

In the few places in which the Authorized Version differs from the Genevan, the change (which is but rarely suggested by any other version) is usually for the better, the new rendering being more literal or idiomatic, better in style or rhythm.

The translators show much tact and skill in selection, combination, and arrangement, but the number of words first introduced by them does not amount to four in a hundred. It is obvious that the Genevan and Rhemish versions have exercised much greater influence than the Great and Bishops' Bibles. The Rhemish Testament was not even named in the instructions furnished to the translators, but it has left its mark on every page of their work.

An inquiry into the exact relation in which the Authorized Version stands to earlier English translations, to the various foreign versions of Scripture, and to the chief critical authorities of the time, is of course impossible in these pages. For more detailed information the reader is referred to Professor Westcott's most valuable work,* so often quoted already.

When all critical helps and sources of influence have been taken into account, the student whose analysis has been most complete will find most to admire in the work of our translators. The praise he will award will not be indiscriminate eulogy. He will discover that much that they have transmitted to us was inherited by them from others; the execution of different parts of the work will prove to be unequal—the Epistles, for example, standing far below the Pentateuch in accuracy and felicity of rendering; many flaws and inconsistencies will reveal themselves; occasionally it will be found that better renderings have been deliberately laid aside and worse preferred; but, notwithstanding, every successive paragraph will bear new testimony to the tact, care, diligence, and faithfulness of the men to whom, in God's providence, we owe the version of the Scriptures which has come down to us consecrated by the associations of 250 years.

If we compare one of our modern Bibles with a copy of the first edition, we find that the differences are by no means few or slight. There is a history of the text which it is very interesting to trace. In Dr. Schrievenner's Preface to the Cambridge Paragraph Bible, which embodies the results of many years of labour, the reader will find this history carefully and fully narrated.

The revision of 1611 was not at once received with general favour. Romanists complained (as Romanists still complain) of unfairness in the translators' treatment of controverted passages; and Puritans clung tenaciously to the translation and commentary furnished in the Genevan Bible. On the whole, however, the opposition seems to have been but faint; and though for half a century the rival versions circulated side by side, the latter steadily gained ground. It could not altogether escape the perils of those troublous times. In 1652 the long Parliament made an order that a Bill should be brought in for a new translation of the Bible, and four years later the House directed "that it be referred to a committee to send for and advise with Dr. Walton, Mr. Hughes, Mr. Castle, Mr. Clerk, Mr. Poulk,† Dr. Cudworth, and such as they should think fit, and to consider of the translations and impressions of the Bible, and to offer their opinions therein."‡ The care of this business was especially commended to Whitelocke, and at his house at Chelsea the committee often met, "and had the most learned men in the Oriental tongues to consult with on this great business; and divers excellent and learned observations of some mistakes in the translations of the Bible in English, which yet was agreed to be the best of any translation in the world" "I took pains in it," adds Whitelocke, "but it became fruitless by the Parliament's dissolution."

* *History of the English Bible* (2nd edit.), pp. 267-280.

† *History* Samuel Clark and Matthew Poole. See Westcott, *History*, p. 124.

‡ Lewis, *History of Translations*, p. 354.