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"LORD, WHAT WILT THOU HAVE ME TO DO?"

[Continued from page 200.]

WE have seen that it is every man's first duty to work out his own salvation; but while this is true, it is also true that Jesus Christ has, just as truly as in the case of Saul of Tarsus, work for every convert to do *in promoting the salvation of others, and in extending His cause and kingdom in the world.* Every man is not called to be an apostle, or even a preacher of the word; yet is every man called to labor in his proper sphere, just as earnestly and as devotedly as the apostle Paul in his, to save the souls of his fellow-men. It is to all his disciples, without exception, that Jesus says, "Ye are the *light* of the world"—"Ye are the *salt* of the earth." And what language can be stronger on this point than the language of the apostle? Let the professing Christian, who may think that he has little or nothing to do, read it and blush for his inaction: "*None of us* liveth to himself, and *no man* dieth to himself; for whether we live, we live unto the Lord, or whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether, therefore, we live or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died and rose again and revived, (or lives a new and glorious life in the highest heaven) that He might be the Lord both of the dead and of the living." And as their *Lord*, He commands all their powers, activities and resources to be employed in His service and to His glory.

Let us, then, in reference to THE WORK OF SAVING SOULS AND PROMOTING THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST, solemnly inquire of Him, *what He would have us to do.* We have no other way of learning his will than by going to His word. From it we learn,

I. *That the foundation of all our efforts should be laid in personal piety*—in heart-felt and unreserved consecration to the Redeemer—implying faith upon Him in His surety-righteousness and sanctifying grace; such repentance as is accompanied with hatred of sin as well as sorrow for it; grateful love, and delight

KEEP YOUR TEMPER—IT WILL HELP YOUR LOGIC.

The *Presbyterian Advocate* is rather amusingly wolfish of late—snapping all around. In a notice of the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland in relation to the admission of hymns into its worship, we stated, “we have for some time observed the United Secession to be relaxing, both in respect of doctrine and order.” This is a fact, in our judgment, fully sustained from the pages of the *United Secession Magazine*—a fact too which must stand on its own independent evidence. But how does the *Presbyterian Advocate* meet it? Why as follows:—“This closing fling at the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland, finds a pretty good antidote in the statements of the prosperity and missions of that body.” It then proceeds to give the statement we published in the same notice. Now, is the *Advocate* prepared to subject the rigid orthodoxy of its own Church to this test? Presbyterianism had a footing in this country before Arminian Methodism? Which numbers the most followers? Which gives most to missionary purposes, the Congregationalists of New England or the Presbyterians of Western Pennsylvania and Eastern Ohio? We hate invidious comparisons, but we are merely showing the *Advocate* how its own rule works. The editor of the *Advocate* closes by tendering a word of exhortation to the Associate Reformed Church, as follows: “It would be well for certain denominations in this country, if they had more of whatever ‘laxity of doctrine and order’, is implied in these statistics.” Thank you, kind sir; we hope we shall profit by your counsel; but we would ask you to compare what your body with its 2,027 ministers is doing, with what is done by the Free Church with scarcely half your ministry. The fact is, we may all take lessons in liberality from the Churches in Scotland to which we claim to be related.

Original Articles.

For the United Presbyterian.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE SCOTTISH METRICAL VERSION OF THE PSALMS. BY THOMAS BEVERIDGE, D. D., OF CANONSBURGH, PA.

It is believed that those churches which seriously intend adhering to the principle, that a faithful version of the Psalms given by divine inspiration should alone be used in the praises of God, either now are, or soon will be, led to see the necessity of making some amendments in the authorized version; or of adding some other metres to those contained in that version. Such it is believed, is the honest intention of the Associate and the Associate Reformed Churches; and the desire which is now felt to accommodate that version, so far as obsolete words and antiquated pronunciation are concerned, to modern usage and rules, is evidence

of that intention; just as a man's making some needful repairs to his house, is evidence, that he does not mean to abandon it, and take up his residence in another. With pleasure has the information been received that the Associate Church has reciprocated the invitation given by the Associate Reformed Church, to correspond with others who agree with us on the *main*, not the *version*, question, as it appears on our printed minutes. It is a common concern. Few things would be more injurious to the cause of sound Presbyterianism, and evangelical religion, than that the churches which adhere to the use of an inspired Psalmody, should have different Psalm books, though the variations among them should be of the slightest character.

Dr. Beveridge is a respectable minister of the Associate Church, and a Professor, it is believed the oldest Professor, in her Theological Seminary. The writer intends to give his thoughts, such as they are, freely on the merits of his performance; though he would do it with deference, as the Doctor, it is believed, is Professor of the Hebrew language, while the writer can pretend to nothing more than an ordinary acquaintance with that language.

The Doctor has deserved well of the friends of an inspired Psalmody, for showing why words which were pronounced differently when the translation of the Bible was made from the modern pronunciation, became offensive in a metrical composition, while they are not so in prose, as he conclusively does in the following extract:—

“It may readily occur to the minds of some, that our version of the Psalms is hardly as old as our translation of the Bible. It is not more antiquated in its style; in some cases, not equally so. And if our translation of the Bible will answer without alteration, why not our version of the Psalms? We answer, that though the fact be as stated, the inference derived from it is not legitimate. Antiquated usages in language become much more apparent and disagreeable in poetry than in prose. Many of the changes in language are such as affect the pronunciation of words, and in poetry we must, in these cases, either violate the laws of the measure or of correct pronunciation. When in prose we meet with such words as *leviathan*, *salvation*, *commandment*, &c., we are not bound to pronounce them as the translators of the Bible may have done, but in poetry we must pronounce them as the poet intended, or spoil the poetry.”

The Doctor also deserves credit for speaking out, and showing why some amendment is necessary to render our version such as may be sung with propriety and edification, by many who attend our worshipping assemblies. Often has the writer felt the force of the remarks in the following extract. Sometimes he has also given them expression when conversing on the subject with his brethren; though, till now, he has not felt himself called upon to give them to the public.

“Those who advocate the use of the inspired Psalms in divine worship, are differently situated in the United States from their brethren in Britain. There, they are so generally used, and their singularities of language correspond so nearly to the usual language of the people, that little difficulty is experienced. But here, the case is totally different. Those who use this version of the Psalms are in a small minority. Multitudes of our Christian brethren have never seen them, and very few are familiar with them. When they come into our assemblies they feel little disposition to unite with us in this part of our worship. They are ready to entertain a prejudice against our principles, as if they were of a local and sectarian character, on the very ground of our adhering to a foreign and somewhat antiquated version of the Psalms. When our ministers are called in providence to preach in strange places, the use of this version is a great hindrance in their way. In many places, preceptors can hardly be found to lead in this part of worship, and when they do attempt it, the blunders into which they readily fall, are frequently such as to mar this part of the worship, if not to turn it into ridicule. If an improvement of the version can be made, which would free it from the exceptions noticed above, it might not only tend to remove those prejudices and difficulties, but to promote a more extensive use of this divine book in the praise of God, and the many benefits which we cannot but believe would result from the use of it.”

The Doctor also does well to endeavor to correct a somewhat prevalent, though erroneous notion, that in a faithful version or translation of the Scriptures, we have “the very words of inspiration.” An individual has been known to say, “if you alter one word, I will take human composition at once.” I do not know but this mistaken notion has sometimes received countenance from the manner in which the use of the inspired Psalms has been defended, at least in the pulpit. In a conversation recently held with some brethren on this subject, the idea seemed to be held by some who were present, that, in a faithful translation, the very words are in some sort inspired. But I may have misunderstood them. But to the extract, on which the writer has simply to remark that he does not entirely coincide with the Doctor in some of the examples and illustrations which follow:—

“The idea appears to be somewhat prevalent, that nothing can be called a translation unless it adheres exactly to the words of the original. It would be curious to see some specimens of such a translation of Hebrew or Greek. Among other things we would need to have not a few words manufactured to suit Greek particles, which in almost every verse of the New Testament are left untranslated, simply because we have no corresponding words into which we could translate them. If, in forming our judgment on this subject, we may take the inspired writers as our guide,

Preception, he that leads the choir.

we are not so strictly bound to any precise form of words. There are numerous quotations of the Old Testament in the New, where the writers cite what the Spirit or the penman said, yet these are very seldom what would be called literal translations. The same passage is frequently cited in different words," &c.

Having now said this much by way of commendation, and freely granting that the Doctor's performance should have all due regard paid to it, as a well-meant attempt toward amendment, it is now proposed to notice, with the same freedom, some faults with which it is believed the performance is chargeable.

Perhaps he has attempted too much. The authorized version—this designation is preferred to that used by Dr. B.—is so weighty and powerful, and withal, so economical, in its words, that every small blemish which may attach to it in a literary point of view, cannot be removed without seriously impairing its sublimity, beauty and force. How would "Paradise Lost" suffer, if some writer of fastidious taste should undertake to accommodate every word and every line in it, to what is called the present state of the English language!

It is a law regulating the pronunciation of English words, that the addition of *ed* to form the preterit of a verb, does not make an additional syllable, except in verbs ending in *d* or *t*. Hence the preterit of the verb command is pronounced command-ed, while the preterit of the verb obey, is pronounced as if written obeyd. This law does not seem to have been distinctly recognized when the Prince of English Poets produced Paradise Lost. Hence, when it was necessary to preserve the measure of the verse, that the preterit should be pronounced according to the modern usage, he suppressed the *e* before *d*, and in its room inserted a comma. Not so when the poetry required that the preterit should have another syllable. Thus:

"Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate."

"Within unseen. Far less abhorr'd than these."

It seems to have been part of the Doctor's plan to make a change whenever, in a preterit, *ed* required to be made a syllable other than in the excepted cases. This appears to have been his reason for altering the first verse of the 32d Psalm, so as to make it read:—

"Blessed is the man who pardon hath
For his transgressions gained,
And for his sin, a covering
Hath graciously obtained."

In this alteration, while the measure is improved, the sentiment certainly is not. To speak of the sinner "gaining a pardon" is not very agreeable either to Bible or Christian usage. As Milton dropped the *e* and inserted an apostrophe to advertise the reader that the final *ed* should not make a syllable, so might not the object be so far gained as to prevent any blundering in singing

the Psalms, by inserting a hyphen before the final *ed* whenever it is to make a syllable, as in the line "Whose sin is cover-ed."—Rather than have too much amending, perhaps it would also be better to let such words as end in *ion* stand as they are, with a diaeresis printed above the vowels *i* and *o* as is now common when such word as pre-eminent occur. We need not expect a perfectly unobjectionable version, labor at it as we may. How have our General Assembly brethren labored on their Psalmody; and yet, themselves being judges, how far from perfection is it still. I have neither time, space, nor inclination to attempt an extended and particular notice of all the Doctor's amendments. But a few remarks which occurred on a hasty perusal will be made.

I dislike the change made on the first verse of the first Psalm. "That man hath perfect blessedness who walketh not astray," &c., is not faulty in its theology as some have ignorantly alleged. The blessings of reconciliation, pardon, justification, adoption, which the believer enjoys in this present state, are perfect blessings. And if this were not so, there is an absolute and a relative use of terms. Though in this life the believer's hope and love are not absolutely perfect, nor his joy full, yet he enjoys such a measure of these blessings as is perfectly adapted to answer the ends for which God bestows present consolation on his children. I do not know how, without much circumlocution, the mind of the Spirit could be better expressed than it is in the authorized version.

The proposed amendment to the third verse is open to objection.

"He's like the tree by many streams,
Extending far its roots,
Whose leaf doth never fade, and which
In season yields its fruits."

The allusion of the Psalmist is to the little artificial rills or streamlets which were conducted to different parts of a field or vineyard for the purpose of irrigation. It is difficult to imagine a tree standing by "many streams." Striking deep its roots, would seem to convey the idea of the original better than "extending far its roots." The proposed amendment marked C, which follows, is better.

"He shall be like a tree which grows
The streams of water nigh,
Which in its season yields its fruit,
Its leaf shall never die."

The proposed amendment of the fourth verse is as follows:

"Not so, the wicked are,
But like the chaff which by the winds
Is tossed and scattered far."

The unamended version is:—

“The wicked are not so,
But like they are unto the chaff
Which wind drives to and fro.”

I admire the unamended original for its simplicity and closeness to the inspired original. A change is not necessary to get rid of the antiquated phrase “to and fro.” There are indications that the class of writers who are called “men of taste and genius,” mean to bring it back into fashionable use. They have tried every experiment to catch the public gaze and render their productions saleable; they have introduced French words and phrases *ad nauseam*; they have coined words; they have tried almost every possible new combination of words; invention has been exhausted; and soon they will have to be dependant on old volumes in Black Letter and Vellum to furnish them with old things, which, when reproduced before the public, will be as good as new. Some years ago, an attempt was made to bring back into use the antiquated word *maugre*, as a substitute for that long, dangling word, *notwithstanding*. It did not succeed, but the next attempt may.

In the last verse it does not appear necessary that *because* should be substituted for *For why?* If read with proper emphasis, the interrogation asking for the cause, is well calculated to arouse attention and give force to the sentiment. My voice would be for letting the first Psalm stand as it is with a slight verbal change on the third verse.

In the authorized version of the nineteenth Psalm, after mention is made of “the heavens,” the Psalm proceeds:—

“In them he set the sun a tent
Who bridegroom-like forth goes
From 's chamber as a strong man doth
To run his race rejoice.”

The Doctor says the line “In them he set the sun a tent” is not very intelligible. “It would appear to mean that the sun itself was set up as a tent.” I do not see why it is not as intelligible as this, William set John a copy; or this, Peter made James a coat. Instead of one stanza, the Doctor employs two in giving the mind of the Spirit.

“He in the midst of these vast heavens
Did also find a space,
And there stretched out a tent immense
In which the sun to place;

Who like a bridegroom cometh forth
And from his chamber goes,
And as a mighty man who doth
To run his race rejoice.”

I am persuaded he could amend this. The repetition, the exuberant verbiage, the “vast” and the “immense,” so much in the

style of Watts, the mingling of the common and the solemn style as "goes" and "cometh," the apparent intimation that after some search the Creator found a pre-existing "space;"—all these things are against this amendment.

In the thirty-first Psalm, to get rid of the line, "I'm like a broken pot," which he regards as too undignified, the Doctor substitutes: "I'm like shattered ware, which can no more be joined." Ware is a word of very general signification. Walker defines it, "anything to be sold." Some kinds of ware cannot be broken; others, which are frangible, may be joined again. The idea in the original seems to be that of something which was formerly esteemed as a utensil, or a useful commodity, but which has, by some means, become useless and is thrown away.

In common with many others, the Doctor seems to be stumbled at the idea of the swallow having a nest at, or near, God's altar, as represented in the 84th Psalm. To get rid of the difficulty he proposes an amendment. But it may be better not to be rash. It is well known that the swallow frequents human dwellings, and sometimes builds her nest in the chimney. Two Egyptian figures were discovered at Herculaneum, having, one, the representation of an altar with the Priest officiating, the other, an altar, with incense or some other perfume burning; on the basement of each, a couple of Ibes, the sacred bird of the Egyptians. The birds are in a position which indicates a sense of perfect security; one of them is apparently in a state of incubation. As these were privileged birds by the Egyptians, so might certain clean birds be privileged by the Jews, to build their nests in places adjoining the altar, or indeed, in the crevices or projections of the bottom layer or basement of the altar. Driven from the house of the Lord, the Psalmist envies even these birds their privileges and their repose. There is a plaintive tenderness and native simplicity in the language, which are peculiarly characteristic of the poetry of the Royal Psalmist. I am not fond of venturing on a new translation merely to get rid of a little *cruz criticorum*.

It seems desirable that the changes made in the authorized version should be few; and these, with the exception of now and then dismissing an obsolete word, chiefly editorial. If a piece of new cloth be put on an old garment, the rent is made worse. Let the Psalm book stand as it has always stood, after the revision of a few passages. With it, our fathers praised God. They praised him while passing through fire and flood, and in the swellings of Jordan. It has intrinsic excellencies of no common order, which will atone for an hundred minor defects.

Let the desire for improvement—for something more in the modern poetic style, be met by some additional metres. The desire should not be rebuked; it should, if possible, be satisfied. One of these can be selected when any of us is called to preach

to an assembly which have not been accustomed to our version. A strictly literal version is not possible, nor is it desirable. Our prose translation might, in some places, be less literal, without being the worse for it. There may be a free, and yet a faithful version. Who does not know that in translating a sentence out of a Greek or Latin author, we may express the idea in a vast variety of language, and yet all the translations be equally faithful? In the process of translation, more or less of paraphrase is often unavoidable. It is still oftener unavoidable when the translation is to be in metre, and encumbered with rhyme. The prose translation of the tenth verse of the twenty-seventh Psalm is: "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." The metre version of this is:

"Though me my parents both should leave,
The Lord will me uptake."

Here is paraphrase, yet true and faithful rendering. Let us retain the authorized version with no material changes; but let a variety of other metres be added. We exhort our young people to learn to sing; we tell them it is their duty to cultivate music that they may praise God in a becoming manner: they will then have more scope for the exercise of their musical powers. This will encourage them. It will also remove the necessity which some of our ministers labor under, of singing the few long and short metre versions which we have, till they have become threadbare. Let me say, that this thing of singing the long and short metre Psalms, in our version, is an innovation, in at least some parts of the Associate Reformed Church. There were fathers who regarded it with no friendly eye; for that desire for variety and novelty which would not be satisfied with the common metres, they were afraid would soon seek its gratification in the use of human composition.

From the different authors who have tried their skill in turning the Psalms into metre, it cannot be doubted that many selections might be made which would be so close to the inspired original, that no just objection could be made against them on the ground of principle. If any object on the ground of custom or prejudice, let them object; but for themselves only. Others might sing them with profit and edification. Perhaps I would never use them myself.—There must be more liberty in the Church in things which do not affect the substance of the Christian faith, hope, or duty, than some would have. Christians must know that they have to fulfill the law of Christ by bearing one another's burdens. For want of this knowledge, and because they could not have everything done precisely as they had seen it done, how often have Christians began to pout, and refused to taste the sacramental bread!

None who have been attempting "amendments" have, so far as I have observed, taken the least notice of the labors of the

late Rev. John Reynolds. Poetry indeed was not his *forte*; but still, as a theologian and scholar, and even as a poet, he was not inferior to any of his co-laborers. The man who could consult the original Hebrew of a Psalm, as his production bears evidence that he did, and then turn it into metre while riding on errands of necessity or mercy, or while engaged in some laborious employment which his circumstances rendered necessary, was more than an ordinary man. As his friend, I would have been glad had he kept his work longer under review, and made it more perfect before he published it, as he could have done. Still, notwithstanding all it suffered from having been too hastily put to press, some very good selections might be made from it.

Sparta, Ill., Aug. 12, 1851.

D.

EARLY TRAINING.

The following extract from the journal of Mrs. Wilkins, Methodist Missionary in Africa, illustrates an important truth:

Saco, a Mandingo, to whom I gave an Arabic New Testament, about six or seven months ago, came here to sell me some fowls. I asked him if he read the book that I gave him; he replied with vehemence, "*Yes, I read that book too much;*" and added, "We have book, too; I no say it tell lie." I asked him several questions about schools in his country; to which he replied, that they have schools both day and night, in which their children are regularly taught to read and write, and, he said, "all what God say." I thought if this false religion (Mohammedanism) can be so thoroughly interwoven with their characters and lives as to be inseparable by anything else than the immediate power of God, why may not Christianity be made to take as deep a hold, if early commenced, and as industriously inculcated? And yet, to our lamentation, we see many sad failures where indefatigable pains have been taken. Why is this? To me it seems that the only correct answer is to be found in the depravity of our nature, that so much more readily receives evil impressions than good.

ANTI-TEMPERANCE.—A number of Germans, of Cincinnati, belonging to one of the great political parties, led by coffee-house keepers, held a meeting last week, at which they resolved that they would support no man for the legislature, who would not vote for the repeal of the anti-license law of last winter. They required of persons wishing to be nominated, to give a written pledge to this effect, and 13 candidates, were so lost to shame, that, for the sake of a paltry office, they "sold themselves to commit iniquity," and signed the pledge.