about twelve times, mostly in Sirach; πληροφορέω occurs only once; ὑπηρέτης, only four times; ἀκριβῶς, about five times; παρακολουθέω, only twice, in 2 Maccabees (the text doubtful in both places).

³ *Hand-Commentar*, I. i. p. 19.

⁴ *Worte Jesu*, i. pp. 31f., 150, 183, 226, 249.

⁵ Das Magnificat der Elisabet (Luc. 1, 46-55) nebst einigen Bemerk-

THE DUTCH "STATEN-BYBEL" OF 1637.

The Tercentenary of the King James version of the English Bible has brought into prominence the literary aspect of the Scriptures. We have been reminded of the value of our inheritance, of what the Bible has done for our civilization, of the marvelous way in which it has imprinted itself, with indelible characters, on our literature. Thus the mind is naturally turned to the general subject of the Scriptures which sprang up in the wake of the Reformation. These were undeniably fruits of the "formal principle" of the Reformation—the absolute authority of the Holy Scriptures for faith and practice—which required that the Bible be made accessible, in its purest form, to all men. Wherever therefore the Reformation asserted itself, the Scriptures were translated into the vernacular. Germany and France, Italy and Spain, Scandinavia and England obtained ready access to the Word of God. As a matter of course some of these translations were hastily made and required revision and re-translation, as soon as the time for such labor was fully ripe. Here as everywhere else "the better proved an enemy of the good." Judged by closeness to the original text and masterful idiomatic rendering in majestic, rhythmic language, the English version, as perfected in 1611, is one of the best of the translations. One other version, however, equals, or perhaps excels it, in these respects. That is the great Dutch "Staten-Bybel," which practically synchronizes with it in origin but through many unavoidable hindrances was not completed till 1636. It seems opportune, in connection with the Tercentenary of the "Authorized Version" in English, to give some account of its great sister version.

The influence of the Lowlands on the Reformation can scarcely be exaggerated. "The Brethren of the Common Life" wrought there. and through their literary labors,

especially in the copying of the Sacred Books, set in motion a tremendous spiritual power. We begin to appreciate how deep and extensive their influence was when we turn over the pages of Drs. Pyper and Cramer's monumental work the *Bibliotheca Reformatoria Neerlandica*, the seventh volume of which has now appeared, and read the early Reformation documents gathered in it. Portions of the Bible, translated into Dutch from the Vulgate, were current in the Netherlands, in missals and breviaries long before the Reformation. But Luther's Bible of 1522 came like a spark in a powder magazine. Men, who felt the hunger of the masses for the Word of God, had no idea of stopping to translate anew for each country from the originals. The Bible was immediately rendered into the tongue of the Lowlands from the Saxon-German in which Luther had clothed it. The New Testament translated by Hans van Roemundt appeared at Antwerp in 1522, the very year of its publication in Germany, and was reprinted in 1525, 1526 and frequently afterwards. Nor was this the only version. Men were hard at work everywhere translating the great German treasure, and the Lowlands were literally flooded with the Scriptures. These earlier labors were all expended on the New Testament. The entire Bible began to appear from 1525, the pioneer in this wider field being again Hans van Roemundt. All earlier versions were compelled however to make way for that of Jacob van Liesveldt, which was first published at Antwerp in 1526, and was reprinted in innumerable editions up to 1542, when the author and printer suffered martyrdom at the hands of the Inquisition. We can scarcely wonder that the iconoclastic storm, with all its hideous consequences, swept first of all over Flanders in 1566. It is estimated by competent authorities, that the editions of the Old and New Testament, which appeared in the Netherlands, between 1522 and 1543, numbered more than one hundred.¹ Here lies the explanation of the "Eighty-Years War," with its unequal struggle against Spain and the mar-

¹Le Long, *Boekzaal der Nederlandsche Bybels*, pp. 846-867.

velous heroism displayed by a God-fearing people. Elsewhere the Church was founded by the State, here the Church founded the State. Without the Reformation the Netherlands had ever remained Spanish provinces, and without the Bible in the vernacular there had been no Dutch Reformation. Liesveldt's rendering of the Scriptures remained in the main the Dutch Bible, till it was replaced by the great version of 1637.

The Dutch people were not at heart satisfied with their Bible. It was not truly Dutch, but only a transposed German rendering. The question of a better Dutch translation of the Bible was raised as early as the Synod of Embden, 1571, the proposition coming from the colony of Dutch refugees at Cologne. But nothing was done. The provincial Synods of Holland and Zeeland broached the matter again in 1574. Once more it was laid on the table, great hopes being expressed of the new French and Latin versions, which were contemplated.² But the thing would not rest, and came up again at the Synod of Dordt, 1578. This time more radical action was contemplated; the question was raised "whether it were not feasible and necessary to translate the Scriptures from the Hebrew into the mother-tongue or at least to revise the common translation, and to whom this work shall be committed."³ Again, however, the movement failed; and this although the Synod committed the supervision of the contemplated task to the statesman-scholar and poet, Philip van Marnix van Aldegonde, who was a great favorite of the States-General, and to the widely famous preacher Petrus Dathenus. The latter apparently did nothing at all in the matter, whilst the former instead of supervising the translators, attacked the task himself and began an original translation of the book of Genesis. Marnix thought ill of Luther's Bible as a literal translation. In a letter to Drusius dated July 17, 1575, he says: "Inter omnes omnium versiones ego ingenue fatebor

² *Kerkelyk Handboekje*, p. 111.

³ Ypey en Dermout, *Geschiedenis der Hervormde Christelyke Kerk in Nederland*, ii. p. 346.

mihi visam esse nullam tanto abesse ab Ebraica veritate intervallo, atque sit Lutheri versio, a qua emanavit nostra." The Synod of the Hague, 1586, was informed of Marnix's labors and requested him to continue therein and to communicate the results to scholarly divines, "so as to make the translation a work of many rather than of one man." He was also requested to undertake the translation of the New Testament as well as of the Old Testament. More than any other man Marnix was fitted for the task by his thorough knowledge of the original tongues of the Bible as well as that of the Netherlands. The latter was a prerequisite by no means common in a day, in which learned men considered Latin their mother tongue. But Marnix fully understood the situation and was keenly alive to the bitter opposition of many bigoted churchmen, both on account of his moderate views and of the high favor with which the States-General regarded him. He therefore declined the honor conferred on him, June 12, 1586, and ceased his labors.

Notwithstanding this rebuff the churches continued to insist on a new translation and the Synod of South Holland in 1587 appointed four men to undertake the task—Jacobus Kimedoncius, Jeremias Bastingius, Arnoldus Cornelli van der Linden and Wernerus Helmichius, all ministers renowned for learning. The other provincial Synods were advised of these appointments, but the States-General was in vain appealed to to finance the project. Their treasury was exhausted by the long war with Spain and habits of thrift had made them very cautious in the expenditure of the public funds. Moreover they were not deeply interested in the matter and the relation between them and the churches was somewhat strained. The appointments therefore lapsed. Five years later the States-General passed a resolution to permit the churches, through a committee of their own appointment, to make a translation of the Latin version of Tremellius and Junius, but so perfunctory was this action that the churches seem not even to have received a formal notification of it. The source of this evident lack of interest lay in the relation between Marnix

and the churches, who seem to have had a very bitter feeling against this great statesman and scholar. And only when the latter was requested once more, in 1593, to devote his talents to the task did the States wake up. Under pressure both from the churches and the States, Marnix finally accepted the offer, the next year, and removed to Leyden, there to settle down to steady work, with the great library of the university at his elbow. The States promised him an annual salary of 2800 florins, whilst the university honored him with the title of professor of theology. His work, as he proceeded, was to be submitted to a committee, appointed by all the provincial Synods, and the solution of the problem at last seemed to have been found. For the first time the Church and the State were in complete harmony and peaceably coöperated for the one thing desired. But a Sisyphus-like experience was in store for the churches; the laden bough escaped their hands when the ripe fruit was about to drop into it. Scarcely was the work seriously begun, when it was interrupted by the selection, by the States-General, of Marnix as ambassador to France. It was said that national interest absolutely demanded this appointment, and it is true that Marnix was better fitted than any other man for this important post, in this critical period of the history of the nascent Republic. Marnix accepted. All that had been accomplished in his Bible translation was the practical completion of the book of Genesis, which was incorporated almost in toto in the later "Staten-Bybel."

An intimate acquaintance with the political and ecclesiastical history of the Netherlands, in this period, is necessary to appreciate the difficulties which beset the plans of a new Bible translation. So many currents and undercurrents, which escape the general view, were at work in this affair and the relation between the State and the Church was so utterly different there from what it was elsewhere, that only a keen eye and a practiced mind can follow the intricate path through the labyrinth. On the resignation of Marnix the churches appointed van der Linden and Helmichius to prosecute the work. But the States which had willingly paid

Marnix the (for that time) princely sum of 2800 florins annually, were unwilling to be at any expense whatever for the ministerial translation. Van der Linden died in 1605 and Helmichius followed him in 1608. Neither of them had done anything of moment to add to the finished work of Marnix. The first idea of a new translation of the Bible had been broached in 1571 and after thirty-six years not even the book of Genesis had been finished. Soon after the death of Helmichius the bitter Arminian controversy arose, which like a threatening thunderstorm had for many years been massing on the horizon—for which the materials in fact had existed from the very beginning in the Dutch Reformation, in a humanistic and Zwinglian tendency, which had many adherents, especially among the upper and educated classes of society. Its raucous clamor filled the whole land, it touched palaces and hovels alike; it filled every sphere of life with rancorous debate and divided the Republic, still fighting for its very existence, into two bitterly hostile camps. The line between the government and the bulk of the ecclesiastics was more clearly drawn than ever before and the Arminian controversy came near to undoing the Republic, through a relentless civil war. It so completely occupied the attention of the political and ecclesiastical leaders that all thought of the new Bible-translation was abandoned till 1618-1619.⁴ Even in the bosom of the Church there had been from the beginning two parties, two ideals. The one desired a translation from the originals; the other one from an approved Latin or German source.

But no sooner had the Arminian storm spent its force even in part, than the old desire for a new Bible reasserted itself. The new English translation of 1611 seems to have brought matters to a head. We find a circumstantial narration of the first serious attempt to achieve the hitherto unachievable in the *Acta Synodi Dordt*. Ao 1618-1619. Sessions VI to XIII. The bitter war between the political and ecclesiastical factions had resulted in a virtual victory for the Church. Arminianism, which had been regnant in

⁴ Hinlopen, *Hist. van de Ned. Overzetting des Byb.*, p. 57.

the heyday of Oldenbarneveldt's power, had been defeated by the *coup d'état* of Maurice of Nassau, and the Calvinistic party ruled in Church and State alike. The Arminians were driven from Church and country into exile or were forced to a humiliating surrender. Thus all factionalism was suspended for the time being and the hour for unanimous action had come at last. The signs of the times were auspicious. In the sixth session of the Synod of Dordt, the question of the proposed new translation of the Bible came up and the foreign delegates were asked for advice. The *Acta* gives us these names as the representatives, sent by the Anglican Church: George Carleton, Bishop of Llandaff; Joseph Hall, Th.D., Dean of Wigorn; John Davenant, Th.D., Professor at Cambridge and Regent of Queen's College; Samuel Ward, Th. D., Archdeacon of Taunton and Regent of Sidney College, Cambridge. And here is what they tell in a carefully written statement in the Seventh Session.

"The theologians of Great Britain, not deeming it advisable to make a hasty and impromptu reply to so weighty a question, have deemed it to be their bounden duty, after ripe deliberation and because honorable mention has been made of the English translation which King James, with great care and expense, has recently published, to tell this reverend synod how and in what way his royal Majesty has accomplished this task. First, in dividing the work, he wished this plan to be followed. The entire body of the Scriptures was divided into six parts, and for the translation of each part seven or eight of the principal men, well acquainted with the languages, were appointed. Two parts were assigned to some London theologians and the four other parts were equally divided between the theologians of the two academies. After each had accomplished the task assigned him, from them all twelve select men were called together in one place, who have corrected and improved the whole work. Finally Bilson, the reverend bishop of Winton, and Dr. Smith, who is now bishop of Gloucester, a celebrated man and one who from the first was well versed

in this work, have finally revised this translation, after ripe deliberation and investigation.

"As to the rules prescribed to the translators, they are as follows:

"1. It was agreed that they should not simply make a new translation, but that the old one, which was long since adopted by the Church, should be purified of all faults and defects and that therefore they should not depart from the old translation, unless the truth of the original text or any emphasis should require it.

"2. That no notes were to be placed in the margin, except the notation of textual references.

"3. That where the Hebrew or Greek word allowed a double sense, in that case, the one should be expressed in the text, the other in the margin, which was done when a different reading was found in the approved texts (*exemplaren*).

"4. The most difficult Hebrew and Greek idioms were put in the margin.

"5. In the translation of Tobit and Judith, because great difference was found between the Greek text and the old Latin version, they have followed the Greek text.

"6. That the words which had to be put in the text, here and there, to fill out the same, should be differentiated by a different, *i. e.*, a smaller letter.

"7. That new arguments be placed before each book and new compendiums before each chapter.

"8. That a perfect genealogy and a description of the Holy Land be added to this work."⁵

A careful study of the *Acta* of the Synod of Dordt, in its six subsequent sessions, seems to indicate that the Dutch translators availed themselves, to some extent at least, of the rules which the English delegates reported to them as binding on their English brethren, engaged in the same work. It was resolved to follow as closely as possible the original text of the Scriptures and also to follow, as far as this fundamental rule permitted, the words and expressions of

⁵ *Acta Syn. Dordtr.* 1618-1619, vii. S.

the earlier version. Like the English translators, these were to avail themselves of other translations and also of the aid of specialists in deciding on the rendering of specially difficult passages. In such cases the Hebrew and Greek idioms were to be printed in the margin. Words, not found in the original but necessary to complete the sense, were to be printed in italics. Each book and chapter was to be headed by a brief synopsis of its contents. The only marginal notes permitted were to be of a textual and explanatory character; all theological discussions were to be avoided. After ripe deliberation it was resolved also to translate the Apocrypha of the Old Testament and to admit them to the printed volume of the Scriptures, but in a place by themselves and printed in different type, so that no one could mistake their character. It was further resolved, in the twelfth session, to request the central government to finance the undertaking.

It was decided to commit the work to six translators, three for the Old Testament and three for the New Testament, whose work was to be revised by two redactors to be chosen from each province and in case of the death or disability of any of the translators, the one who had after him the greatest number of votes in the General Synod, was to succeed him, whilst the provinces were to elect new redactors in place of the original ones, who might die or become disabled. Four years were set apart for the completion of the task, if possible, but accuracy and fidelity, rather than haste, were advised. The translators were to report every three months to the States-General on the progress of the work (Session XI). An interesting discussion arose in the Twelfth Session as to whether the unity of God demanded that in addresses to the Lord the second person singular of the personal pronoun—"Du"—should be used or the commonly used plural term—"Ghy"—. The latter was decided on. Also whether the name Jehovah was to be retained, or the translation—"Heere"—used. The latter was ordered. It was further decided that all proper names were to be transliterated, as had been done in former trans-

lations. The old divisions into chapters and verses were to be retained as far as possible. The matter of chronologies was deemed to lie beyond the sphere of the translators; but an index or register was to be added to the translation, containing a reliable rendering of the Hebrew names.

In the Thirteenth Session, the six translators were elected. Johannes Bogerman, minister of Leeuwarden and president of the General Synod, Guilhelmus Baudartius, minister at Zutphen and Gerson Bucerus, minister at Vere, were elected for the Old Testament. For the New Testament were elected Jacobus Rolandus, minister at Amsterdam, Hermanus Faukelius, minister at Middleburg, and Petrus Cornelli, minister at Enkhuizen. In the same Session the various provinces elected their revisers or redactors. It is a remarkable fact and a witness to the scholarship of the Dutch ministry of the period that the Synod of Dordt elected for the responsible task of translating the Scriptures from the original tongue, men from among the ranks of the ministry, rather than professional scholars. The six translators were all ministers of parishes, in active service, and among the redactors from all the provinces were only four professors. Any one familiar with the history of the Dutch Republic, in examining the list of redactors, will see that two of the provinces, Utrecht and Drenthe, are omitted. The ministry of the first was almost wholly Remonstrant, and on that account the delegates of the province requested that they might be excused till the ecclesiastical question in their borders was fully settled. The representatives of the Synod of Drenthe seem originally to have appointed their quota of redactors, but apparently requested the very next day (Nov. 27,) that their election might be made inoperative "because the Dutch tongue was not very well known in their country."⁶ Quite a controversy arose later on about this matter. On the one hand it is a fact that no such request is found in the *Acta* of the Fourteenth Session of the Synod of Dordt. In the *Acta* of the Thirteenth and Four-

* Ypey en Dermout, ii. p. 357; Brandt, *Hist. der Ref.*, ii. pp. 53 f.

teenth Sessions all mention of the province of Drenthe fails. It may however have been in the journal of the day; the *Acta* stand only for the final acts of the Synod. Moreover the fact remains that Drenthe had its own peculiar dialect, which was akin to that of the provinces of Gelderland and Overisel and formed a branch of the Low-Rhenish speech, growing cruder as it proceeded Eastward, till in the dukedom of Benthem it merged itself into the Low Saxon. An eloquent witness to the incompetency of the ministry of Drenthe to assist in the translation of the Dutch Bible is found in the report of their delegates to the General Synod, rendered to the Synod of Drenthe April 7, 1619, still preserved, and written in a barbarous and scarcely readable Dutch.⁷

At last the work seemed to be started in earnest and under a far more hopeful star than ever before; and yet eighteen years were still to elapse before its completion. The request of the General Synod for the authorization of the work and for the financing of it by the States-General was laid on the table of their "High-Mightinesses" and was quietly ignored. Great bodies have ever moved slowly. Both the States and the Church, immediately after the adjournment of the Synod of Dordt, were more than occupied with their own immediately pressing affairs. The "Twelve-Years Truce" with Spain was practically ended and the resumption of the tedious war was certain. The Bible translation seemed once more forgotten.

A last desperate effort was, however, made. The promoters of the project, which had always met, and was still confronted with, widespread secret opposition, made a final appeal, through the Synods of North and South Holland, to the deputies *ad hoc* of the General Synod, and these in turn to the States-General, which finally approved of the plan April 11, 1624, and called a special preliminary meeting of the translators and revisers, at the Hague, May 22, 1625. Faukelius and Cornelli had meanwhile died and in their stead appeared Anthonius Walaeus and Festius Hom-

⁷ Ypey en Dermout, *Aanteekeningen*, ii. p. 416.

nius, the one Professor in the University of Leyden, the other one of the ministers of that place. After some further delays the States ordered all the translators to settle down at Leyden, during the term of their labors. Bogerman came almost at once, November, 1625, Baudartius in April, 1626, Bucerus not till the early fall of that year, whilst Rolandus did not arrive till 1628. The reasons for these delays lay mainly in the refusal of the consistories of the various churches to allow their pastors to intermit their ministry for an indefinite and probably very lengthy period, for the common good of all the churches. Human nature in the Seventeenth and in the Twentieth centuries is the same. Each of the translators retained the stipend of his own church but, besides that, the States-General paid them each nine hundred florins, as a special honorarium, with two hundred florins extra for a secretary and a smaller sum for incidental expenses. This was for that time princely treatment and compares very favorably with the treatment accorded the English translators. In England the bishops were informed that the King would have defrayed the expense of the translation "but his lordes did not holde it conuenient." In Holland, with a devastating and expensive war before them, the States-General hesitated indeed but, having once set their hands to the plow, held them there right royally. In England the King took the initiative, in Holland the Church. In England the Church and the printer were burdened with the expense, and the provision made was unworthy of a great King and a great land; in Holland the State assumed the burden, of its own free will, at the request of the Church, and did it in such a way that even to this late day the reading of the record of their liberality is a source of pride to every loyal Dutchman.

The hesitancy of the States to authorize the new translation was due in part, as has been above indicated, to the political complications which menaced them. But this hesitancy was of long standing and extended, as we have seen, to the entire period, in which the matter had been under discussion. The Churchmen themselves were very

much divided. Some opposition to the new version was occasioned by men, "who themselves would have wished to have been selected for the great honor, obstinate obstructionists, who were accustomed to call nothing good but what they did themselves."⁸ Men like Hugh Broughton in England. But the main opposition arose from the struggle between the ecclesiastical factions. The so-called Strong Calvinists, belonging to the Leycester faction, were opposed by the avowed Arminians; and between them stood the faction of the Moderates, the so-called Zwinglian Calvinists, with an Arminian leaning. Naturally appointments pleasing to one faction would be decried by the others, and nothing of importance could be done till the ecclesiastical struggle was finally settled in favor of one of the factions. This took place only after 1618-1619, when by the execution of the decrees of Dordt the pronounced Calvinistic faction gained a complete victory and the work could authoritatively proceed. This also explains why men like Drusius, the great Semitic scholar, professor of the university of Franeker, who drew students from all European countries to the little Frisian town, was not recognized in the enterprise. He had been engaged on the recommendation of the Arminian leaders, at the expense of the province of Friesland, in the painstaking labors of annotating the Old Testament, a task for which he was admirably fitted. Yet his *Ad loca difficiliora Geneseos, Exodi, Levitici, Numerorum, Deuteronomii, Josuae, Judicum, et Samuelis librorum commentarii libri sive notae*, published by Amama at Franeker in 1617 and 1618 were not utilized, so far as we know, in any way by the translators.

The Old Testament committee began its work on the 13th of November. Bogerman was elected chairman, Baudartius clerk, of the committee, whilst Bucerus took on himself the translation of specially difficult passages. For the book of Genesis they utilized the nearly completed earlier work of Marnix van Aldegonde, and this part of the task was completed in a few meetings. For their later labors

⁸ Amama, *Boekzaal der Ned. Bybels door Le Long*, p. 783.

they divided the book in hand into three parts and then compared and criticized these separate translations in their meetings, till they had worked them into a thoroughly homogeneous whole. Some outside help was freely given. Thus Jodocus Van Laren, of Vlissingen, voluntarily translated the book of Job and later on the book of Daniel, and submitted these labors to the Committee.⁹ By the 8th of June, 1629, the Pentateuch was printed and in the hands of the redactors. Meanwhile Rolandus, Walaeus and Hommius had completed the gospel of Matthew with its annotations in 1628. Their method of operation differed from that adopted by the Old Testament Committee. Each man translated the whole of every book, and this was then submitted to the entire Committee for comparison and criticism. By 1631 they had translated up to II Corinthians when for a little while the entire work was suspended. In that year both Rolandus and Bucerus died; a severe blow to both Committees. Some trouble was experienced in finding new translators, when the remaining four consented to labor on, two by two, and thus to finish the work. A year later the Old Testament Committee had completed its task, and the revisers or redactors were bidden to come to Leyden. The various churches released them with more or less grace and they finished their labors in 1634, each one of them receiving an honorarium of four florins per diem over and above his regular salary. By the end of the same year the New Testament Committee was ready and the New Testament revisers arrived, and completed their task by the 10th of October, 1635. Whilst they were at work a violent pestilence ravaged the city, sweeping away in a few weeks twenty thousand of its inhabitants. These consistent Calvinists, however, continued their labors undaunted, without the loss or even the illness of one of their number, although on some days more than 100 people died. The completed work was presented to the States-General and every one of the revisers received a special honorarium, over and above their previously mentioned stipend, whilst the

⁹ Hinlopen, pp. 101 f.

translators received each 500 florins, Bogerman alone receiving 1000.¹⁰

At the beginning of their work, the translators had spent several months in agreeing on an analogical system of spelling, to be followed in the translation. Various traditions regarding this feature of the work have come down to us, but without any fixed historical basis or value. The only assured fact is the agreement of the translators on a fixed spelling. Beyond that we know practically nothing at all of the matter. Where did they get their plan? Who was their guide and special adviser? No one can tell us with any assurance. But the translators did an inestimable service to the Dutch tongue by this feature of their labors. What the Lutheran version of the Bible did for the German tongue and what the "Authorized" version of 1611 did for the English tongue, that and more was done by the Staten-Bybel for the language of the Lowlands. It unified the Dutch language and accomplished more than any other agency, in establishing the character of the tongue common to all the provinces of the Netherlands. The Staten-Bybel received its name from the formal authorization of the new version by the States-General, June 29, 1637. It was printed, under an exclusive privilege, by Pauwels Aartsoon van Ravenstein, from the house of the widow and heirs of Hildebrand Jacobszoon van Wouw, at Leyden. The long patience of sixty-six years was rewarded at last and the translation of the Scriptures from the originals into Dutch had been accomplished. In the authorization, published as an introduction in all the older editions of the Dutch Bible, the States, somewhat at variance with the historical facts, claim the honor of having inaugurated the project and of having instructed the Synod of Dordt to that end. But whatever their part in the inauguration of the movement, they had abundant reason to be proud of their "authorization." The Dutch Staten-Bybel is a noble rendering of the Scriptures.

Like the "Authorized" English version of 1611, the

¹⁰ Hinlopen, p. 167.

Dutch Staten-Bybel had to make its way in the face of great opposition. The Arminians—eloquent testimony to the impartiality of the translators and annotators—almost immediately accepted and used it in their worship. Episcopius, their leader, gave it preference above the old version.¹¹ Intelligent pastors and church-members everywhere received the new version with great cordiality. But the masses of the people viewed it with suspicion, as a "work of men;" and their prejudice was well nigh invincible. The States-General had wisely left the introduction of the new translation to the various provincial governments. With quiet patience and undeniable tact, the various political and ecclesiastical bodies coöperated to this end and the new Bible was practically in general use within a period of a dozen years after its publication. This was all the more remarkable when we remember that it took the "Authorized Version" in England forty years to attain this standing. The bitterest opposition centred in Amsterdam, the chief city of the land; the remote country districts, as might be expected, were the last to swing in line; for instance some places in Gelderland did not do so till 1652.¹²

As in the case of the English version of 1611 the appearance of the Dutch Staten-Bybel opened the floodgates of criticism. The translators were accused of having made too liberal a use of some of the German and other continental translations. That of Piscator was named with special emphasis.¹³ They had been ordered to follow the older Dutch translation as far as practicable. They had done so, as is evident especially in the New Testament.¹⁴ Yet this was charged against them as a flagrant breach of duty. They were accused of too great literalness,¹⁵ although they had been ordered to make a literal translation. They were charged with being too oriental, their traducers forgetting

¹¹ *Instit. Theol.*, lib. iv. sec. 1, cap. 21.

¹² Ypey en Dermout, ii. *Aant.*, p. 263.

¹³ D. Gerdes, *Miscell. Groning.*, iv. p. 672.

¹⁴ Ypey en Dermout, ii. p. 374.

¹⁵ *Idem*, p. 375.

that they had to deal with oriental thoughts and idioms which cannot be translated in occidental terms or dressed in a Western garb. Hugh Broughton in England had his imitators in Holland, men who lashed the translators unmercifully and endeavored to fix on them the stigma of ineffable ignorance and stupidity. Broughton said that "he would rather be torn in pieces by wild horses than recommend the English translation of 1611 to the churches;" but Julius Steginga wrote a bitter criticism of the mistakes of the Dutch translators, citing innumerable passages, in the Pentateuch alone, to prove his querulous contention. His name like that of Broughton is rescued from oblivion almost alone by this bitter tirade. And yet the Staten-Bybel survived all these attacks and gained strength and influence as it became more generally known. All opposition ceased after a while and it became the people's book, it may almost be said, their idol.

In rhythm and swing and force and stateliness of language it reminds one strangely of the "Authorized" English version. It was produced at the very threshold of the golden age of Dutch letters; in fact it may be said to have inaugurated this period and, as in the case of the contemporaneous English version, it bequeathed to the coming generations a marvelously strong and expressive example of a tongue, that had but just found out its own strength and sweetness, a tongue that was entirely free from the artificiality and effeminateness of later days. It moulded the thinking of the entire nation; it penetrated the very marrow of their bones and became so intimately identified with Dutch literature and history, as to become bone of its bone and flesh of its flesh. Individual and associated efforts have been made to replace the Staten-Bybel with a new version, but without any success. Verbal revisions have been made from time to time to correct antiquated words and forms of spelling; but such labors have been expended merely on the bark of the ancient tree and have never touched its living tissue. The Dutch believer loves the old Bible next to his God and Saviour, and is not rarely in great danger

of becoming a bibliolater. The reverence for the Bible of 1637 became so great that "many illiterate people ascribed to it no less value than the Roman Catholics do to their Vulgate." And even learned people have slipped into this error. Thus Maresius, Professor at Groningen is said to have taught the infallibility of the version of 1637; and Anthonius Perizonius, professor of theology at Deventer is reported to have been accused of heresy because he had taught and defended a contrary view.¹⁶

The value of the Dutch Bible is best seen perhaps by comparing the English "Authorized" Bible with it. Both are among the very best translations of the Scriptures ever made; both have a swing and force which appeals to the hearts of their readers; both have a glorious history and have exerted an inestimable influence. But on a critical study of the two, the balance dips toward the Dutch version. It seems almost as if the criticisms, which ultimately gave to the English speaking world the English and the American Revisions, were as old as the seventeenth century and as if the Dutch translators of 1637 had been guided by them. In an astonishing percentage of cases the changes in the "authorized" English versions of 1611 proposed by the recent revisions were anticipated by the Dutch translators.

In support of this contention, I confine myself wholly to revisions of the "authorized" English version proposed in the New Testament field. The criticisms on the "Authorized version," presented in Condit's *History of the English Bible* p. 345 or in Dr. Alexander Roberts' illuminating little volume *Companion to the Revised Version of the English New Testament* pp. 75-135 may be adduced as examples. They are very plain and very pertinent, pertaining to the correction of mistakes in the meaning of Greek words, of mistakes in Greek grammar; or archaisms, ambiguities and faulty rendering of proper names; of the unnecessary confounding of one Greek word with another and of needless variation in the rendering of the same Greek word. Let us look at these in their order.

¹⁶ Ypey en Dermout, ii. *Aant.*, p. 437.

1. *Mistakes in the meaning of Greek words.* I take but a few of many examples, in which the Dutch version gives the true rendering demanded by our American revisers. Mt. x 4 and Mk iii 18 ὁ Καναναῖος, "Simon the Canaanite" (E) "S. Canaanitis" (D) Mt xxvi 15 ἐσθησαν, "covenanted" (E), "toegelegd" (D). Mk iv 29 παραδοῖ "is brought forth" (E), "zich voordoet" (D). Other passages are Rom iii 25, xi 7, 25; 1 Cor iv 4, Eph iv 29, Phil iv 2, 3; 1 Tim vi 5, Heb xi 13, 1 Pet iii 21. In Rev iv 6, 7, 8, 9; v 6, 8, etc., ζῶον, the English throughout has "beasts," the Dutch the generic term "dieren." In all of these passages the Dutch text wholly or largely conforms to the later criticisms of the English text of 1611.

2. *Mistakes in Greek grammar.* Mt ii 4 "Christ" (E) "de Christus" (D); 2 Thess ii 3 "that man of sin" (E), "de mensch der zonde" (D); 1 Tim vi 10 "the root" (E), "een wortel" (D); 2 Cor iii 15 "the veil" (E), "een deksel" (D); Jn i 21 "that prophet" (E), "de profet" (D); 2 Cor iii 17 "that spirit" (E), "de geest" (D). Jas v 20 and 1 Pet iv 8 the Greek verb is translated "hide" and "cover" (E), in both cases "bedekken" (D). Mt. iii 14 διεκώλυεν translated "forbad" (E), "weigerde zeer" (D), indicating the strenuousness of John's opposition. 2 Cor v 10 φανερωθῆναι translated "appear" (E), not bringing out the passive force of the verb; "geopenbaard worden" (D), exactly anticipating the criticism of the revisers.

3. *Archaisms, ambiguities and the misuse of proper names.* In so far as these criticisms of the revisers touch the peculiar genius of the English tongue and are of a philological character, as a matter of course no comparison is possible. But in regard to the use of proper names especially in the Old Testament it may be said that the Dutch translation is practically free from the errors, charged in this respect against the English translators of 1611. Names, except when the text absolutely requires it, are always given in the same way.

4. *Confounding Greek words in translating them.* Jn x 16 αὐλή, ποιμνὴ "fold" (E), "stal," "kudde" (D); Jn i 11 τὰ ἴδια, οἱ ἴδιοι, "his own" (E); "het zyne," "de zynen" (D); Lk xv 10 μετανοοῦντι "repenteth" (E), "zich bekeert" (D). Jn vii 17 again literally anticipates the criticisms of the revisers, as do nearly all the loci here mentioned. The translation of the words σημεῖον and τέρας throughout the Dutch version is "teekenen" or "wonderen" or "wonderheden;" whilst δυνάμεις Mt xiv 2 and Mk vi 14 translated "mighty works" (E), is correctly translated "krachten" in Dutch. ὄχλος, Jn vii 20, is translated "people" in English; whilst the Dutch, with finer acumen, translates "schare," the mass of the people as distinct from the leaders. Mt xxviii 19, 20, the great command, in English has the words "teach" and "teaching" whilst the Dutch translates διδάσκω and μαθητεύω "onderwyzen" and "leeren." The translation of Jas i 6 is again, in the Dutch version, a complete anticipation of the criticisms of the revisers against the "authorized" version; the same is true of Rom xii 2. In the translation of the words κρίνω, κρίμα, κρίσις, ἀνακρίνω, διακρίνω, κατακρίνω the Dutch translators never fall into the error of their English brethren, but they translate "oordeel," "oordeelen," "veroordeelen," entirely in line with later criticisms.

5. *Needless variation in the translation of the same word.* Here again the Dutch is far in advance of the English translation. Thus 1 Cor iii 17 φθείρει "defile" "destroy" (E), "schenden" (D); Mk xv 33 γῆν and Lk xxiii 44 γῆν translated "land" and "earth" (E), "aarde" in both cases (D). Rev. iv 4 θρόνος "throne" "seats" (E), "troonen" (D); Mt xxv 46 αἰώνιος "everlasting" "eternal" (E), "eeuwig" (D). In Rom iv λογίζομαι is found eleven times and the English translators render it twice "count," thrice "reckon," six times "impute;" the Dutch uniformly translate "rekenen." Again in Rom vii 7-8 the English translate ἐπιθυμία "lust" "covet," the Dutch "begeerlykheid" "begeeren," using the same root form. In

2 Cor ii 16 the English translate *ικανός* "sufficient," in 2 Cor ii 6 "able;" here again the Dutch literally anticipate the criticism of the revisers and translate "bekwaam," "bekwaam maken" in both cases. 1 Tim vi 12 *ὁμολογία* translated in English "profession,"* v 13 "confession;" the Dutch in both cases reads "belydenis."

It is little wonder that the Dutch have been proud of their Bible. In many particulars it bears a strong likeness to the later English revisions, whilst it lacks their angularity and martinet-like precision. I may be permitted here to relate an anecdote, told me as a personal experience by a young Dutch scholar in this country, who was cut off in the height of his promise. When he was studying for his Ph.D. degree, in one of our most renowned universities, the professor in Hebrew one day propounded to the class a crux in the translation of a passage in Malachi. Rolling the intended surprise of his pet translation as a sweet morsel under his tongue, he passed the text from student to student and of course asked in vain for the translation he sought. He came to my Dutch friend, who happened to have his Dutch Bible at his elbow. Glancing at it, he gave a literal translation of the Dutch text as his answer. The professor, in a passion, accused him before the class of having examined his notes, claiming that he alone, in all the land, knew this translation. Stung by this wanton attack, the student, lifting his Dutch Bible said, "Sir, my Dutch ancestors knew that translation as early as 1637." A proud moment, in a small way, for the old Dutch version. I would urge everyone who is conversant with the two languages, to follow out more in detail the comparative critical study of the two versions, and I am sure he will meet with many surprises. The critical material at hand, was about the same in the case of the English and the Dutch translators.¹⁷ Of all the translations of the Scriptures, from the

¹⁷ The Critical Apparatus of the Dutch Translators was in the main identical with that of the English Revisers of 1611 who say in the preface:

"If you aske what they had before them, truly it was the Hebrew

original languages, in the Reformation and Post-reformation period, the Dutch stands at the head for faithfulness of rendering and for critical acumen. It is all in all a remarkable monument to the erudition of the Dutch ministry of the seventeenth century.

To the original documents of the Bible translation of 1637, unlike those of the King James version, almost idolatrous reverence was paid. They were collected with painstaking care, as had been those of the earlier national Synods.

text of the Olde Testament, the Greek of the New. Neither did wee thinke much to consult the translators or commentators, Chaldee, Hebrew, Syriac, Greeke or Latine, no nor the Spanish, French, Italian, and Dutch. Neither did wee disdain to revise that which wee had done, to bring back to the anuill, that which wee had hammered."

They had before them the Hebrew and Greek texts of the Scriptures. The knowledge of these languages was indeed the chief condition of the selection of the committee. But what were the original texts at hand when the translation of 1637 was made? And what texts did they use? (Condit: *History of the English Bible*, 339.) As was the case with the translators of the Bishops' Bible, they had the Latin translation of the Hebrew Bible by Sanctes Pagninus of 1527, in which the author had endeavored to give an absolutely idiomatic translation of the original. Arias Montanus had revised this work in 1572, in the Antwerp Polyglott. The Muenster Latin Translation of the Hebrew text, 1534-35, which was highly praised for its literalness, was also at hand. Also that of Leo Juda of 1544 and that of Castalio of 1551, which evidently had some weight with the English translators, yet was wholly unworthy of it. (*Idem*, 340.) Finally, the text of Tremellius, a converted Jew, of 1579. They had the French translation of 1587-88, the Italian by Diodati, of 1607; the Spanish versions of Enzena, published at Amsterdam, 1543 (N. T.); of Reynal, 1569, and of Valera, of 1602. Besides they had the Lutheran version, which by that time had appeared in countless editions.

As to the originals, they had Soncino's Hebrew Bible of 1488, Bomberg's great edition of the Hebrew Bible of 1518, 1525-26, 1547-49, characterized by Adam Clark as "the most correct and the most valuable Hebrew Bible ever published." Moreover, they had the text of the Complutensian Polyglott of Cardinal Ximenes of 1522, the Antwerp Polyglott of Christopher Plantin and Arias Monatanus of 1572. This for the Hebrew text. For the Greek they had the text of Erasmus 1516, 1519, 1527, 1535; those of the above Complutensians; that of Stephens, 1550, a critical review of the text of Erasmus, built on the readings of some sixteen new manuscripts. And this edition of Stephens was chiefly used by the English revisers of 1611. They had also the texts of Beza, 1565 and 1589.

The latter had been practically lost in 1593, but when the historic sense asserted itself, they were re-collected, as far as possible, in 1620, and locked in a chest, which was kept at Delft. The manuscripts of the Dortrechian Synod were now added to them, with the exception of those of the *Post-Acta*, which in some unaccountable way were lost.¹⁸ A carefully prepared index was made and the whole was deposited in 1625 in a strong chest with eight locks, with the order that every three years this chest was to be opened, and the contents examined as indexed, lest any of them should be lost.¹⁹ On these occasions, one of the ministers of Delft was to open the chest in the presence of two delegates of the Synod of South Holland, and thus the examination was made. The magistrates of the city were also present and assisted in the function. Thus it continued till 1640 when the chest was transported to the Hague. Meanwhile the autographs of the Bible-translation had been preserved in a similar chest, and in 1641 the *Commission on the Autographa* was created, consisting of two ministers of each provincial Synod. This large commission with two delegates of the States-General met every three years at the Hague, to examine the Dordtrechian autographs and those of the Bible-translation. But since the manuscripts of the Bible translation were kept at Leyden, two days were spent in this work. It was a ceremonious and dignified function, conducted with all the pomp of the seventeenth century, and those old Dutchmen loved pomp with all their hearts. This minute examination continued till 1794, when it was abolished by the Revolution, which engulfed the Dutch Republic, like a gigantic whirlpool, and made an end of its glory.

What finally became of the autographs—whether they were destroyed or scattered or whether they are still in existence in the Dutch archives or among the treasures of the Leyden library—I am not informed. But the work

¹⁸ As to the fate of the manuscripts of these *Post-Acta* see the interesting discussion in Ypey en Dermout. *G.D.C. N.H.K.*, ii. *Aant.*, p. 460.

¹⁹ *Acta Syn. Z. Holl.*, 1625, 1628, 1629.

of the translators of 1637 abides. The wonderful growth of modern Biblical science, the inestimable increase in critical apparatus since the Dutch Staten-Bybel was printed, will ultimately make a competent revision, even of this excellent version of the Scriptures desirable and inevitable. But that time has not yet come. As we have seen, the Dutch translation has anticipated very many of the just criticisms, which finally compelled the English speaking world to revise the King James Bible of 1611. Those who in Holland of late years have sought to inaugurate the work of revision or retranslation, are not the men to whom Bible-loving Dutchmen could venture to entrust it. Accordingly their labor has been only academic without national significance. The Staten-Bybel of 1637 is still the national Bible and the people's treasure, and will unquestionably hold that position for many years to come.

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