

... from out of the western languages; the ... and ... education, since, modern of ... and ... situation, govern ... and ... the authors, in many ... similar to our; the likeness of ... the Scriptural dialect ... and lexicogra ... was ... To these causes may be added, the authority ... in any ... men have had over the ...

2. The point of good interpreters, who ... have ... the interpretation of the Scriptures in a simple ... and ... principles ... is much greater than any ... required by consulting commentators, ...

3. Definitions. The art of interpretation is the art of teaching what is the meaning of another's language; or that faculty, which enables us to attach to another's language the same meaning that the author himself attached to it. (Morus, p. 6, III.)

It is better to define interpretation as an act than as an art. To interpret a passage is to show or declare the sense of it, or simply to explain the meaning, i. e., the meaning which the author himself of the passage attached to it. Any other meaning than this can never be called, with propriety, the meaning of the author.

Interpretation, strictly speaking, may be called grammatical, when the meaning of words, phrases, and sentences, is made out from the *usus loquendi* and context; historical, when the meaning is illustrated and confirmed by historical arguments, which serve to evince that no other sense can be put upon the passage, whether you regard the nature of the subject, or the genius and manner of the writer.

4. Requisites of a good interpreter. The act of interpretation implies two things; viz. a right perception of the meaning of words, and a proper explanation of that meaning. (a) Hence a good interpreter must possess a sound understanding, and be skilful in explanation. (Morus, p. 8, IV.)

(a) The words of Ernesti are *subtilitas intelligendi et explicandi*; a phrase which would convey a meaning quite foreign to his intention, if literally translated into English, or, at most, convey his idea very imperfectly. His meaning is, that the interpreter, who exercises a sound understanding, or possesses *subtilitas intelligendi*, must demand satisfactory reasons for believing in any particular exegesis, and build his opinion in respect to the meaning of any passage on such reasons. These reasons rest founded on the *usus loquendi*, the context, the nature of the subject, the design of the writer, &c. An interpretation supported by none of these, cannot be admitted by a sound understanding.

The *subtilitas explicandi*, which I have translated *skill in explanation*, consists generally in the accuracy of explanation. To constitute such accuracy, in its proper sense, a right use must be made of all the means of interpretation, so as to gain precise and definite views of the author's meaning; then every thing should be so defined and expressed as to exclude all ambiguity and uncertainty; and lastly, the whole should be explained in the proper order which the nature of language and of reasoning demands.

5. *Subtilitas intelligendi*. A sound understanding is exhibited in two ways: first, in discerning whether we really understand a passage or not, and provided we do not, in discovering the difficulties that lie in the way of rightly understanding it, and the grounds of those difficulties; secondly, in finding out, by a proper method of investigation, the sense of those passages which are difficult. (Morus, p. 10, V.)

6. Means by which difficulties and their causes are detected. A good degree of talent or capacity is requisite for this; for men of small capacity frequently assent to things which seem to be taught, without any good reasons for so doing; and often believe themselves to understand what they do not understand. To a good degree of talent must be joined a careful habit of distinguishing ideas of things from mere words or sounds; (a) for we ought always to inquire, in respect to any word, whether we have a distinct perception of the thing or idea which it is meant to designate, and not to regard merely the sound of the word. (Morus, p. 10, VI.)

(a) Specially should this be done, where language is employed to designate any thing that is not the object of our senses, but is of an intellectual or metaphysical nature. Habit as well as care will do much in these cases.

... in an excellent manner; for when we come to express the ideas of an author in another language, we often find that we had only an indistinct perception of them. The employment of teaching, also, is well adapted to promote the same purpose, as is the study of ... of any science which leads to nice discrimination.

7. Means of removing these difficulties. The first means is, a just and accurate knowledge of languages. The next, an acquaintance with the principles of interpretation. Not that no one can interpret at all, without a scientific knowledge of these principles; but because they assist men of moderate talents, and guide them, as it were, in the right way, so that they are not left independent chance rather than reason. Besides, they are, in this way, supplied with a common rule for judging in controverted cases. Finally, as in detecting difficulties exercise and habit are important; so here, they are of so much consequence that all other advantages will be of little use without them. (Morus, p. 12-19, VII Nos. I, II, III.)

(a) An accurate knowledge of grammatical principles and of the *usus loquendi* is here intended; for what authority can an interpretation have, which violates rules of grammar and the usage of speech?

(b) Precepts for interpretation, well grounded, clearly understood, and judiciously applied, very much facilitate the task of the interpreter and render the result of his labours more worthy of confidence. He who acts by well established rules is more certain that he acts right, than if he followed his own opinion merely, in all cases of difficulty and doubt. And in controversies of an exegetical or doctrinal nature, to what can the appeal be made, in the ultimate resort, but to the principles of interpretation, i. e., the precepts or rules which it prescribes? Nor are these principles useful only to men of moderate talents; (as Ernesti would seem to impute,) but to men of the highest talents and best acquirements. Men may, indeed, learn them by usage in the interpretation of authors, without the scientific study of them; but the latter is the easier method, and guards most effectually against mistakes.

In addition to those helps for removing difficulties, a knowledge of history, geography, antiquities, &c., is of high importance.

8. Exercises of habits adapted to overcome the difficulties of interpretation. First, we should attend the instructions of a good interpreter; next, we should read those works where exegetical knowledge is displayed in the best manner, and reflect much upon them, for in this way we may be led to the imitation of them; and lastly, those books which we desire to interpret must be assiduously and constantly perused. (Morus, p. 19, IV.)

In the two first exercises, example serves both to excite and to guide our efforts. The habit of reading, often and assiduously, the book which we desire to interpret, is of more importance than any, or perhaps, than all, other means to him our power. Every new perusal will suggest to an intelligent and inquisitive mind many ideas, frequently very important ones, which he had not before entertained. This practice cannot, therefore, be too strongly recommended to the student.

9. *Subtilitas explicandi*, i. e., skill in explanation. This is exhibited by expressing the sense of an author, either in words of the same language which are more perspicuous than his, or by translating into another language, and explaining by argument and illustration. (a) In addition to an accurate knowledge of the language which we translate, skill in explaining requires that we should exhibit purity of diction; still preserving, as far as may be, the features of the original, lest the mode of reasoning should be obscured, which sometimes depends on the form of the words. (Morus, p. 20, VIII.)

(a) We explain by argument, when we exhibit reasons drawn from the grammar and idiom of the language, the context, and the design of the writer. We illustrate, when we cast light upon the meaning of an author, which is borrowed from history, chronology, antiquities, &c. Purity and brevity of style should characterize both these modes of explanation.

10. Definition of Hermeneutics. (a) Hermeneutics is the science which teaches to find, in an accurate and judicious manner, the meaning of an author, and appropriately to explain it to others. (Morus, p. 21, IX.)

(a) Modern usage distinguishes between Hermeneutics and Exegesis. Hermeneutics

is the theory or science of interpretation; it compiles and exhibits the principles and rules of this art. Exegesis is the practical application of these rules, or the act of carrying them into execution. The etymology of the two words would lead to the conclusion, that both are of the same import; but usage has assigned a different signification to each.

11. Definition of Hermeneutics. Hermeneutics, considered as the art of finding the sense of the words, (so far as it is in art, and is the proper subject of precepts,) consists of two parts, viz. the theoretical and preceptive. (a) The first comprises general principles, as respect to the meaning of words and the various kinds of them. On these principles, the rules of interpretation and the reasons of them are grounded. The second consists of rules, which are to be used as in investigating the sense of an author's words. Both of these parts are essential; for, on the one hand, principles without rules deduced from them would be quite inadequate to guide our philological inquiries; and on the other, rules can neither be perspicuous nor well grounded, which are not established upon principles. (Morus, p. 22, X.)

(a) Exegesis differs from the preceptive part of Hermeneutics, inasmuch as it is the act of carrying the precepts into execution, and not the precepts themselves.

### Biography.

MEMOIR OF THE REV. WILLIAM ARNETT: BY THE REV. ROBERT LEAK.

From the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine. The writer of the following memoir regrets the scantiness of his materials, much as a larger measure of information would have rendered it more worthy of the departed himself, and at the same time more edifying to the reader. But limited in this respect as it may be, still, as an exhibition of Christian character, there is much in it that will be found profitable.

The Rev. William Arnett was born at Haxby, near York, in the year 1785. His mother was deeply pious, but died when he was very young. By the merciful arrangement of divine Providence, this sorrow was in part supplied by a pious aunt, under whose care he was placed. She presented to his early observation a godly example, instructed him in religious truths, led him regularly to the house of God; and her labour was not in vain. At an early age his mind seems to have been strongly impressed with the evil of sin, and the importance of religion. When he was about twenty years of age his convictions of sin were so powerful, and the remonstrances of his conscience so loud, that he was in terrible dread lest he should go down quick into hell. His conversion was brought about more by alarm of conscience, than by the drawings of the heart; and from this circumstance, perhaps, it arose, that his subsequent ministry partook more of the alarming than the melting. On one occasion, after attending a prayer-meeting in Dwygate, York, where his mind was graciously affected, he retired to his room, and there wrestled with God until the morning light broke in on him, when it pleased the Father of mercies to remove his burden of sin, and give him an evidence of his adoption into the family of God. He always remembered this important and joyous event with thankfulness; and the 15th of May was a day marked in his calendar for holy and grateful commemoration. He immediately joined the Methodist society, and proved the soundness of his conversion by a holy and consistent life.

From this time, like all who are truly brought to God, he desired and laboured to be useful. He first became a Prayer-leader, then he passed on to the class of Exhorters; and these efforts of zeal God was pleased to bless with some success. Shortly afterwards his name appeared on the Plan as a Local Preacher; and in this department of Christian benevolence he laboured acceptably and usefully for three years. His general character and success led his friends to believe that he had talents and piety suited to a larger sphere of exertion, and having consulted the Superintendent of the circuit in which he resided, he was advised to permit himself to be proposed as a candidate for the regular ministry. From a benevolent principle, which through life strikingly marked his character, he declined acceding to this advice. His objection was, that his pious aunt, in whom he had found a mother in his youth, was partly dependent on him. This hindrance

was shortly afterwards removed by the death of the good woman; for in a few weeks she peacefully fell asleep in the Lord. From this circumstance his mind was more settled as to the path of duty, and after submitting to the usual examinations, he was received on trial as a Wesleyan Minister, and appointed to the Berwick Circuit by the Conference of 1811. From this time until the close of his life, he laboured as one that must give an account. His great aim was to save himself and those that heard him; and in his different circuits the Lord was with him, and men were turned to righteousness. Though as a Preacher he was neither distinguished nor highly gifted, yet he was faithful and fervent; so that his addresses could hardly be listened to by a person of unimpaired mind, without producing the impression that he was a man of God. His ministrations in the pulpit were preceded and followed by prayer in his closet. His public services bore marks of private intimacy with God. He rose early for secret devotion; and sometimes his fervour would disturb the slumbers of others, and remind them of their residence with a man of prayer. His confidence in God was very strong. Where timid or doubting minds would have quailed, he went boldly on; his motives being pure, he fearlessly left consequences to God. For his family, his circumstances, his salvation, he knew that the security he held would not fail; and his mind was kept in peace.

Mr. Arnett was a truly generous man; and in most cases it might be said of him, "he hath done what he could." Gentle, peace and integrity were marked on his countenance, and visible in all his acts. In these virtues he was of the true "Nathaniel" class; and for any thing dishonourable, unjust, or inconsistent, he felt a strong abhorrence. Occasionally the warmth and openness of his character, and sometimes error of judgment, might lead him to use bitter terms in reproving or opposing evil; but his courtesy would have allowed; but his fault was not of the heart. The warmth he exhibited was the indignant expression of an energetic and honest mind. He expressed the same warmth in the pulpit and in private. All who knew him intimately, and who loved real excellence, though unaccompanied by external refinement, loved Mr. Arnett for his frank, generous, upright, and Christian character. In all the relationships of life, he sought to please God, and to make those around him happy. As a husband, he was affectionate and attentive. As a parent, he was more anxious to see his children good than great. His own significant remark was, "I would rather that my children should go bare-footed and bare-headed to heaven, than possess this world's goods, and afterwards suffer the vengeance of eternal fire in hell!" He looked on outward things with the eye of a Christian, and felt content with his portion, so long as he possessed the favour of God, and the prospect of heaven; and his strongest desire was, that his children might partake of these spiritual blessings, and with himself inherit everlasting life.

He laboured with great energy and zeal until the year 1833, when an attack of influenza so greatly reduced him, that he never afterwards possessed his former health. At the Conference of 1833, on account of increasing indisposition, he determined to retire from the full work of the ministry for one year, hoping that his strength would be recruited by rest, and that he should thus be enabled to resume the labours which he loved, with the prospect of performing them more efficiently. When his determination was known, he received an invitation to reside as a Supernumerary at Halshaw-moor, in the Bolton Circuit. He considered this invitation as the pillar of the cloud before him, marking some providential path; and as it offered some advantages, likely to make his situation more comfortable, he thankfully accepted it.

When he became a resident at Halshaw-moor, the members of the Wesleyan society there showed him great kindness and respect, and he rejoiced in the prospect of living among them for a time very happily and usefully. These hopes, however, were soon blighted. His complaint began to assume a more alarming appearance; and, on consulting a physician, he was informed that, though present and temporary relief might be afforded, a cure was impossible. From this time he lived under the influence