



*Job xxxvii : 1-38*

REV. PROF. J. F. M'LAUGHLIN, M.A., B.D.

THE following translation is of the nature of an experiment. An effort is made to imitate the rhythm of the Hebrew verse. Similar attempts have been made again and again, but, until recently, without any large measure of success. The laws of Hebrew metre were imperfectly understood and the difference in form and accentuation of our words, as well as in the structure of our sentences, was discouraging. Besides, there was a feeling that the metrical form did not matter, and that, in translation, all that was wanted was the meaning. Or the Bible, at least the Authorized Version, had come to be looked upon as an English classic, and any change, on the ground of literary form, was naturally looked upon with suspicion. I have much sympathy with such views and prejudices, but I think that something may now be said on the other side.

Recent investigations have thrown much new light on the form and structure of the Hebrew poem. A knowledge of metrical laws appears to help greatly in bringing out the true sense of many passages. And, moreover, it is often possible, with the aid of these laws, to restore a broken or corrupted text.

The metre appears to be based upon an interchangeable use of iambic and anapaestic feet. For either, the spondee is sometimes substituted, and, in the middle or at the end of a line, the amphibrach. Sometimes, too, the anapaest is followed by a short syllable, which is either lightly pronounced or actually combined in pronunciation with the preceding heavily accented syllable. The character and length of the foot is determined not so much