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THE REVISED NEW TESTAMENT.

As we anticipated, before our paper of last week, with our few observations upon this important subject, had reached our readers, the book itself was upon our table, and, doubtless, was in the hands of very many of our subscribers. We have had time only to glance through its pages, and to compare in but few places the old with the new; but what little we have seen of it makes us feel, on the whole, much better pleased than we were led to suppose we would be by the examination. Some changes, we feel sure, will be heartily approved, others, we think, will be as deeply regretted; but the general verdict, if we mistake not, will be one of satisfaction that so gigantic an undertaking, attended with much danger, has been so happily completed. That those of our readers who have not yet come into possession of the book may have a good idea of the manner in which the work has been done, we give them, in the Revisers own words, the early history and origin of the movement, the spirit which controlled it, and the principles and rules which governed the Committees. They say of their work in the Preface of the book:—

"The present Revision had its origin in action taken by the Convocation of the Province of Canterbury in February 1870, and it has been conducted throughout on the plan laid down in Resolutions of both Houses of the Province, and, more particularly, in accordance with Principles and Rules drawn up by a special Committee of Convocation in the following May. Two Companies, the one for the revision of the Authorized Version of the Old Testament, and the other for the revision of the same Version of the New Testament, were formed in the manner specified in the Resolutions, and the work was commenced on the twenty-second day of June, 1870. Shortly afterwards, steps were taken, under a resolution passed by both Houses of Convocation, for inviting the co-operation of American scholars; and eventually two Committees were formed in America, for the purpose of acting with the two English Companies, on the basis of the Principles and Rules drawn up by the Committee of Convocation.

The fundamental Resolutions adopted by the Convocation of Canterbury on the third and fifth days of May, 1870, were as follows:—

1. That it is desirable that a revision of the Authorized Version of the Holy Scriptures be undertaken.

2. That the revision be so conducted as to comprise both marginal renderings and such emendations as it may be found necessary to insert in the text of the Authorized Version.

3. That in the above resolutions we do not contemplate any new translation of the Bible, or any alteration of the language, except where, in the judgment of the most competent scholars, such change is necessary.

4. That in such necessary changes, the style of the language employed in the existing Version be closely followed.

5. That it is desirable that Convocation should nominate a body of its own members to undertake the work of revision, who shall be at liberty to invite the co-operation of any eminent for scholarship, to whatever nation or religious body they may belong.

That the Principles and Rules agreed to by the Committee of Convocation on the twenty-fifth day of May, 1870, were as follows:—

1. To introduce as few alterations as possible into the Text of the Authorized Version consistently with faithfulness.

2. To limit, as far as possible, the expression of such alterations to the language of the Authorized and earlier English Versions.

3. Each Company to go twice over the portion to be revised, once provisionally, the second time finally, and on principles of voting as hereinafter is provided.

4. That the Text to be adopted be that for which the evidence is decidedly preponderating;

and that when the Text so adopted differs from that from which the Authorized Version was made, the alteration be indicated in the margin.

5. To make or retain no change in the Text on the second final revision by each Company, except two thirds of those present approve of the same, but on the first revision to decide by simple majorities.

6. In every case of proposed alteration that may have given rise to discussion, to defer the voting thereupon till the next Meeting, whensoever the same shall be required by one third of those present at the Meeting, such intended vote to be announced in the notice for the next Meeting.

7. To revise the headings of chapters and pages, paragraphs, italics and punctuation.

8. To refer, on the part of each Company, when considered desirable, to Divines, Scholars, and Literary Men, whether at home or abroad, for their opinions.

These rules it has been our endeavour faithfully and consistently to follow. One only of them we found ourselves unable to observe in all particulars. In accordance with the seventh rule, we have carefully revised the paragraphs, italics, and punctuation. But the revision of the headings of chapters and pages would have involved so much of indirect, and, indeed, frequently of direct interpretation, that we judged it best to omit them altogether.

"The whole time devoted to the work has been ten years and a half. The First Revision occupied about six years; the Second, about two years and a half. The remaining time has been spent in the consideration of the suggestions from America on the Second Revision, and of many details and reserved questions arising out of our own labours. As a rule, a session of four days has been held every month (with the exception of August and September) in each year from the commencement of the work in June, 1870. The average attendance for the whole time has been sixteen each day; the whole Company consisting at first of twenty-seven, but for the greater part of the time of twenty-four members, many of them residing at great distances from London. Of the original number four have been removed from us by death."

The best thing we can do is to advise our readers to get the book at once, and compare very carefully the New with the Authorized Version, and where changes have been made to satisfy themselves as to their import.

However much some may deny the necessity or wisdom of the undertaking, we must all feel devoutly thankful to God that an unparalleled interest has been awakened in the reading and study of His Holy Word; and in whatever spirit its examination may be approached, the prayer of every Christian heart will be that a great multitude may, by its perusal, be made "wise unto salvation."

THE N. S. DEFICIENCY FUND.

We wish to make a final appeal to our readers in the interests of this Fund. On the 24th of February the Lord Bishop of the Diocese was good enough to offer of \$250, if within three months \$750 additional was subscribed towards reducing the debt of \$4000 now hanging over the Diocese. It was to have been expected that without any delay at least the amount required would have been made up, and the Bishop's generous gift secured. But no, the three months have expired, and \$200 is still wanting to complete the amount. On any other subject, or for any other less urgent matter, we should not have felt at all disposed to trouble ourselves further, but so necessary do we feel it to be in the interests of every Mission in the Diocese that a reduction should be made in the debt rather than in the grants now severally made to them, that we have taken upon ourselves to ask his Lordship to extend the time until the 1st July, which he has very generously and willingly consented to do. We now make bold for the last time to call the attention of the Clergy and Laity to the subject, with the full confidence that his Lordship's kind forbearance will stimulate them to immediate action. It cannot surely be regarded as an unnecessary alarm, or as an unreasonable request. The Board of Home Missions will positively have to reduce the grants, and will probably do so at its July meeting, unless sufficient evidence has been afforded them that the Clergy and people mean to take a more active and liberal interest in the Fund than they have heretofore done.

The grave is the place to study ambition. Approach the tomb of the proud man, and there investigate his pride. The piercing eye that convulsed the world with fear, is covered with a midnight gloom; the formidable arm that disturbed the destinies of mankind, is now without motion or life. How different with the true Christian! The Saviour was precious to him, and the thought of heaven ever present with him, and his end was peace.

SOMETHING OF THE LITERARY HISTORY OF THE BIBLE.

No. I.—(Continued.)

Compiled by the Curate of Yarmouth.

A great deal of interesting information might be collected from learned sources upon the mode and materials employed in writing the Books of the Bible by the earliest authors; and we might allow ourselves to have this in view, if we should have the opportunity of continuing our classes another season. Just now I will be content with saying that a papyrus is now in existence in Europe, which scholars of high authority in such matters, have shown to be of the time of Cheops, more than 2000 years before Christ, and considerably before the time of Abraham. Before God, with His own hand, had written the Decalogue on the two Tables of Stone, He had commanded Moses to write the important transactions which occurred during the progress of the Israelites from Egypt to Canaan, for in Exod. xvii. 14 it is written, "And the Lord said unto Moses, 'Write this for a memorial in a book.'"

It is probable that on some occasions the old Prophets employed secretaries to write at their dictation. When Baruch, at the request of the princes, read the warnings of Jeremiah in their ears, they asked him, "Tell us now, how didst thou write all these words at his mouth?" Then Baruch answered them, "He pronounced all these words unto me with his mouth, and I wrote them with ink in the book." (Jer. xxxvi. 17, 18.) "The Book" was a roll, perhaps of skins fastened together, and if I may venture so boldly as to describe it from one of the Synagogue rolls, now in the British Museum, among the Harleian MSS. No. 7,619, it was fastened at each end to a roller with handles. In reading from right to left, Baruch would roll off with the left hand, while he rolled on with the right. Such, at least, was the method in use in the later worship of the Synagogue, and such a roll was that from which the Saviour read the Lesson, when, "as His custom was, He went into the Synagogue at Nazareth on the Sabbath Day, and stood up for to read." (St. Luke iv. 16.) The word which in verse 17 is translated "opened," means literally, "unrolled."

The writers of the New Testament very probably wrote with their own hands the Books which bear their names, except, of course, St. Paul. He employed a scribe, or amanuensis, for all his Epistles, save that to the Galatians. In Romans xvi. 22 the scribe on that occasion, whose name was Tertius, unites his own affectionate greeting with those of St. Paul. But in order that the congregations to whom these letters were sent might know them to be genuine, the Apostle invariably wrote at least the benediction with his own hand—"The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every Epistle, so I write, 'The grace,' etc." (2 Thess. iii. 17, 18.) A similar distinction is found in 1 Cor. (16-21), and in the Epistle to the Church people of Colosse (4-18). Beside this Epistle to the whole congregation of Colosse, there was another written to an individual member, perhaps an officer of the same Church, named Philemon. It is debated whether this was an autograph letter of St. Paul's or no. Certainly the 18th and 19th verses were so written by himself. "If he (Onesimus) hath wronged thee or oweth thee ought put that on mine account; I, Paul, have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it."

A theory, which I will just now characterize only as ingenious, has been suggested to account for the Apostle's employing a scribe to write at his dictation instead of writing for himself. It is to the effect that God, for the purposes of His Providence, did not allow His servant to regain his full sight after that blaze of miraculous light which blinded him on the road to Damascus; that this partial blindness was the "thorn in the flesh" of which he speaks in 2 Cor. xii. 7. In support of this theory, the Epistle to the Galatians is referred to. The Apostle there says (vi. 11) that he wrote the letter with his own hand, and he apparently speaks of its great length, "See how large a letter." But the letter, it is urged, is not long; it is among the shortest, and the literal translation of the words is, "See in how large letters," from which it has been concluded that the Apostle's weakness of sight caused him to write in unsightly and straggling characters.

Allow me to add here one matter more. The subscriptions at the end of St. Paul's Epistles,—they are not added to any other of the Books of the New Testament,—are all the work of comparatively later years, and are manifestly spurious, since some of them contradict both Chronology and History. Bishop Horne says: "For instance, according to the subscriptions to I. and II. Thessalonians, those Epistles were written at Athens, whereas they were written at Corinth. The subscription to I. Corinthians states that it was written at Philippi; notwithstanding it appears from chapter xvi. 8 and 19, that the Apostle was at that time in Asia. . . . And the subscription to the First Epistle to Timothy evidently was not, and indeed could not have been written by the Apostle Paul: for it states that Epistle to have been written from Phrygia Pacatiana; whereas the country of Phrygia was not divided into the two Provinces of Phrygia Pacatiana, or Prima, and Phrygia Secunda, until the fourth century. The author of these subscriptions, it is evident, was either grossly ignorant or grossly inattentive."

I have referred to the reverent care with which the Jews numbered even the letters of their Scriptures. For the information of the curious, I add here a table of the number of letters in our present English Translation; only taking care to say that I have not verified the figures:—

| Old Testament. | New Testament. |
|-----------------------------|----------------|
| 39.....Books..... | 27 |
| 929.....Chapters..... | 260 |
| 23,214.....Verses..... | 7,959 |
| 592,493.....Words..... | 181,253 |
| 2,728,100.....Letters..... | 838,380 |
| Total in the English Bible. | |
| Books..... | 66 |
| Chapters..... | 1,189 |
| Verses..... | 31,173 |
| Words..... | 773,746 |
| Letters..... | 3,566,480 |

"The middle chapter, and the shortest in the Bible, is the 117th Psalm; the middle verse is the 8th of the 118th Psalm. The 21st verse of the 7th chapter of Ezra, in the English Version, has all the letters of the Alphabet in it. The 19th chapter of II. Kings and the 37th chapter of Isaiah are alike."

NOTES FOR CONFIRMATION CLASSES.

By G. W. Hodgson, M. A.

VII.

The Eighth Article of the Creed: "I believe in the Holy Ghost." The term "Holy" is applied to the Blessed Spirit, because it is His special work to make holy—"He sanctifieth me and all the elect people of God." St. Matthew xxviii. 19, 2 Corinthians xiii. 14, speak of the Holy Ghost, together with Father and Son. Acts v. verse 3, compared with verse 4, and 1 Cor. iii. 16, compared with vi. 19, refer to Him as being a Divine Person. The Holy Ghost is God, the Athanasian Creed says. 1 Cor. ii. 11 speaks of the Spirit of God bearing the same relation to God that the spirit of man does to man. If the latter, then, is human, the former is Divine. At Pentecost, fire and a mighty wind were His symbols, i. e., light (of knowledge), heat (of love), and power. At our Blessed Lord's Baptism, His symbol was the dove—purity and gentleness. It is His special work to unite. He has already been mentioned in the Creed as effecting the Incarnation (St. Luke i. 35), uniting the Divine and human natures in the Person of Christ. It is His power that makes the Sacraments to be "effectual signs," uniting, so to speak, their inward part and outward part. A well-known hymn (208, A. and M.) suggests the thought of other uniting work—

"As Thou in bond of love dost join
The Father and the Son," etc.

As the sanctification of the elect is His special work, a few words on "election" will here be in place. St. Paul most decidedly teaches predestination and election. You will find this in his Epistles to the Romans and Ephesians, as well as elsewhere. God chooses some to higher spiritual knowledge and privileges than others; places them in His Church. But now get out of your mind, if it has ever been in, the thought that your religion is intended only to save your soul, and that for that purpose alone you have been placed amongst the elect,—a most selfish, unworthy thought. Take one of the very earliest instances of election, that of Abraham (refer to Genesis xii. 2). Particularly notice two reasons there given for his election. One, "I will bless thee;" but that is not the only one; there is another, equally important—"Thou shalt be a blessing. So God chooses His elect to be a blessing to those who are not the elect. We can believe in election without believing in reprobation. God's living mercies are over "all His works;" surely all souls of men are included in that list. But He chooses some first that He may bless them; then that they may be a blessing. There is a most remarkable instance of this way of working to be found in an event in our Lord's life. The very fact of its being a brief, single event makes it the more remarkable, as though this law were always at work. See St. Luke xxii. 31, 32: "Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you (plural, you all), that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee . . . and when thou art converted strengthen thy brethren." Our Blessed Lord had His purposes of love for all; therefore He elected one for whom He would pray. How clearly this proves that election shows God's love and care for all, and not for the elect alone. Thank God that He has placed you among His elect, and pray that you may make your calling and election sure, may yield to the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit and be a blessing.

Having expressed our belief in the "One Spirit," we next express our belief in the "One Body" (Eph. iv. 4), in the words of the Ninth Article of the Creed, "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints." As the soul or spirit of man acts in and by the body in which it dwells, so the Spirit of Christ acts in and by the Body of Christ, of which Body we are members. God has shown us that it is His will not to save a man separately from all others; but to place him in a community, in a body, and so to put him in a "state of salvation." So in what God calls upon men here to do; it is not to work alone, but as members of a society. But this society is not a mere human association, such as the Free Masons, Odd-Fellows