

We pass to a brief examination of the character of this translation. The principal questions before us are these:—In what relation does the Great Bible stand to those previously published by Coverdale and Rogers? What influences may be traced in this new version? How far are we justified in speaking of the seven issues in 1539 and the two following years as editions of the same work? Comparing Num. xxiv. 15-24, as given in the Great Bible, with the translations of Tyndale and Coverdale, we find that in every four places in which these two translators differ, the Great Bible agrees with Tyndale three times, with Coverdale's Bible once. Very rarely do we find any new rendering of importance. The most striking are in verse 16, "and that falleth with open eyes;" verse 18, "and Edom shall be possessed, and Seir shall fall to the possession of their enemies;" verse 22, "the Kenite shall be rooted out;" verse 24, "Italy," in the place of "Chittim." In most of the new renderings the authority followed is Munster's Hebrew-Latin Bible, published in 1534-5. In the early books of the Old Testament the successive editions of the Great Bible appear to be nearly in accord, the work of revision being in the main completed when the book was first published in 1539. If we pass to the prophetic books we meet with a much larger proportion of new matter. In Isa. liii., for example, the Bible of 1539 differs in about forty places from Coverdale's former translation; in the Bible known as Crammer's we find about twenty additional alterations, some of great importance; in the editions of 1541 hardly any further change was made. The influence of Munster is to be seen in almost every case. We gladly welcome such rendering as "the chastisement of our peace" (1540) in the place of "the pain of our punishment" (1539); and "the Lord hath heaped together on him the iniquity of us all," is a more adequate representation of the prophet's meaning than "through him the Lord hath pardoned all our sins." We need not examine other passages in detail. So far as the Old Testament is concerned, we see that the term Great Bible represents in the main two revisions (1539, 1540); and that, whilst much use was made of the Vulgate and of the Complutensian Polyglott, Munster's Latin version was the authority to which Coverdale chiefly deferred.

In its general character the New Testament is very similar to the Old. In Luke xv., xvi., for example, the Great Bible almost always agrees either with Tyndale's or with Coverdale's earlier version, but in most instances with Tyndale. What is new is of little value. The impression produced by these chapters is confirmed as we extend our survey. There are, however, some changes of detail which are very important, though they are not always changes for the better. Thus in John iii. 3, "born anew" gives place to "born from above;" in John x. 16, "one fold" is unfortunately substituted for "one flock;" in John xiv. 1, the familiar rendering, "ye believe in God, believe also in me," takes the place of Tyndale's, in which all was exhortation ("believe in God, believe also in me"). In these passages the change is apparently due to the authority of Erasmus. Throughout the New Testament, indeed, the new renderings are mainly derived from Erasmus and the Vulgate. The later editions of the Great Bible sometimes contain valuable emendations, but the amount of variation is apparently not great.

The chief characteristic of the Great Bible is found, not in its translations, but in its texts. In one of his letters to Cromwell, Coverdale speaks of the care with which he notes the "diversity of reading among the Hebrews, Chaldees, and Greeks and Latinists. The result is, that on every page of this version we find some additions to the text. The reader may remember that Parvey's version of Proverbs contains several clauses and verses found in the Latin text, but not in our Hebrew (Vol. I., p. 82). Almost all these supplements may be seen in the Great Bible. The same phenomenon meets us in the New Testament. In Luke xvi. 21, for instance, we read of Lazarus, that "no man gave unto him;" at the end of 1 Cor. xvi. 19, we find the words, "with whom also I am lodged;" and it is in this version that Luke xvii. 36 first finds a place. It must be confessed that his unwillingness to give up any per-