

times; that they often give readings which quite solve difficulties in the Hebrew text, and have every appearance of being more correct; that sometimes it is easy to prove from their translation that the mistake *must be* in the Hebrew, and to see exactly the copyist's slip which gave rise to the mistake.

And all this is true. The Revised Old Testament is decidedly behind the scholarship of the age. The work is a timid and cautious one. There is little doubt that the next revision, whenever it takes place, will be bolder and freer, and that the ancient versions, especially the Septuagint, will play a larger part in the work. Yet, in spite of all this, we believe that the revisers were fully justified in their cautious procedure.

For, in the first place, as we have seen already, there is every reason to believe that the existing Hebrew manuscripts, late though they be, differ but very slightly from those in use at the time of our Lord, and probably centuries earlier. The most important of their flaws and defects are of very ancient times, before any critical study of the manuscripts had begun, and before any of the versions, except perhaps the Septuagint, had been made.

And, in the second place, it must be remembered that the versions, the only means of correcting the Hebrew, are at present in a most unsatisfactory state. The different copies of the Septuagint vary considerably from each other, and this too is the case with the other old versions.

Therefore there is much to be said for the revisers'