

the value of the revision in itself, are of course legitimate with a view to influencing and governing the judgment both of the Church in general, and in particular of those in high places to whose office it more especially belongs to give a verdict on these matters. Before the authority of the Church as such intervenes to authorize, much more to impose a version of the Scriptures upon the Christian people, time ought to be afforded for all such questions as these to be thoroughly thrashed out, viz:—Is the version made from a sound text? Is it a faithful version? Is it in language at once suited to the dignity of the theme, and yet so plain as to make it 'understood of the people'? Is it orthodox? This I fancy was always the course followed by the Church, certainly in ancient times. We want to know, the whole Church wants to know, whether in the tremendous revolution involved in their treatment of the Greek text of the New Testament, the revisers have gone upon a sound system; whether, in the many hundreds of alterations they have made in the Received Text in carrying out that system they have been guided by a sound judgment; whether in turning the text so formed into English, they have shown themselves to be sound Hebrew scholars and Greek scholars, and, which is equally important, English scholars; and finally, supposing the verdict in these respects were favourable whether still there were not many or at least some passages in which they had, in the general judgment, conspicuously failed, which were not only changed for the worse, but of which the new version was positively wrong, and which therefore must be recast before the revision could be accepted.

I have no hesitation in saying that the general judgment of the Church, and of the English-speaking Christian world is that sufficient time has not yet been afforded for these objects; and that so far as these questions have been examined, the verdict is that the revision can never be authorized as it stands. I am certain that the great mass of thoughtful students are not satisfied either as to the text or as to the version of it into English. On one point their minds are made up, that so many passages are changed for the worse as to necessitate a re-committal of the revision either to the same or to a fresh company of revisers to be revised afresh.

The first point on which the mind of the Church is seriously disturbed is that of the alterations made in the Received Greek Text of the New Testament by the revisers. The limit laid down on this point by Convocation, in their original resolution, was as follows,—the Committee was to report on the desirableness of a Revision in those passages where *plain and clear errors*, whether in the Hebrew or Greek text, or in the translations made from the same shall be found to exist? In bringing in the report of the Committee, Bp. Ellicott stated that this was understood to be a fundamental rule;—"we may be satisfied with the attempt to collect plain and clear errors, but there it is our duty to stop." So satisfied was Convocation with these declarations, that in the rules they proceeded to draw up for the revisers, nothing is found on this point. The revisers also drew up a set of rules for their own guidance, and among them the following:—

That "the Text to be adopted be that for which the evidence is decidedly preponderating; and that where the Text so adopted differs from that from which the Authorized Version was made, the alteration be indicated in the margin." Convocation evidently did not contemplate any alterations in the Greek Text worth mentioning, and the revisers themselves at the outset only a few, which as could be conveniently indicated in the margin. Their views however enlarged as time went on, and the alterations grew to be so numerous that, in their own words, "it proved inconvenient to re-

cord them in the margin." 'Impossible' would have been a better word; in fact they were forced to cause a separate edition of the Greek Testament to be printed to set them forth. As to the actual number of alterations, writing here at a distance from books, I can only say they amount to many hundreds, of course a very large proportion of them comparatively unimportant, but many of the most serious importance.

The result came as a painful shock to a great many persons, and the action of the revisers does not seem defensible. Certainly Convocation would never have consented to the revision of it had been known beforehand that such radical alterations would be introduced into the Text. The revisers themselves supply the best argument for their own condemnation. They say, in their Preface to the revised New Testament, "Textual Criticism, as applied to the Greek New Testament, forms a special study of much intricacy and difficulty, and even now leaves room for considerable variety of opinion among competent critics." Surely, where ever there was this 'variety of opinion,' the Received Text should have been left unchanged. Unfortunately, however, the 'different Schools of Criticism' which they say 'were represented among them, were very unequally represented. The Radical School had as its representatives two not only of the ablest and most learned, but of the brightest and most influential scholars and divines in England, Dr. Westcott and Dr. Hort, and these backed up by other friends of the highest brilliancy and influence, such as Dean Stanley and Bishop Lightfoot. For the Conservative School, Dr. Scrivener stood pretty much alone, an able man and of acknowledged authority, but in readiness, and power of setting in the most convincing light his own views, a poor match for his brilliant opponents. The rest of the revisers, for the most part, listened to the discussions carried on between these champions,—alas, how unequal!—and then simply voted. The result is what might be expected. The revision was gone over twice. The first time, a bare majority carried the alteration; for the final revision a two-thirds vote was required. But it will at once be seen how delusive this plan was,—how difficult and insidious it would be to cast out a reading once adopted, to undo a work once done, and that against such men as I have named above. The whole proceeding was wrong. Convocation should have laid down on such a vital matter as this very stringent rules, and not have left it to a committee, sitting for ten years in secret, to recast the New Testament by a two-thirds vote.

In considering this aspect of the question, one fact ought to be borne in mind. It is fully granted by Drs. Westcott and Hort that before the close of the fourth century the text from which our English New Testament was translated was in general, and soon in universal use throughout the Church and has continued so ever since. If then the new revision be adopted, the English Church, isolating herself from the rest of Christendom, will be using a Bible widely differing from that which the whole Catholic Church has used for 1,500 years. Let us consider how serious a step this would be. To put forth editions of the Greek Testament and to make versions of it, differing ever so widely,—to use and discuss them in schools and colleges, in the pulpit, in the Bible class, in the press, is one thing;—deliberately to displace, in the services of the Church, the New Testament of 1,500 years standing and to put a rival in its place, the result of the private judgment of a Committee of the Convocation of Canterbury is a very different thing. Has the Convocation of Canterbury, has the Church of England the right of remodelling the Bible of the Catholic Church in this way? Supposing she has the right, is it desirable that she should use it?

HENRY ROE.

Port Daniel, 14th August, 1886.

To the Editor of the CHURCH GUARDIAN:

DEAR SIR,—It has been hinted that the Domestic and Foreign Missions Committee find the working of the system somewhat cumbersome. Certainly it must be expensive for men to travel from one end of the Ecclesiastical Province to another to perform the duty of dividing the Fund.

I would suggest the following as a simple mode of carrying out the objects of the Society:—

The Algoma Bishopric Fund is apportioned to the various dioceses, and I believe faithfully paid by them. Is it impossible to adopt a similar plan to meet the wants of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society? I cannot think it.

At the present time the "Appeals" tell us how much is needed. Well, why not ask each diocese to raise so much (1) for Domestic Missions, (2) for Foreign Missions, and thus each diocese would undertake this—as in the case of Algoma Bishopric Fund—as something which *must be done*.

If it be asked how the apportionment could be decided, it may be answered that an *approximation* could be made by the offerings of the past three years, and if the standard were raised a little higher we might reach it in time.

The advantages of this plan appear to be—

1. It would systematize the whole work. We should have some idea of what we had to depend on, and not be at the mercy of the weather and the size of the various congregations on the First Sunday after Epiphany and the Sunday after Ascension Day.

2. There would be no need for "Appeals," which are not always read.

3. It would seem to be more satisfactory that the Funds should be apportioned by the Synod rather than by a Committee, or, as it frequently happens, half the Committee, however desirous they may be to deal fairly and justly.

This is written without intending any reflection on the present Committee.

If it be objected that possibly the Dioceses would not meet the apportionment, the question may be asked, Do they come up to the appeals of the Committee to-day?

They do not. Would we not be more certain of a larger amount if it were made the business of each Diocesan Synod to provide ways of meeting the claims of the Church, as they do for their own home work, and for the salary of the Bishop of Algoma.

At the present time, to use a warlike figure, we are firing random shots at long range.

Yours truly,
Aug. 29, 1886.

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.—We are obliged to hold over a large amount of matter received for this week's GUARDIAN, but for which we have not space. Amongst this is a second letter from Mr. S. G. Wood, in re Revised Version of Scriptures and the Toronto Resolution.

A subscriber who lately ordered from us "Methodism vs. the Church," answered by a layman, writes "that the fine spirit displayed in it and the cogency of argument are extremely good: it should be circulated by the million in the cause of simple truth alone." Every layman should read it, and hand to Methodist friend.

A venerable clergyman in Niagara Diocese writes: "Enclosed herewith I send you one dollar, being my subscription to your valuable paper, THE CHURCH GUARDIAN, in full for 1887. I like your paper very much, and only wish it were in the hands of every member of the Church in our Dominion."