

All the qualities of a good Style may be ranged under two heads, Perspicuity and ornament or all that can possibly be required of Language is, to convey our ideas clearly to the minds of others, and, at the same time in such a dress, as, by pleasing and interesting them, shall most effectually strengthen the impressions which we seek to make. When both these ends are answered, we certainly accomplish every purpose for which we use Writing and Discourse.

BLAIR.

ENGLISH BIBLE.

The present authorised Version of the English Bible, translated from the original tongues, or revised from the Bishop's Bible, (so called,) by order of King James the first, has afforded abundant edification and comfort, to the simple and sincere reader; and by the learned, it has been admired, for its faithfulness, and for the purity of its style. After the lapse of upwards of two hundred years since its translation, and notwithstanding the improvement which the language has undergone in the course of that time, with but very few and unimportant exceptions, the English Bible is still considered to be, the standard of the English Language.

When the Bible is compared with the style of the best, and purest writers contemporary with the translation, its superlative excellence seldom fails to excite astonishment; and persons are ready to enquire, has not the Bible undergone a revision since that time? With a desire to satisfy a laudable curiosity on this head, and to give our readers an opportunity of knowing, or revising in their recollection, how this translation or revision originated, the names and situations of the persons by whom it was effected; the directions by which they were governed, the space of time occupied in the work; and the opinions of some learned and good men as to its merits,—we copy the following article from the General Preface to the Rev. Dr. A. C. ANKER'S Commentary. And in the mean time we earnestly recommend the Bible itself, that precious Book, containing a full revelation of the will of God to man, to the frequent perusal, and prayerful consideration of our readers.

"Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of his prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein."—Rev. 1. 3.—E. JOURNAL.

"Of the COPY of the sacred text used for this work, it may be necessary to say a few words. It is stated in the title, that the Text "is taken from the most correct copies of the present authorized version." As several use this term, who do not know its meaning, for their sakes I shall explain it. A resolution was formed, in consequence of a request made by Dr. Reynolds, head of the Nonconformist party, to King James I. in the Conference held at Hampton-Court, 1603, that a New Translation, or rather a revision of what was called the Bishop's Bible, printed in 1568, should be made. Fifty-four Translators, divided into six classes, were appointed for the accomplishment of this important work. Seven of these appear to have died before the work commenced, is only forty-seven are found in Fuller's List. The names of the persons, the places where employed, and the proportion of work allotted to each class, and the rules laid down by King James for their direction, I give chiefly from Mr. Fuller's Church History. Book x. pp. 44, &c.

Before I insert this account, it may be necessary to state Dr. Reynolds's request in the Hampton-Court Conference, and King James's answer.

Dr. Reynolds. "May your Majesty be pleased that the Bible be new translated: such as are exact not answering the original." [Here he gave a few examples.]

Bishop of London. "If every man's humour might be followed, there would be no end of translating."

The King. "I profess I could never yet see a Bible well translated in English; but I think, that of all, that of Geneva is the worst. I wish some special pains were taken for an uniform Translation, which should be done by the best learned in both Universities; then reviewed by the Bishops; presented to the Privy Council, lastly, ratified by Royal authority, to be read in the whole Church, and no other."

The Bishop of London in this, as in every other case, opposed Dr. Reynolds, till he saw that the project pleased the King, and that he appeared determined to have it executed. In consequence of this Resolution, the following learned and judicious men were chosen for the execution of the Work.

WESTMINSTER.

The Pentateuch: the Story from Joshua, to the first Book of the Chronicles exclusively.

10.

Doctor Andrews, Fellow and Master of Pembroke

Hell, in Cambridge: then Dean of Westminster, afterwards Bishop of Winchester.

Dr. Orrell, Fellow of Trinity Coll. Master of Kath. Hall, in Cambridge: then Dean of St. Paul's, afterwards Bishop of Norwich.

Dr. Scrivia.

Dr. Clarke, Fellow of Christ Coll. in Cambridge, Preacher in Canterbury.

Dr. Laiffeld, Fellow of Trin. in Cambridge, Parson of St. Clement Dances. Being skilled in architecture, his judgment was much relied on for the fabric of the Tabernacle and Temple.

Dr. Leigh, Archdeacon of Middlesex, Parson of All-hallows's, Barking.

Master Burgley.

Dr. King.

Mr. Thompson.

Dr. Hedwilt, of Cambridge, and (I think) of St. John's Vicar of Tottenhama, nigh Loudon.

CAMBRIDGE.

From the First of the Chronicles, with the rest of the Story, and the Hagiographia viz: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Canticles, Ecclesiastics.

8

Master Edward Livly.

Mr. Richardson, Fellow of Emman, afterwards D. D. Master, first of Peter-house, then of Trinity Coll.

Mr. Chaterdon, afterwards D. D. Fellow, first of Christ Coll. then Master of Emmanuel.

Mr. Dillingham, Fellow of Christ Coll. beneficed at — in Bedfordshire, where he died a single and wealthy man.

Mr. Andrews, afterwards D. D. brother to the Bishop of Winchester, and Master of Jesus Coll.

Mr. Harrison, the Rev. Vice-Master of Trinity College.

Mr. Spidding, Fellow of St. John's, in Cambridge, and Hebrew Professor therein.

Mr. Bigg, Fellow of Peter-house, in Cambridge, and Hebrew Professor therein.

OXFORD.

The four greater Prophets, with the Lamentations, and the twelve lesser Prophets.

7.

Dr. Harding, President of Magdalen Coll.

Dr. Reynolds, President of Corpus Christi Coll.

Dr. Holland, Rector of Exeter Coll. and King's Professor.

Dr. Kirby, Rector of Lincoln Coll. and Regius Professor.

Master Smith, afterwards D. D. and Bishop of Gloucester. He made the learned and religious Preface to the Translation.

Mr. Brett, of a worshipful family, beneficed at Quinton, in Buckinghamshire.

Mr. Fairclowe.

CAMBRIDGE.

The Prayer of Manassah, and the rest of the Apocrypha.

7.

Dr. Duport, Prebend of Ely, and Master of Jesus College.

Dr. Braithwaite, first, Fellow of Emmanuel, then Master of Gonvil and Caius Coll.

Dr. Rindlyffe, one of the Senior Fellows of Trin. College.

Master Ward, Emman. afterwards D. D. Master of Sidney Coll. and Margaret Professor.

Mr. Downs, Fellow of St. John's Coll. and Greek Professor.

Mr. Boyce, Fellow of St. John's Coll. Prebend of Ely, Parson of Barroorth in Cambridgeshire.

Mr. Ward, Regal, afterwards D. D. Prebend of Chichester, Rector of Bishop-Waltham, in Hampshire.

OXFORD.

The Four Gospels, Acts of the Apostles, Apocalypsc.

8.

Doctor Ravis, Dean of Christ-church, afterwards Bishop of London.

Dr. Abbot, Master of University Coll. afterwards Archbp. of Canterbury.

Dr. Eedes.

Mr. Thomson.

Mr. Savill.

Dr. Peryn.

Dr. Ravens.

Mr. Hamer.

WESTMINSTER.

The Epistles of St. Paul, and the Canonical Epistles.

7.

Doctor Barlowe, of Trinity Hall, in Cambridge Dean of Chester, afterwards Bishop of Lincoln.

Dr. Hutchenson.

Dr. Spencer.

Mr. Fenton.

Mr. Rablat.

Mr. Sanderson.

Mr. Dakins.

"Now, for the better ordering of their proceedings, His Majesty recommended the following rules, by them to be most carefully observed.

1. The ordinary Bible read in the Church, commonly called the Bishop's Bible, to be followed, and as little altered as the original will permit.

2. The names of the Prophets, and the Holy writers, with their other names in the text, to be retained as near as may be, accordingly as they are vulgarly used.

3. The old ecclesiastical words to be kept, viz. as the word (Church) not to be translated Congregation, &c.

4. When any word hath divers significations, that to be kept which hath been most commonly used by the most eminent Fathers, being agreeable to the propriety of the place, and the analogy of Faith.

5. The division of the Chapters to be altered either not at all, or as little as may be, if necessity so require.

6. No marginal notes at all to be affixed, but only for the explanation of the Hebrew or Greek words, which cannot, without some circumlocution, so briefly and fitly to be expressed in the text.

7. Such quotations of places to be marginally set down, as shall serve for the fit reference of one Scripture to another.

8. Every particular man of each company to take the same Chapter, or Chapters; and having translated or amended them severally by himself, where he thinks good, all to meet together, confer what they have done, and agree for their part what shall stand.

9. As any one company hath dispatched any one book in this manner, they shall send it to the rest, to be considered of seriously and judiciously; for His Majesty is very careful in this point.

10. If any company, upon the review of the book so sent, shall doubt, or differ upon any places, to send them word thereof, note the places, and therewithal send their reasons: to which, if they consent not, the difference to be compounded at the general meeting, which is to be of the chief persons of each company, at the end of the work.

11. When any place of special obscurity is doubted of, letters to be directed by authority, to send to any learned in the land, for his judgment in such a place.

12. Letters to be sent from every Bishop to the rest of his Clergy, admonishing them of this Translation in hand; and to move and charge as many as, being skillful in the tongues, have taken pains in that kind, to send his particular observations to the company, either at Westminster, Cambridge, or Oxford.

13. The Directors in each company to be the Deans of Westminster and Chester for that place; and the King's Professors in Hebrew and Greek in each University.

14. These Translations to be used, when they agree better with the text than the Bishop's Bible, viz. { Tindol's, Matthews, Coverdale's, Wicheursh, Geneva.

"Besides the said directions before-mentioned, three or four of the most ancient and grave Divines in either of the Universities, not employed in translating, to be assigned by the Vice-chancellor upon conference with the rest of the heads, to be overseers of the Translations, as well Hebrew as Greek, for the better observation of the fourth rule above specified.—

"And now after long expectation and great desire," says Mr. Fuller, "came forth the new translation of the Bible (most beautifully printed) by a select and competent number of Divines appointed