

There was probably not the least intention amongst the Jews of falsifying the text in this place. They scrupulously kept the \aleph small and suspended, and had a note in the margin calling attention to it. It was only that they hated to hear the name of Moses read in such a connection, and so, to spare their feelings, they pronounced it as Manasseh.¹ The Talmud has a note accounting for the reading:—"Gershom is called the son of Manasseh. Was he not the son of Moses? For it is written, The sons of Moses were Gershom and Eliezer. But because he did the works of Manasseh the idolater, the Scripture hangs him on to the family of Manasseh." And Rashi, the Jewish commentator mentioned already, tells us, "For the honour of Moses \aleph was written, but it was suspended to indicate that it was not Manasseh, but Moses."

V.

"AUTHORISED" READING.

1 SAM. xiii. 1: Saul reigned
one year, and when he had reigned
two years over Israel.

REVISERS' MARGIN.

Saul was (thirty) years old when
he began to reign, and he reigned
two years over Israel.

Beyond all question the Hebrew Bible is here corrupt. The usual formula for stating a king's age at his accession and his length of reign is:—" ——— was ——— years old when he began to reign, and he

¹ With the same object they substituted *bosheth* for *Baal* in proper names, Ishbosheth for Eshbaal, Mephibosheth for Meribaal, Jerubesheth for Jerubaal, &c., to avoid pronouncing the accursed name.