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THE TRIUMPH OF THE BIBLE.

BY THE BISHOP OF ROCHESTER.

A Sermon preached at St. Paul's Cathedral on behalf of the British and Foreign Bible Society, on May 6, 1879.

"Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away."—MARK xiii. 31.

Five men were sitting together on the Mount of Olives; four were listening and one was speaking. It was evening in spring, and as the setting sun smote the gold and ivory of Herod's temple with its crimson splendour, the sudden blaze of colour perhaps stirred one of them into an ecstasy of surprise, and out of an eager entreaty to his Master to observe and admire what hitherto he had seemed to regard with a sort of cold sadness, grew this prophetic discourse: "Do I see those stones? Of course I do; and I see beyond them, to the moment when mortal eye shall gaze on them no more; and while I behold my heart weeps. For what profits the beauty of a sepulchre that only hides corruption; and what is the shrine worth from which no worship ascends that can reach a holy God!" His entire heart seems to have glowed with a solemn fervour as He opened out the burden of the coming sorrow; and the consummation of it all was in the words of the text. Then, as we may be permitted to suppose, lifting up His hand to the paling sky, in which the first stars were already glimmering, and then round on the great battlements that frowned over the gorge of the Kedron, and the rugged gloomy hills that gird the city as with a cincture of fortresses, He said sadly and earnestly, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

What a boast it was! At first, indeed, not likely to be justified. In less than a week the betrayed Master, the dispersed followers, the malignant priesthood, the vacillating governor, the scourging, the crowning, the cross, the grave, hardly looked like the triumph of One, who, however innocent, had fallen into the hands of His enemies; who, though a king with a crown

on Him, died a death of shame. Yet wait, and all is changed. The tomb emptied, the soldiers scattered, the council baffled, the disciples convinced, the portents of Pentecost, the baptism of the multitude, the terror of Herod, the boldness of Stephen—what do these prove, but that the words of Christ lived, moved, and conquered after all! Little by little the heaven spreads, and the conflict thickens, and the light grows, until the most vital and aggressive and irresistible and unmanageable power on the earth is the society of believers in a crucified Jesus; and a temple made without hands, in the place of the temple made with hands, grows stately and strong, clothed with the glory of God. My friends, all that is happening still, will go on happening till the Word made flesh comes back in His glory; and our gathering here to day is an instance of it. For this sentence of Christ declares a marked and everlasting contrast between what looks permanent, but is really transitory, and what looks transitory but is really permanent; between Heaven and earth on one side, and Christ's words on the other. Heaven and earth are, of course, the figures of a parable, and we may explain them in their marked contrast with the word of Christ, either in that material sense which lies on the surface—the firmament with its twinkling worlds, and the earth with its seas and rivers, its cities and palaces, its smiling vineyards and its everlasting hills; or in a more spiritual sense, yet really cognate to the meaning of the text, either as empire in antagonism to religion, or as the visible organization, framework, and ritual of the Church on earth when compared with her resurrection life in that heavenly city of which it is said there is no temple there.

We shall always worship, but forms will have passed away; we shall always be thinking, and weighing, and learning, but by new symbols, and perhaps a new language; for the glass in which we now see darkly there will be the vision of God; one thing will remain, which I suppose we shall love and ponder and discuss and feed on as ever—the imperishable word of Christ.

For of this word, He says, it shall not pass away; but abide for evermore!

What does He mean by it?

In its primary sense it declares the entire fulfilment of that prophetic word that then left His lips. In a secondary yet not unimportant sense also, its principle is applicable to the volume of Holy Scripture as settled by the canon, and in that English version which we all so gladly use and so reverently love.

In his remarkable book, "The Bible in the Church," which I wish every member of this congregation would procure and master, Professor Westcott has shown by what slow degrees, and under what Divine guidance, what we now call the Holy Bible assumed its present form, and has rigidly maintained it from St. Athanasius's day down to our own. "The formation of the collection of Holy Scripture was according to natural laws. Slowly, and with an ever-deepening conviction, the Churches received after trial, and in some cases after doubt and contradiction, the books which we now receive. The judgment, which was in this manner the expression of the fulness of Christian life, was not confined in early times by rigid or uniform laws; the extreme limits of the collection were not marked out sharply, but rather, the outline was at times dim and wavering, yet not so as to be incapable of a satisfactory adjustment.

"In their origin the writings of the Apostles seem to have been both casual and fragmentary. But an instinctive reverence invested the immediate disciples of the Lord with a natural dignity, and their writings moulded the thoughts of those who succeeded them. Experience soon deepened and defined the impression of this Divine instinct. Controversy brought out the decisive authority of the apostolic texts. The corruption of the evangelic tradition, placed the simple grandeur of the four Gospels in clear pre-eminence. The words of the Apostles were placed more and more frequently by the side of the words of the Prophets; and as the whole Christian body realized the fulness of its common life, the teaching and the books, which had been in some sense the symbol of a part only, were ratified by the whole.

And all this came to pass without any sudden transition, or powerful personal influence." The result has been that for at least fifteen hundred years the canon of Scripture has remained unchanged, we might say, without either effort or desire to change it. Everything else in the world has changed again and again ; but Christ's word remains.

Yet Christ's sentence has a deeper meaning yet.

For His word has true and absolute everlastingness in the ideas which it expounds, in the morality which it creates, in the forces which it exerts, and in the results which it achieves.

To glance at only a few of its ideas. Here are four which not only seize and possess the imagination, but awe the reason, while they soothe and feed the heart. The Fatherliness of God revealed and reconciled in Christ ; so that the poor African, hunted for the slave market, may, if he only knew it, cry out to God above him : " Doubtless Thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not." Eternal life, God's present gift to mankind by Him in whom it dwells, His incarnate and only begotten Son, Who in humanity has won for us victory in the flesh, over the flesh, for the flesh, and freely communicates to us that nature in which He thus has triumphed, and in which we by His grace may triumph too. First, our sacrifice, then our food, ever our example. That by the simple and mighty power of faith this gift becomes ours, with all the righteousness it implies, and the grace it conveys, and the peace it bestows, and the holiness it compels, we humbly and meekly using those ordinances which usually and normally are the channels of it—the Sacraments of His presence. Once more : That circumstances have no power to hurt us ; nay, whatever they are, if we use them and master them, they must be conductors and reservoirs of blessing. Nay, that even sorrow, the darkest and saddest, may become a mighty power and an ineffable privilege, the mourner having his share in the promotion of the divine kingdom as well as the doer ; the mere patience and courage of the saintly sufferer edifying the Church and filling up the sorrow of his Lord.

Possibly these truths are familiar to us ; let us thank God they are so ; but they are the illumination and the regeneration of the world.

But Christ's word abides also in the morality which it creates. It is not too much to say that the Sermon on the Mount brought a new code of morality into the world, and the best proof of this is the bitter hatred with which the Pharisees encountered it, the unspeakable disdain with which the Pagan philosophy of the time crushed it under its heel. Christ may be said by His word to have created at least three moral virtues, which exist to this hour, as the immortal offspring of His word—for purity already had been the hereditary virtue of the Jews—humility, meekness, and pity. If they existed in any sense before Christ, it was only by sufferance, hidden away in a corner, permitted to women and children, and perhaps priests, but the bitter derision of strong men, and even denounced by statesmen as inevitable dissolvents of that vigorous selfishness which seemed necessary to the commonwealth. Workhouses for the destitute, asylums for the orphans, hospitals for the sick, almshouses for the unfortunate—paganism never even conceived of these, much less attempted them. The slave was but a chattel ; the pauper a victim.

You cannot even imagine of the loftiest of heathen moralists taking the trouble to disseminate the precepts of his philosophy among the masses of the artisans ; such an enterprise as that undertaken under the auspices and with the aid of this Society, for more than twenty years past, of selling the Bible among the crowded masses of the London poor, to St. sea or even Epictetus would not only have been ludicrous but inconceivable.

But it has all sprung from the word of Him, whose first sign was that He preached the Gospel to the poor, whose last utterance admonished His disciples, " By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another."

Again, Christ's word abides, and passes not away in the forces which it exerts. It is the power of God himself, the expression of His thoughts, the instrument of His purpose, the channel of His grace. The Epistle to the Hebrews says of it, "The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword." And St. Peter, "Being born again—by the word of God, which dwelleth and abideth for ever." And St. Paul, "The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." And our Lord, "The word which I have spoken, the same shall judge him on the last day." It challenges the intellect, and certainly no book in the world has been so bitterly attacked, so gallantly defended, so profoundly studied, and so universally read. It compels homage, even where it may not secure conviction. Those who attack it, admire it; and those who reject its claim to be the message of God, praise it as the supreme effort of humanity.

Once more: Christ's word abides in the results, of which we here this day are a visible, though an insignificant proof. "The Church is the offspring of the word"—the Church with all she is, has, and performs. "As Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it, with the washing of water by the word." The Church in her grand totality, as Christ's body, in her individual membership, shared by each separate Christian, in union with his Divine and immortal Head. You and I, my brethren, I say, are witnesses to it this evening.

That word has made us what we are, and given us what we possess. It defines our authority, sanctions our organisation, imposes our responsibilities, assures us our grace. Each of us for ourselves, in the secret of our own consciousness, knows what the Bible has done for us; each of us also sadly confesses how much more it might and could do, if we gave it the leisure it desires, and yielded it the obedience it deserves. For, indeed, it is the very presence and voice of Christ to us; when it is dark and stormy visiting us on the tossing sea, and saying, "It is I, be not afraid"; finding us out in the temple, whither we have fled from those who oppress us, and saying, "Dost thou believe on me?—I am He"; filling our solitude with a sweet and holy companionship, as near, as real, as blessed as if His very bodily presence were with us in the room; chiding us with wholesome reproof when self-love or laziness are tempting us; giving us God to our exceeding joy, when all that makes life happy seems utterly and irrecoverably gone.

It not only lights us to the grave, but across the grave; while it nerves us to be up and doing, it calms us to sit still and wait. It is ever beyond us and above us; yet its divineness is human; to our fickle changeableness it is the immovable assurance of the Divine faithfulness. The frivolous chattering of shallow unbelief or the cold scoffings of a defiant impiety dash on it like the white spray of the waves against a cliff of granite; but still it lives, and abides, and justifies itself, and never passes away, and never can pass away, while God is in heaven, and speaks from heaven to man.

And one result, yet to be named, is this British and Foreign Bible Society, which, in common with all missionary institutions of the Church, is the handmaid of that word which animates the hope it expresses, and inspires the activity it exerts, about the efforts of which we are met to-day in this august cathedral—mother church of that great Church of England which, with all her faults and shortcomings, has not yet forfeited her claim to be the one Church in the world which in her Articles so emphatically and nobly confesses that what is not read in Holy Scriptures, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation; which in her ordinal requires that daily, in her public services, at least four portions of Holy Scripture be read in the English tongue to the congregation, these not including the Psalms nor the Canticles, which amount to half as much again.

You will not think me too much encroaching on your time, if I conclude my sermon with a brief statement of the work and effort of this great Society, of which the operations lie truly and essentially at the foundation of

all other efforts for the spread of Christ's kingdom, and to which all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity may, without offence, be heartily invited to give their benediction and aid.

The work of the Society may in a certain sense be said to be twofold—that of *translating*, and that of *circulating* the Word of God. The total number of *versions* in which it circulates the Bible is two hundred and seventeen; that number including those translations in existence before it was founded, or versions made by kindred societies, but which it assists in circulating. The new versions or translations which it has itself undertaken amount to no less than one hundred and eighty-seven.

During the seventy-five years of its existence, it claims to have circulated no less than eighty-two million copies of the Word of God, whether in whole or in portions; and it is important to remark the impartiality shown by it to the various Christian communions.

In Africa the Society prints at its own expense the translations of Bishop Steere, Dr. Moffatt, and Bishop Crowther. The Anglican Societies for the Propagation of the Gospel and the Church Missionary Society are mainly dependent on this Society for the Scriptures circulated by their agents, as likewise are the Missionary Societies of the voluntary bodies. It is also delightful to observe the watchful and robust activity with which every opening is seized and welcomed for pushing on the work.

When our Indian troops were in Malta they were supplied with Bibles in their various languages. When Cyprus came under the English sway, a colporteur was despatched there, who has met with great success and received the warm support of the Greek archbishop. During the Russo-Turkish War neither trouble nor money was spared to take the Bible to the soldiers in camp, the sick and wounded in hospital, and the prisoners of war. At the recent Paris Exhibition a large number of Bibles were sold and given away; and in every country in Europe, in towns and villages and scattered dwellings, which no other agency can reach, the agents of this Society circulate the Word of Life.

There is yet one agency more of this Society, to which not to refer to-day (when we are still mourning for one into whose heart God put it to set it going, and by whose indomitable energy, mellow judgment, and sunny kindness, its great success, under God, was due) would be an unpardonable, if not an impossible, omission. I mean the Bible mission work among the poor of London, originated just twenty years ago in the parish of St. Giles, of which I for ten years was permitted to be rector, and the growth of which I have had the opportunity of watching and assisting from that time till now. During twenty-one years no less than one hundred and seventy-six thousand Bibles have been sold to the poor, many of them family Bibles paid for by dribblets of slow earnings extending over months. To this agency the Bible Society has contributed over £10,000 in grants of Bibles; and I leave you to judge for yourselves, who know what the Bible is to you, who can guess what other blessings of comfort, and prudence, and cleanliness, and even physical happiness true religion usually brings with it, what light to saddened hearts, what sweetness to morose tempers, what hope for crushed lives, what spring and energy to wills paralyzed by despair, what peace to sad consciences, what pureness to soiled and debased spirits, this book has brought to the homes of the London poor. Had I time or you patience, I could tell you of the awful words of gladness when the story of the Passion was first told them, as a very message from the skies; the slow lifting off as of a cloud of frozen bitterness from the heart when it was first explained that God really loved them, and that the Bible is His message of that love; of real and abiding transformation, enough, and more than enough, to make up for bitter and sickening disappointments; of families once wretched and squalid made bright and united through the message of the Gospel of peace. Let the Bible do its work, by itself, and as God sees fit, and it shall yet prove to be the instrument as well as the history of how God can raise the dead.

My friends, all of us here to-day believe in the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the glorious company of the Apostles, the goodly fellowship of the prophets, the noble army of martyrs, and we all bless and praise one God with one heart and voice for the gift of His written word. Those who wrote it and those who compiled it, those who translated it and those who expounded it: evangelists, who gave it to the world; doctors, who opened its secrets; martyrs, who bled for its honour; saints, who have lived and grown on its sweetness—they are a goodly company, and we are heirs to their inheritance, in possession of their wealthy land. St. John and St. Paul, Jerome and Ambrose, Wickliffe and Luther, Tyndale and Coverdale, Henry Martyn and William Carey—may we not add David Livingstone and Ellen Ranyard?—here is a chain of golden souls which knits the nineteenth century to the time before the Exodus; here is the noblest succession of which the Catholic Church can boast, of those who have built, kept, and cherished the oracles of God.

Our task to-day may be but an insignificant one, when compared to theirs. But sympathy is possible from all of us, and the surest way to learn the value of the Bible for our brother's salvation is first to have discovered it for our own. It has been said again and again, and it is no mere gasconade of rhetoric, that the surest safeguard for the liberty, for the intelligence, and for the godliness of a country, is the free circulation of the Bible. And so this day, from this pulpit, in this great church, and by the favour of its eminent rulers, who have done so much to make it a house of prayer for the masses of this metropolis, and from among whom one has lately gone forth to fill a foremost place in the English Church, whose vast erudition all must gratefully respect, and perhaps whose worst misfortune it is that it is almost impossible for him to fulfil the lofty expectations which English Christians have formed of his new career—I, a humble vice-president of this Society, but one of its truest friends and warmest supporters, say publicly, heartily, cheerfully to it, in the presence of its friends, "The Lord prosper thee: we wish thee good luck in the name of the Lord."

Bible Society Recorder.

TORONTO, 15TH JANUARY, 1880.

BOARD MEETINGS.

The Board of Directors met on Tuesday, December 9th, at the usual hour, and adjourned to the same hour on the 16th, when there was a more than usually full attendance. The Hon. G. W. Allan, President, was in the chair, and the meeting opened with the usual devotional exercises.

At the request of a number of Directors who objected to the protest which was received on the 11th of November, those who had signed and presented it, agreed, in view of certain proposed alterations in the by-laws and constitution of the Society, to have the protest withdrawn from the minutes of the meeting.

A Committee was appointed to draw up a code of rules for the future government of the proceedings of the Board, and to suggest such alterations in the Constitution as may be considered desirable: the Committee to be the President, the Treasurer, the Rev. Dr. Reid, the Rev. Dr. Potts, John Mac-

donald, Esq., J. K. Macdonald, Esq., Warring Kennedy, Esq., Dr. Geikie, and the Secretaries.

Reports were submitted from the following agents: The Revds. J. G. Manly, J. Alexander, O. R. Lambly, J. Learoyd, S. Kappelé, H. D. Hunter, E. Cockburn, and E. M. C. Botterill.

Colporteurs' reports were submitted from Messrs. Lowry, McPhail, Taylor and Rouleau; some grants of Scriptures were made and other business transacted, and the meeting was closed with prayer.

The Quarterly Meeting of the Board was held on Tuesday, January 13th, at 7.30 p.m., the Hon. G. W. Allan in the chair. The ordinary business was transacted and reports submitted from the following agents: the Revds. J. G. Manly, John Gray, Dr. Bell, Dr. O'Meara, Jas. Carmichael, T. M. Reikie and J. Alexander. Colporteurs' reports were submitted from Messrs. McPhail, Taylor and Rouleau. A letter was read from the Secretary of the Quebec Bible Society, expressing the gratitude of that Society for the annual grant made by this Society in support of their French Colportage. Some extracts were read from the reports of the French Colporteur which had been sent, that the Board of this Society might judge of the nature and importance of this work.

RETIREMENT OF THE REV. CHARLES JACKSON.

All friends of the Society, and especially those who have experienced his courtesy when visiting the Bible House in London, will regret to hear that the Rev. Charles Jackson has been obliged by the state of his health, to retire from the Secretaryship of our great Parent, the British and Foreign Bible Society. A minute was adopted by the Committee at their November meeting, expressing their deep regrets that his health should require such a step, and recognizing with satisfaction the ability and conscientiousness with which he has discharged the important and responsible duties of the office, which he has held for nearly eighteen years.

EXTRACTS FROM THE MONTHLY REPORTER OF THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

"JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH."

"We have another colporteur in Switzerland at work among the Catholics in Berne and Soleure. His is a case in which faithfulness, earnestness, and deep love for his work and for the souls of men make up, and more than make up, for brilliant gifts. He is very successful. Let me introduce him by the following extract from my journal:—

"Before entering on our work Nyffeler was in service. His master and mistress were devout Catholics. He served them fifteen years. Once for a whole week he suffered agony from toothache, and one evening overheard his mistress reciting the rosary with her husband. When she had finished she said, 'And now let us recite three paternosters for poor Nyffeler.' It is not surprising after this that master and man came from time to time to speak

with each other on religious themes. One day the theme was justification by works *versus* justification by faith. Nyfieler was hard pressed. At last he said, "You have servants and you have sons. We servants say, What is the work you demand of us? When we know that, we ask further, What wages do you give? So much labour for so much pay; that is the law of master and servant. But your sons work as hard, often harder than we. What would you say if they were suddenly to demand wages? You would say, My dear boys, what do you mean? You are my sons, not my servants. You eat at my table, and all I have is yours.—So we. By faith we are raised from servants to sons, not of ourselves, it is the gift of God; but once raised, we mean to remain sons, not servants, working in our Father's service harder, it may be, than servants, but all for love, nothing for pay." A better illustration of faith working by love it would be difficult to give. With this extract I take leave of our colporteurs.

"Under Zurich I find the following entry. It was suggested by what was told me of the relation of the Bible in the school.

A TOUR IN NORTHERN CHINA.

"A CONVERT THROUGH THE READING OF THE SCRIPTURES ALONE."

Mr. S. Dyer, the Society's Agent at Shanghai, in one of his letters gives the following:—

"You will recollect that I promised to give you a short account of a Mr. Wang, whom I mentioned in conversation. The following particulars may interest you. The person I speak of came into our chapel in the spring of the present year, and was present as an attentive listener during the whole of the service. At the close of the address I offered, as usual, Bibles and religious literature for sale. Mr. Wang not only bought himself but recommended the books to the bystanders. His own purchase consisted of a New Testament, a Catechism, and 'Christianity and Confucianism compared.' A remark he made as he stood beside the reading-desk arrested my attention and struck me very much. It was this: 'Every time I read this book it does my heart good.' Then ensued the following conversation: He said he could not understand many parts of the Old Testament—that every time he read it he got confused over it. I observed that the New Testament was a key to the Old; and that if he could find time to pay me a visit the next day, I would explain to him the nature of the Christian doctrine, and the connection between its books. He promised to see me the following day, as he was just then engaged. In reply to my query, he said that he became acquainted with the doctrine by buying a copy of a Gospel in the street at Newchwang. He bought the book merely to occupy his leisure on a journey to Moukder which he was about to make. On the way he found the book to be more than the 'rivel' which he took it to be; and the more he read it the more interested he became in the contents of it.

"He did not keep his engagement and pay his promised visit. Not one in a hundred does so. But knowing where to find him, I enquired after him and immediately he made his appearance. He came in the morning, and the greater part of the forenoon was spent with him in reading the prophecies in the Old Testament concerning the Messiah and their fulfilment in the New. The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah he was especially delighted with and seemed thoroughly to understand its meaning. He read the Chinese text of the chapter in a very intelligent and scholarly manner, and with evident appreciation of its meaning. During the course of a long interview I found out that he was well acquainted with the doctrine of Christianity—so much so, that had I thought it wise, I should have had no hesitation in baptizing him. As it was, I contented myself with pointing out to him that it was the duty of all who believed in Christ to make a public profession of their faith by entering the Church. We engaged together in prayer—an act which seemed not unfamiliar to him. He said he followed literally the directions of our

Lord and frequently engaged in secret prayer. He had never conversed with a foreign missionary before. I made a subsequent but ineffectual attempt to secure him as a teacher for our boys' school, distinctly pledging myself that he should not in any way be compelled to act contrary to his convictions. On two occasions he actually engaged to enter upon the duties, but at the last moment he drew back. He is an artist by profession, and his home is in the west."

LORD SHAFTESBURY AT CARNARVON.

GREAT BIBLE MEETING.

The Carnarvon Auxiliary Bible Society was formed in the year 1812, and from that time to this it has been distinguished for its unabated attachment to and exceptional liberality towards the Society. It is also the parent of vigorous and flourishing offshoots, which, having separated from the mother Society, have started on their own account and have rendered invaluable aid by their very handsome free contributions. The Carnarvon meetings have always been famous for their popularity, and this year, Lord Shaftesbury having consented to take the chair, the Committee determined to make a special effort.

October 16 was the appointed day, and Lord Shaftesbury, having arrived at the Carnarvon station, was met by the Mayor and local Committee, and escorted to the Pavilion, a large building erected for Eisteddfodau and grand Welsh concerts, and capable of holding about 7,000 people. The streets were lined with Sunday-school children, belonging to the various Sabbath schools of the town and districts, and numbering from 3,000 to 4,000. These, accompanied by their teachers, assembled at the Pavilion and were addressed by his Lordship in appropriate and eloquent terms.

AN IMPOSING SCENE.

At half-past six o'clock the public meeting commenced when the chair was occupied by Lord Shaftesbury, who was supported on the platform by the Lord Bishop of Bangor, Lord Penrhyn, and a great many clergymen, ministers, ladies and gentlemen from the neighbourhood. The large hall, with its vast assembly numbering about 7,000 people, presented a most imposing appearance. After singing, reading, and prayer, the secretary, Mr. John Thomas, was called upon to read the Report, which showed that in spite of the great depression in trade, the small town of Carnarvon, with a population of from 8,000 to 10,000, had been enabled to send up a free contribution of £410. The Secretary also stated that he held in his hand two cheques, one for £50, the other for £100 (less duty), the former of which was a legacy left by the late Simond Hopley, Esq., who died a short time ago, and whose son paid the amount before the expiration of the legal year; the other was a legacy left by the late Rev. Thomas Hughes, and which was to be paid after the decease of his widow, but she elected to pay the sum in her lifetime, and chose the present occasion to mark her appreciation of the noble President's visit.

THE BETHLEHEM OF THE BIBLE SOCIETY.

The Earl of Shaftesbury, on rising to address the meeting, was received with rounds of cheers, which lasted for some time. He then delivered an address of forty-five minutes' duration, which was listened to with the most rapt attention. The Chairman referred to the power of the Word of God, and adduced the instance of the learned Brahmin, Seshadri, who was converted by the simple reading of the Word of God without note or comment, and without the aid of any human teacher, and he said "if one copy had produced such a result, it could do so again." He also remarked: "Not only was it a pleasure to him to come among them as the President of the Bible Society, but it was also a duty devolving upon him, because he looked upon Wales as the Bethlehem of the Bible Society. He thought with gratitude of Charles, of Bala, from him sprang the idea which ultimately resulted in the

formation of this excellent Society, whose labours now girdled the whole habitable globe." His Lordship concluded a most effective and telling address by a strong appeal in behalf of the Society, exhorting all to do their best in support of it, and added that "God would bless them in all time of their tribulation, in all time of their wealth, in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment." Then Lord Penrhyn, the Lord Bishop of Bangor, the Venerable Archdeacon Smart, the Rev. Dr. Thomas and others addressed the vast concourse of people with much power; and shortly after nine o'clock terminated one of the grandest and most successful Bible meetings ever held in the Principality of Wales. In fact, as his Lordship remarked, it would have been impossible to have brought about such a meeting in any other town in the kingdom, for not even in London is there such a spacious and commodious building as the Pavilion to be found. The railway authorities kindly ran late trains to Bangor, Llanberis, and Nantlle, so that hundreds were thus enabled to be present from a circuit of twelve to fifteen miles. It is hoped that the good results anticipated from this great gathering will be fully realized. One of its most important features was the bringing together so many thousand Sunday-school children; and the appropriate words spoken to them by Lord Shaftesbury will, it is firmly believed, be the names of stirring up their sympathies in behalf of the Society's work, so that when the old and faithful labourers now engaged in it have passed away, the work shall not flag for want of men endued with a like spirit to that of their devoted predecessors.

VIII. THE HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH BIBLE.

THE BISHOPS' BIBLE.

BY THE REV. W. F. MOULTON, M. A. LOND., D. D. EDIN., HEAD MASTER OF THE
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During the early part of Elizabeth's reign, the English Scriptures were circulated mainly in two versions. Four editions, indeed, of Tyndale's Testament are assigned to the years 1561, 1566, 1570, but it does not appear that the Bibles of Coverdale, Taverner, or Matthew were reprinted after 1553; hence the Great Bible and the Genevan Bible, the versions associated with Archbishop Cranmer and with the Puritan exiles, were left in possession of the field. The former alone had any authority or ecclesiastical influence on its side, but the latter was the household Bible of England. For some years new editions of Cranmer's version continued to appear. Eight in all are known to have been published in this reign—together, it is said, with one New Testament of the same version, for printing which without licence the printer, Richard Harrison, was fined eight shillings. One of these Bibles, printed at Rouen in 1566, at the cost of R. Carmarden, is especially noted as a fine specimen of typography.

This state of things could not continue. It could not be expected that the Genevan version (with its body of notes, which reflected the views of one particular school of theology, and which were not always guarded in expression) would receive such official sanction as to displace the Great Bible; and, on the other hand, the manifest superiority of the later translation, joined with its great popularity, made it impossible to restore Cranmer's Bible to its former position. Matthew Parker, the celebrated Archbishop of Canterbury, consecrated in 1559, resolved on undertaking a revised translation, upon a plan similar to that which Cranmer had tried (though without success) in 1542. Letters collected in the volume of the Parker correspondence, published by the Parker Society, contain much interesting information respecting the archbishop's design. In 1566 he writes to Sir W. Cecil, stating that he has "distributed the Bible in parts to divers men," and expressing a hope that Cecil will undertake the revision of some "one epistle of St. Paul, or Peter, or James." As early as December, 1565, we find a letter from Parkhurst, Bishop

of Norwich, acknowledging the receipt of the portion which he had assigned to him—five of the Apocryphal books. About the same time, Geste, Bishop of Rochester, writes, returning the Book of Psalms revised, and expressing a hope that the archbishop will excuse his “rude handling of the Psalms.” This modest description of his work is not far from the truth. “I have not altered the translation,” he says, “but where it giveth occasion of an error, as in the first Psalm, at the beginning, I turn the preterperfect tense into the present tense, because the sense is too hard in the preterperfect tense. Where in the New Testament one piece of a Psalm is reported, I translate it in the Psalm according to the translation thereof in the New Testament, for the avoiding of the offence that may rise to the people upon diverse translations.” Sandys, Bishop of Worcester (father of the poet, George Sandys), writes on the 6th of February, 1566, announcing that he has completed his portion (Kings and Chronicles); he adds a criticism on the Great Bible—that Munster had been followed too much by the translators. Davies, Bishop of St. David’s, writes that he received the archbishop’s letter of December 6th, 1565, towards the close of the following February, and the “piece of the Bible” (Joshua, Judges, Ruth, and Samuel) a week later! He was at the same time engaged, with William Salisbury and Thomas Huatt, upon the first Welsh translation of the New Testament, which was published in 1567. A letter from Cox, Bishop of Ely, who was entrusted with the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistle to the Romans, shows a just appreciation of the magnitude of the task on which Parker had ventured. “I would wish,” he adds, “that such usual words that we English people be acquainted with might still remain in their form and sound, so far forth as the Hebrew will well bear. Inkhorn terms to be avoided. The translation of the verbs in the Psalms to be used uniformly in one tense, &c.; and if ye translate *bonitas* or *miser cordia*, to use it likewise in all places of the Psalms, &c.” On the 5th of October, 1568, Parker writes to Cecil, sending at the same time a copy of the completed work, to be presented to the Queen. “Because I would,” he says to Cecil, “you knew all, I here send you a note to signify who first travailed in the divers books, though after them some other perusing was had; the letters of their names be partly affixed in the end of their books, which I thought a policy to shew them, to make them more diligent, as answerable for their doings. I have remembered you of such observations as my first letters sent to them (by your advice) did signify.” The rules for the revisers here referred to were the following:—“First, to follow the common English translation used in the churches, and not to recede from it but where it varieth manifestly from the Hebrew or Greek original. Item, to use sections and divisions in the text as Pagnine in his translation useth, and for the verity of the Hebrew to follow the said Pagnine and Munster specially, and generally others learned in the tongues. Item, to make no bitter notes upon any text, or yet to set down any determination in places of controversy. Item, to note such chapters and places as contain matter of genealogies, or other such places not edifying, with some strike or note, that the reader may eschew them in his public reading. Item, that all such words as sound in the old translation to any offence of lightness or obscenity, be expressed with more convenient terms and phrases.”

It is a matter of greater difficulty to determine with exactness who were the revisers of the several books. The letter just quoted contains a list, and at the end of some books in the new Bible are initials which can be identified with more or less certainty. Unfortunately the list does not always agree with the initials; but the discrepancy may perhaps be explained by the archbishop’s statement that some books passed through the hands of more than one reviser. From the list we learn that Parker himself undertook Genesis, Exodus, the first two Gospels, and the Pauline Epistles, with the exception of Romans and 1 Corinthians. Leviticus and Numbers were revised at Canterbury, probably by A. Picrson, to whom Job and Proverbs also seem to have been committed. Deuteronomy was placed in the hands of

Alley, Bishop of Exeter. At the end of the Psalter are the initials T. B., supposed to indicate Thomas Bacon, a prebend of Canterbury. Ecclesiastes and Canticles fell to the lot of A. Perne, Dean of Ely. The earlier Apocryphal books were revised by Bishop Barlow; Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Lamentations by Horne, Bishop of Winchester; Ezekiel and Daniel by Bentham, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry; the Minor Prophets by Grindal, Bishop of London. The third and fourth Gospels seem to have been committed to Scambler, Bishop of Peterborough; 1 Corinthians to Goodman, Dean of Westminster; the General Epistles and the Book of Revelation to Bullingham, Bishop of Lincoln. The remaining books have already been referred to in connection with their respective revisers. The above particulars are not free from doubt, but they are probably not far from the truth. It will be observed that most of the contributors were bishops, hence this version is commonly known as the Bishops' Bible. Archbishop Parker, in reserving for himself so large a portion of the books of Scripture, some of these remarkable for their difficulty, was no doubt sure of obtaining efficient co-operation in his work. The memory of one scholar, Lawrence (possibly the Thomas Lawrence who was head-master of Shrewsbury School from 1568 to 1583), is preserved by Strype in his account of this version. Lawrence, who was famed for his knowledge of Greek, sent to the Archbishop "notes of errors in the translation of the New Testament." These notes relate to nearly thirty passages of the New Testament, almost all taken from the first three Gospels. It has been generally supposed that the criticisms refer to the earlier translations, and hence Lawrence has been classed amongst the objectors whose complaints led to the scheme for a new version. Upon examination, however, it will be found that the renderings on which he comments belong, without exception, to the first edition of the Bishops' Bible itself; some, indeed, are not found in any other version at all. These criticisms belong, therefore, to a later date.

The preparation of this version seems to have extended over three or four years. The letter accompanying this splendid copy which was presented to the Queen bears date October 5, 1568. The Bible itself had no dedication. On the title-page are no other words than "The Holie Bible," with a quotation from Rom. i. 16. In the centre is a portrait of the Queen, and at the commencement of Joshua and the Psalter are introduced portraits of the Earl of Leicester, and of Cecil (Lord Burleigh). Prefixed to the book we find a sum of the whole Scripture, a table of genealogy, a table of the books of the Old Testament, with tables of lessons and psalms, an almanack and calendar, two prologues, a chronological table, and the table of contents; woodcuts, maps, and other tables are also introduced into the volume. The second of these prologues is Cranmer's, taken from the Great Bible. The first is written by Parker himself, and mainly consists of a defence of translations of the Bible, and an earnest exhortation to all to search the Scriptures; the design and plan of the new version are also briefly explained. There is also a preface to the New Testament from the archbishop's hand. At the end of the volume is the name of the printer, John Jucge, and the last page is adorned with a woodcut representing a pelican feeding her young with her blood, and a Latin couplet on this symbol of our Saviour's love.

A second edition, in a small quarto volume, was issued in 1569; a third of the Bible, and an edition of the New Testament, followed in 1570, 1571. In 1571 Convocation ordered that every archbishop and bishop should have a copy of this version, "of the largest volume," in his house, "to be placed in the hall or the large dining-room, that it might be useful to their servants, or to strangers;" also that a copy should be placed in every cathedral, and, as far as possible, in every church.

The criticisms of Lawrence referred to above may have been the occasion of a new revision of the work. However this may be, it is certain that the edition published in 1572 contains a corrected translation of the New Testament, in which nearly all the improvements suggested by Lawrence are found in the text. In all, about thirty editions of this version appear to have been

published, almost all of these containing the whole Bible. There are some singular differences of text and many other variations in the several editions. The edition of 1572, for example, contains two translations of the Psalter in parallel columns—one properly belonging to this version, the other taken from the Great Bible. Other editions—those of 1575, 1595, for instance—contain only the latter version of the Psalms. Sometimes Parker's preface is omitted, so that Cranmer's stands alone, giving to a hasty reader the impression that he has before him a copy of the Great Bible. The last edition of the Bishops' Bible bears the date 1608.

As to the character of the translation very different views have been held. As the Genevan version and the Bishops' Bible represented widely different ecclesiastical opinions and sympathies, we can hardly wonder that many a critic has given a partisan's opinion instead of a sober judgment. We are, moreover, confronted by a difficulty which has not hitherto existed. The revision was entrusted to many hands; each reviser seems to have acted independently, and the superintendence exercised by the archbishop and others could not possibly render uniform the results of the separate action of many minds. The version must therefore be examined in various parts; one book cannot be taken as representing others. It need hardly be said that the basis of the translation is the Great Bible; a glance is sufficient to make this certain. The merits of the Genevan Bible are so great, that, without losing sight of the Hebrew and Greek scholarship of the revisers, or of the aids which they (in common with the Genevan translators) possessed and used, we may be content to try the Bishops' Bible in most instances by one simple test—how far have the revisers of the Great Bible availed themselves of the corrections and the improvements which are found in the Genevan version? Less could scarcely be expected than that those changes which were real improvements, and which could be adopted without sacrificing the style and spirit of the older translation, should be taken into the text.

The conclusion from such an investigation is not very favourable to the Bishops' Bible. In the Old Testament, it is clear, Cranmer's Bible was too closely followed, and improvements which were ready to the hand of the translators were not appreciated. What is original in this version does not often possess any great merit; nor does it appear that the revision of 1572 produced much effect in the Old Testament.

When we come to consider the New Testament, it is more important to distinguish between the two editions of the Bishops' Bible. Lawrence's criticisms, already spoken of, bring before us some thirty passages which stood in need of correction. All the renderings to which Lawrence raised objection are to be found in the first edition of the Bishops' Bible: his corrections, with the exception of one, are almost literally adopted in the revision of 1572. In two or three instances the faulty rendering is found in the Bishops' Bible alone; thus in Matt. xxi. 33 we read "*made a vineyard,*" where almost all other versions rightly have "*planted;*" and in Col. ii. 13 we find "*dead to sin, and to the uncircumcision of your flesh.*" The latter is so serious a mistake, both as a translation of the Greek and in the sense conveyed, that charity would require us to regard it as a misprint if the preposition "*to*" were not repeated. In most of the passages the renderings to which Lawrence takes exception are simply retained from the Great Bible and other early versions. Lawrence's criticisms are very interesting, and in most points unquestionably just. We owe to him several readings in our present Bibles—for example, *armies* in Matt. xxii. 7; *besides* (instead of *with*) in Matt. xxv. 20; *seize upon* in Matt. xxi. 38 (Lawrence's suggestion was, "*take possession or seize upon his inheritance*"); *bramble bush* (instead of *bush or bushes*) in Luke vi. 44. The last words of Mark xv. 3, "*but he answered nothing,*" were introduced at his suggestion from the Greek text of Stephens (1546); this clause, however, is probably not genuine.

In judging of the merits of the translation of the New Testament, we must take the version in its corrected form, as it appeared in 1572. The verdict of

the student will vary according to the portion which he is examining. Again and again he will wonder at the retention of an early rendering which had been corrected by a later translator, or the preference shown for a roundabout phrase (such renderings as "when he had gone a little further he," &c., instead of "he went a little further, and," &c., are especially common in the Bishops' Bible); but he will meet with many proofs of close study of the original text, and an earnest desire to represent it with all faithfulness to the English reader. Dr. Westcott's comment on the translation of Eph. iv. 7—16 (a very difficult section) will show how much merit is possessed by some portions, at least, of the Bishops' Bible. Having pointed out that in this section the Great Bible and the Bishops' differ in twenty-six places, he adds: "Of these twenty-six variations no less than sixteen are new, while only ten are due to the Genevan version, and the character of the original corrections marks a very close and thoughtful revision, based faithfully upon the Greek. The anxiously literal rendering of the particles and prepositions is specially worthy of notice; so too the observance of the order and of the original form of the sentences, even where some obscurity follows from it. In four places the Authorised Version follows the Bishops' renderings; and only one change appears to be certainly for the worse, in which the rendering of the Genevan Testament has been followed. The singular independence of the revision, as compared with those that have been noticed before, is shown by the fact that only four of the new changes agree with Beza, and at least nine are definitely against him." The same writer compares the two chief editions of the Bishops' Bible throughout the Epistle to the Ephesians. The changes amount to nearly fifty, and among the new readings are some phrases most familiar to us all, as "*less than the least of all saints*," "*middle wall of partition*," "*fellow-citizens with the saints*."

The marginal notes in the Bishops' Bible consist of alternative renderings, references to similar passages, and comments explanatory of the text. The comments are much less numerous here than in the Genevan Bible. They are very unevenly distributed. On the first five chapters of Job, for example, there are (in the edition of 1575) more than fifty notes, a larger number than we find on the whole book of Isaiah, with its sixty-six chapters. The Epistle to the Romans contains nearly seventy explanatory notes, in the place of the 250 of the Genevan Bible: a few, perhaps a dozen, of the Genevan annotations are retained in the Bishops' Bible. It is curious to notice the difference in the passages chosen for explanation in the two versions. Sometimes it is a rendering of the Genevan Bible that calls forth the remark in this. Thus in Rom. viii. 6 the Genevan translators read "the wisdom of the flesh." The note in the Bishops' Bible is as follows: "*φρονούσι and φρόνημα*, Greek words, do not so much signify wisdom and prudence as affection, carefulness, and minding of anything." A little lower down there is a curious note on another Greek word. In verse 18, where we now read "I reckon," the Bishops' Bible has "I am certainly persuaded." The note runs thus: "*λογίζομαι* signifieth to weigh or to consider: but because the matter was certain, and St. Paul nothing doubted thereof, it is thus made: I am persuaded." Where an uncommon word is used in the text, the translator sometimes adds a short note on its meaning. Thus in Rom. xi. 8, where we now read "the spirit of slumber," this version has "the spirit of remorse," the last word being explained as "pricking and unquietness of conscience." In Isa. lxvi. 3 we read, "he that killeth a sheep for me *knutcheth* a dog," with a note which certainly cannot be considered superfluous: "That is, cutteth off a dog's neck."

The general tendency and character of the Bishops' Bible are perhaps shown most clearly in the Apocryphal books. Strange to say, the Great Bible is followed here also, though representing the Latin and not the Greek text. The precedent of the Genevan Bible, therefore, is entirely neglected, as a glance at the beginning of Tobit or Esther, or at the fourth chapter of Judith, is sufficient to prove. As in the Genevan version, however, the comments on

the Apocrypha are very scanty. The prayer of Manasses is restored to its former position between the additions to Daniel and the First Book of Maccabees.

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