

But some may naturally think that the translation must have been wretchedly made, when it requires such an amount of correction. I hope this is not the case either. Our own authorised version is admitted to be the most correct translation in the world; and yet every one has seen a corrected edition of it, with 10,000 emendations. The British and Foreign Bible Society would have printed our version without any of Mr. Meller's suggestions. It was a privilege to secure his assistance, not an ordeal through which we were obliged to pass. The version remains essentially as it came from Mr. Geddie's hand and my own. Mr. Meller's labours belong to what Dr. Chalmers would have called transcendental criticism, not affecting the general character of the translation, but securing an exactness in many passages, a uniform correctness, and a scholar like finish of the whole; which in our circumstances we could not have attained without his assistance, but which is of very great importance in a version of the new testament—a portion of God's own Word—which will probably for the next fifty years be the standard of both theology and literature, the model on which the whole language of devotional feeling and religious instruction will be formed. As we were getting a large edition printed, and as the population was so much reduced last year by the sickness, I do not expect that another edition will be required for many years to come. In these circumstances, I feel satisfied that no friend of the Mission on either side of the Atlantic, will think that eight or ten months longer, spent in accomplishing such an object, is time wasted.

I formerly stated that, but for taking advantage of the return of the *John Williams* to this country, I should not have come home for at least a twelve-month later than the time at which I did come. Mr. Geddie and I should then have unitedly corrected and finished the translation, and I should have brought it home in the same condition as I had brought it up to in August last, ready for being placed in Mr. Meller's hands. This would greatly have lessened my labors, and lightened my responsibility. This is the way which the larger missions invariably do, and hence the editor has only to see that it is printed according to the manuscript which has received the *imprimatur* of all his brethern.

Be it further remembered, that it is only fourteen years since there was not a sentence either printed or even written in the language, that every word had to be caught up as it floated on the lips of untutored savages. The sound, the meaning, the spelling, the syllabication, the grammatical structure, had all to be discovered and settled, before it could become the visible medium of communicating to the minds of these same savages the truths of God's holy Word. We commenced our printing in January, and we have printed as far as the 14th chapter of Mark. Our first two sheets were very much experimental: a number of points had still to be settled, chiefly of a literary character, in which Mr. Meller's experience and literary taste were of great value. At his suggestion, several decided improvements in the printing have been adopted, combining to some extent the advantages of both the paragraph and the chapter-and-verse systems, with little of the disadvantages of either.

It is perhaps desirable that I should specify a few of those corrections which Mr. Meller's 1000 pages suggest. They may be arranged chiefly under the following classes. The most important of his suggestions are those that relate to the meaning of the original. He is pre-eminently at home in this important department. As might reasonably be expected, even with all the helps which critics and commentators supply, we sometimes mistake the meaning of the sacred writers. At other times, when we perceive the meaning, the language, in our hands still poor, and not moulded to express theological ideas, remarkable as yet for nothing more than the contrasts it present to the copiousness and flexibility of the Greek original, cannot be made to bring out the exact ideas of the original: sometimes our expressions are ambiguous, sometimes they are defective, and sometimes they are redundant. In all these cases Mr. Meller's suggestions are valuable, and a much greater exactness in many cases has been the result.

Another class of his suggestions relate to *uniformity*, especially in the parallel passages of the gospel. As we translated gospel after gospel, we were constantly finding out new words, and new modes of expressing the same idea. In correcting for this edition, while we aimed at a correct translation, we did not observe