

not one of them ever saw Syria or Palestine or Egypt. Now, these countries are almost as well known as our own, and the increased knowledge of them has materially aided Bible study. Ancient manuscripts have, moreover, come to light, much earlier than those used by the translators of our present version, and more likely to be correct, in consequence of not having passed through the hands of so many copyists. Now it has been properly thought that all this advance in the knowledge of the original languages, and in the knowledge of Bible countries and Bible archaeology, should be brought into requisition for the purpose of correcting any errors that may have crept into the commonly received translation. The object, as stated by one of the revisers, has been "not to destroy the past, not to obliterate any of the excellencies of the present version, but to make a good translation better, a correct translation still more correct, and to bring the Bible of the English speaking race up to the present standard of the English language, and of Biblical scholarship.

Such has been the object of the revisors in the work that is now before the public. To what extent they have accomplished their object is the question that is now agitating the public mind. As might be expected, on this question there is a great diversity of opinion. In Britain the prevailing sentiment appears to be less favourable than in America. Some think that the revisors were too *conservative*, and that some additional changes would have enhanced the value of the Revision. Such was the opinion of the American Committee who sought to have some additional alterations introduced, to which the British Committee refused their consent. Others look with disfavour on the work, on the ground that it is too *radical*, that the revisors were not true to their pledge to introduce the fewest alterations possible—that a great many changes are unnecessary, "frivolous and capricious," "adopted for reasons of mere literary criticism," and to "attain dry and merely mechanical accuracy of expression"—and that the revisors "have stripped the noblest book in the English language of much of its beauty, and have destroyed many of its historical associations."

Of course, it would ill become us to express a dogmatic opinion at present in regard to the general merits of the work; when older heads and more mature judgments feel the need of caution; yet we may venture on the remark that, whatever value may be in *a priori* reasoning, seems to favour the New Revision as a correct translation of Holy Scripture. When sixty of the ripest scholars of England and America, of different creeds and of unquestioned piety, devote ten years of painstaking yet gratuitous service to the work of revision, the strong probability is, apart from all examination of the work, that it would be as true to the original as could be expected from fallible men. The character of the men for piety and scholarship, their facilities for the successful prosecution of the work, their entire freedom from all embarrassment arising from human dictation, their solemn pledge to introduce the fewest alterations possible, and the length of time occupied in the work, all these furnish at least strong presumptive evidence that it would be as near perfection as uninspired men could make it. "By long study," says the New York *Independent*, these men have made themselves more com-