

only the Baptist Union and the Congregational Union of Scotland, among the dissenting representative bodies, sent delegates.

The holding of the Conference produced no perceptible impression on the public mind at the time, but it satisfied and encouraged its projectors. Mr. Miall himself described it as "the season of blossoming;" declared it to be a fact out of which "something real and tangible must hereafter grow."

The first borough which Mr. Miall contested was that of Southwark, in 1845, a contest in which the editor of the *INDEPENDENT* took an active part in support of Mr. Miall, as he is proud to remember, and on this occasion the principles of what is now known as the "Liberation Society" were, for the first time, brought before any constituency. 1845 was not, however, 1880. The constituency which, in the latter year, returned two anti-State men to the House of Commons, rejected Mr. Miall in favor of Sir William Molesworth.

After several contests Mr. Miall was elected for Bradford, in 1868, without even being present.

It is impossible, with the space at our command, further to follow the very full and interesting sketch. Never resting, keeping the one object of his life steadily before him, in the press, on the platform and in Parliament Mr. Miall had the satisfaction of seeing a mighty change come over the minds of Nonconformists themselves in relation to the great question of a State-Church. Disestablishment took place in Ireland, the "entering wedge" as it was termed, but constant strain and labor told upon a never robust frame, and gradually he had to give up all literary work.

On the anniversary of his seventieth birthday, in May, 1879, Mr. Miall was much cheered by the visit of a deputation of his political friends and colleagues at his residence at Forest-hill, who came to present him with an address of congratulation on his having attained this age. Amongst the visitors on this occasion were Mr. Bright, who spoke in very warm and touching terms of Mr. Miall's past career, and of his long personal acquaintance with him, and Mr. Henry Richard, his life-long friend. This interchange of friendly sentiments at that time was not only pleasant but beneficial to Mr. Miall, who, while losing none of his interest in the course of political events, was beginning to feel rather keenly the isolation which was involved in his continued retirement. The result of the General Election last spring also favorably affected Mr. Miall's general condition of health. He was no exception to the rule in being taken aback by the overwhelming force and unanimity of the national response to Lord Beaconsfield's challenge.

Mr. Miall's illness was of short duration, life slowly ebbing away, he died almost without pain on Friday, April 29th. And so he passed over to join the great company who rest from their labors and whose works do follow them.

THE REVISED NEW TESTAMENT.

The majority of our readers have no doubt had the long-looked-for

Revision of the New Testament in their hands before this, and have more or less made up their minds as to their attitude towards it—approval, condemnation, or a more extended and patient investigation before a conclusion is reached. The excitement caused by the issue of the book has been unprecedented—never before was any book awaited with such widespread anxiety; never before were so many copies, or even, perhaps, a hundredth part so many, prepared before the issue, reaching, it is said, no less than two millions, while the number of unauthorized copies already printed, or to be printed, on this continent, will probably soon exceed the first issue. We are told that a Chicago newspaper had a large portion of it telegraphed from New York, and published on the day after its issue there; while more than a week ago we saw it complete in two issues of the "Seaside Library"—and, by the way, it was very conveniently arranged, as the old and the new versions were printed side by side. We would not, however, advise our readers to possess themselves of these American reprints;—they have been issued at such an excessively high pressure to be in the market first, that without very careful examination we should hesitate to receive them as strictly accurate. Here, however, is the great fact, that for a time a tremendous impetus has been given to the reading of the New Testament, and this may be, who knows, the precursor of a development of its power that shall exceed anything that has gone before.

But, it is asked on all sides does it make any changes in doctrine? does it affect any of the denominational ideas? A moment's reflection would show that this is not likely to be; all texts which may have been used for theological or ecclesiastical artillery, have for centuries been examined with the keenest criticism by friend and foe, have been analyzed, dissected, turned inside out, and if there has been really any question about them, their authenticity or correct translation, they have long ago been abandoned as useless weapons, and their disappearance from the text was a foregone conclusion which disturbs no one. Such texts as Acts viii. 37, and 1 John v. 7 (we see the revisers divide v. and vi. so as to retain the same number of verses; better have omitted that number as in Acts) are of this character.

There have also disappeared some texts which have troubled readers that did not know their doubtful character, transcribers' comments which crept into the text, as John v. 3, 4. One portion which we regret to lose is the doxology at the close of the Lord's prayer, Matt. vi. 13. It has always seemed to us a fitting close to that divine series of petitions; but it is, without doubt, we suppose, an interpolation, and not a very early one.

On the other hand, we find that some texts, respecting which doubts have been expressed, are acknowledged by the revisers as genuine, and find an unquestioned place in the text, such as 1 John ii. 23, the last clause, which in our authorized version is printed in italics, as doubtful, why, it is difficult now to say.

Some little violation of ideas as derived from texts will be found in the change of tense in many passages which the original absolutely requires, as in Romans v. 1, 2, though in all three of the changes made in these two verses the original is retained in notes as alternate readings.

Perhaps it would be best to take one chapter to serve as a specimen of the changes made, and why made; and we select just because it is a well known chapter, the third of John's Gospel, containing the conversation with Nicodemus. In this chapter of thirty-six verses, there are fifty-nine changes, nearly ten to every six verses. Large as we may think this number compared with what we had expected, it is yet below the average of the whole book, that being, according to the Bishop of Gloucester, nine changes to every five verses, or not far from two in every verse from Matthew to Revelation, a startling statement on the face of it. By way of comparison we may say that Dean Alford's New Testament, thought by many to be far too radical in its changes, gives in this same third of John forty-six variations from the authorized version. Of these fifty-nine changes in the revised text, the bulk are grammatical corrections, some are transpositions of sentences, some a change of word, and some a slight change of statement, not one affecting the teaching of the gospel in the remotest degree. A natural question will be asked, Why all these alterations if nothing is gained, if none were absolutely needed? The answer to that question will depend upon our ideas as to the intention and duty of the revision; if for us alone, why disturb texts and associations of ideas that are interwoven into the texture of our religious life and thought—why touch what has become sacred to us? But if it is to be a work for posterity, if it is for our children, whose association of words and phrases is yet unformed, then it may be said, Let us give them these Scriptures in the most exact counterpart of the original that we are able. On such grounds, and on such grounds alone, is so extensive an alteration in minor details permissible. Will, however, our children be benefited by the changes? Still with this chapter before us, let us examine.

In v. 2 "signs" is substituted for "miracles." Seeing that Alford retains "miracles," and that "signs" is an ambiguous word, we can hardly think that the translation of the passage imperatively required it. The phrase in vs. 3 and 7, "born again," and which has become a part of the phraseology of our literature of regeneration, is changed to "born anew." We confess ourselves unable to see what compensating advantage will follow from the change, to be "born again" conveying in its fullest sense the idea of the new birth, in no other way is it used. In verse 8 we have "canst not tell" changed to "knowest not," a change that is really no change, and only disturbs a strong, terse utterance. Again, in v. 11 we have "testify," changed to "bear witness," on the principle of rendering the same Greek word uniformly by the same English word; but

surely our older translators were wiser who thought it permissible to use a perfectly synonymous word to avoid a repetition of the same. If the same principle is to be rigidly carried out in the Old Testament revision, and the narrow range of the Hebrew is to limit the translation, our whole Bible will be a very shallow well of pure English. In v. 15 we have a transposition which is disturbing, to say nothing of the omission of the antithesis, which Alford retains, "that whosoever believeth may in Him have eternal life." The form and the antithesis are, however, preserved in the next verse. Why, again, in v. 20, substitute "ill" for "evil?" it is only a weakening of the idea. We do not pursue the analysis after the close of the conversation with Nicodemus. It is not too much to say that many of the changes are unnecessary—do not improve the thought, and with either idea of the object of the translation were not desirable. There are changes in other parts to which we strongly object, for instance, Matt. iv. 19, the call of Peter and Andrew, we read—"Come after me," instead of the old, vigorous, comprehensive "Follow me." To follow—to be a follower of Christ has a meaning and an association which we look for in vain in the substitution. In John i. 43 the old form is retained, as in some other places.

That light will be thrown upon many passages by the revision is undoubted. Take as an instance the S. S. Lesson of Sunday, May 22—Luke xix. 13—"Occupy till I come," is more correctly given—"Trade ye herewith till I come;" the word "occupy" has lost its old meaning, though we retain it in occupation; also in same verse, "ten servants of his" (why not "ten of his servants?") for "his ten servants?" So, again, in Matt. xiv. 8, "instructed" gives place and properly to "put forward"—that is, urged on. It would take a volume—more than one—to give anything like a comprehensive review of the changes made, many of which are undoubtedly excellent, and by which the revisers have laid the Christian Church under a lasting debt of gratitude, others, we venture to think, bold as may be the suggestion, while critically exact, perhaps, bring in disturbance without giving fresh light, strength, or beauty.

These remarks are from the standpoint of our common English tongue, we hope to present shortly a critical review from the pen of a competent Greek scholar. His opinions may in some points be at variance with our own, none the less would we ask attention to them. The condition of the whole matter, to our mind, is this, although we present it with some hesitation, as a complete analysis is a work of time, that the present revision will not be acceptable to the great body of English-speaking Christians, especially in the Old Country, that it will not be authorized as it is, but that extensive modification will have to be made before its universal reception—that, in fact, this revision will have to be revised.

HONOR TO MOFFAT.

A unique gathering, so far as regards the place, was held at the