

explanation that the time is not yet ripe, that "our knowledge at present is not sufficient to justify an attempt at a reconstruction of the text by means of the Ancient Versions." The fact is, we were not ready for an Old Testament revision at all in this present century. The amount of necessary preparation work is simply enormous. We want a band of scholarly specialists to spend years in collecting and comparing the copies of the Septuagint, and by means of their critical wisdom to find out as nearly as possible what the old scholars of King Ptolemy really wrote down two thousand years ago. The same thing is needed for every one of the old versions, as far as it is possible to do it for them now. The Hebrew manuscripts themselves also need a good deal of careful study.

We must wait for all this to be accomplished. And we must wait, too—we shall not have long to wait—for the growth of a spirit of common sense in the public, whose prejudices have so much to do with rendering any new version a failure or a success. Our "Bible-loving people" must learn to aspire a little higher than the "rhythm" and "music" and "old associations," whose disturbance, I remember, was the chief burden of their criticism in the days of the late revision. They must get beyond this sentimental pietism, and see that, if necessary, all things else must be sacrificed to the one supreme object of making the Bible mean to us exactly what it meant to its original readers.