

with great lack of reverence Him whom they all profess to regard as its Author. Now I do not intend to maintain here that this is wrong. My contention just now is that it is injurious, and this it must be and is in many ways. The minister who neglects his Hebrew Bible in ordinary circumstances is injured thereby because he loses self-respect through the consciousness that he has been unfaithful to the commission he has received to prove all things and to declare the whole counsel of God (which does not mean simply all the councils of the Church). He is crippled too in moral power by a sense of inconsistency, of unfaithfulness, and of preventable inefficiency—feelings which must assert themselves as soon as he looks the conditions and the facts full in the face, and discards the miserable evasions which have been deferred so long only because of the half lights and prejudices which the churches and the world at large have cherished for the bewilderment and entanglement of the minds that are to guide and save the people.

The force of these statements cannot be fully felt until those most directly interested become practically convinced of the truth of certain broad propositions: first, that the Bible should be not only the book of texts for the pulpit and the chief study of the regular minister, but also the chief text-book of the theological student; second, that the interpretation of the Bible directly is to be the basis of its rational study, and third, that the more intelligence is brought to bear upon the study both in aim and in method, the more satisfactory and fruitful will be the process and the results. The first of these propositions is not such a truism as it may seem, since nothing is more certain than that exegesis in the widest sense, which is the same thing as Bible study, has not had a foremost place in our divinity schools; but the soundness of the principle may be taken for granted for the present. The second and third propositions go together, the one relating to the character and the other to the work of true exegesis, and it is in their demonstration that the evil done or the loss suffered by the neglect of Hebrew can be made most clearly manifest.

The essence of the case against the exclusive or predominant use of any translation instead of the Hebrew itself is that the minister who deliberately prefers the translation necessarily comes