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## THE STATE OF THE CHURCH

The Church has been passing through troubled waters. This is no new or strange experience for the Church, but has been her history from the very beginning, ever since Christ said to His disciples, "In this world ye shall have tribulation." As the ocean is the home of storms, so is the world the home of unbelief and of opposition to the kingdom of God. But even in the ocean there are different kinds of storms; the winds blow out of different quarters; and, after suddenly arising and blowing with great vehemence for a season, they will as suddenly subside and there will be a great calm. Now that the roar of this particular storm through which our Presbyterian Church has been passing, and indeed, all Churches, begins to subside, though for a season only, and one of a great number who tried to keep a sort of mariner's log during this voyage of the past few years, I would like to put down some of the entries from the log-book. Perhaps these entries will be of suggestion to others who want to know from what direction the prevailing winds blew, whether the storm arose suddenly and unexpectedly, or whether in falling barometer and obscured heavens there were unmistakable signs of its approach.

How shall we describe this stormy wind that has left no Church untouched and unruffled by its breath? From what quarter did it blow? To answer this question is not as easy as it might appear. Unbelief, like God, never changes; from everlasting to everlasting it is the same. However he changes his accent, the tempter has never really said anything different from what he said at the very beginning: "Hath God said?" Yet the metempsychosis of error and unbelief is a very curious thing. How diverse and numerous its

## DR. MOFFATT'S "NEW TRANSLATION" OF THE OLD TESTAMENT\*

It is both remarkable and significant that three centuries after the value and even necessity of cooperation in so arduous and difficult a task as that of Bible translation was signally proved by the success of the Authorized Version, we should be witnessing a return to the "one-man" type of version. For the New Testament we now have some half dozen such versions; and there are also several for the Old Testament. This is remarkable because it might seem as if for the English speaking world with its excellent Authorized and Revised Versions the day of one-man versions had passed away.

The versions of the Bible into English which were made during the first half century after the commencement of the Protestant reformation may be called "one-man" versions. They are chiefly connected with the names of a few individuals: William Tyndale, the 400th anniversary of whose translation of the New Testament is now being celebrated, Miles Coverdale whose Bible appeared about 1536 and William Whittingham whose New Testament appeared twenty years later. Tyndale, who but for his early death by martyrdom, would doubtless have completed the translation of the whole Bible and might in view of his high scholarship and literary ability have given to the world a version which would have won for itself a preeminent place among English speaking peoples comparable to that enjoyed by Luther's version among Germans, has none the less exerted upon subsequent versions a profound influence, notably upon that of 1611. The other two of this distinguished trio seem to have figured prominently in the preparation of the first of the "Great Bibles"—Coverdale in the *Great Bible* of 1539 and Whittingham in the *Geneva Bible* of 1560. The *Bishops' Bible* (1569) was apparently the first which was the result

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\**The Old Testament: A New Translation.* By JAMES MOFFATT, D.D., D. LITT., M.A. (OXON). Vol. I, Genesis to Esther; Vol. II, Job to Malachi. New York: George H. Doran Co., 1924-25.

of the cooperation of a considerable number of scholars, about fifteen having a part in its preparation. The task of preparing the King James or Authorized Version was committed to some fifty of the ablest scholars of the day, belonging to both of the great parties of the Church; and some four years were devoted to the task of translating and revising. Within a generation this work had firmly established itself as the version of Protestant England and its supremacy has not been seriously disputed by any subsequent version. About the middle of the last century a movement was set on foot to revise this historic version. This work was finally undertaken in 1870 by a committee of more than fifty British scholars, with the cooperation of a somewhat smaller American committee. The English Revised New Testament appeared in 1881, representing about ten years of labor, and the whole Bible was completed in 1885. The American committee by arrangement with the British committee supported this version for twenty years; and then in 1901 the survivors of that committee published the American Revised Version.

It is important to bear such facts as these in mind when we would estimate the merit of the one-man version. The publishers of Dr. Moffatt's translation quote a well known radical critic, Professor A. S. Peake, as authority for the statement that Dr. Moffatt's *Old Testament* "has the inestimable advantage of being the work of a single mind." And the same scholar declares, "I must express my admiration of the skill and resourcefulness with which the author has accomplished a difficult task." Now if the one-man translation has an "inestimable advantage," why did nearly fifty scholars labor on the AV and nearly twice their number devote years of labor to its mere revision? The most natural answer is suggested by Professor Peake's closing words—because to translate the Bible is "a difficult task," which in the opinion of most competent judges would be too great for any single mind, however gifted. A further reason is found in the fact that a version prepared by a number of scholars would be more likely to be objective and free from personal preferences

and idiosyncrasies than the one-man version and would therefore make a more universal appeal, as it would also possess a greater weight of authority.

Adoniram Judson who completed his translation of the Bible into Burmese in 1834 after a number of years of much interrupted labor, tells us, "I consider it the work of a man's whole life to procure a really good translation of even the New Testament in an untried language." What these difficulties are the missionaries have told us. One of the greatest is to find heathen words which will express Christian ideas. Thus George Grenfell of the Congo writes: "I find it very difficult to translate many of the ideas which are really of great importance. For instance, I can find no word for 'forgiveness,' and it has to be rendered by 'cleansing.' 'Sanctification' I have not ventured to grapple with yet." And then he adds, "Of course, at the best, in these early days a translation is only an approximation to what it ought to be, but if I can only manage to give the people an idea of the truth I shall be very glad." This is the great problem stated from the standpoint of the pioneer. And it is probably safe to say that most pioneer translations have been "approximations" which have required more or less revision later on.

But we are not thinking now of pioneer versions but of something very different, of the attempt of a single scholar to improve upon the work of some fifty of the ablest scholars of the seventeenth century, as well as upon a careful revision of this work prepared by nearly twice that number of able scholars of the nineteenth century. To realize the magnitude of such a task we have only to think of the vast literature, textual, exegetical, expository, homiletical and critical, which has grown up around the Bible. There are scholars who have devoted years of patient labor to the careful interpretation of only a few of the books of the Bible. Can one scholar cover all this vast auxiliary literature? Clearly he cannot. And even the "critical" scholar who is inclined to disregard as of little value much of the scholarship which goes back of the

days of Darwin and Wellhausen, should hesitate to maintain the contrary since he is constantly assuring us that modern scientific study of the Bible has thrown such a flood of light upon it and opened up such a wealth of new material, archaeological, philological, critical, that the layman is not competent to pass judgment upon it and the scholar must become more and more of a specialist, restricting himself to a comparatively narrow sphere of investigation. How then can a scholar who has devoted most of his time to the New Testament field and to the department of Church History be expected to be thoroughly at home in the Old Testament? The publishers tell us regarding Dr. Moffatt's work: "In his own handwriting he wrote out the whole of the New Testament six times, and the Old Testament at least twice." When we recall that the Bible is a large book, that the Old Testament has in Dr. Moffatt's version 1031 pages, "at least twice" seems a great deal. Simply to copy it once in the course of a year would be quite an undertaking. The number of people who read either Testament through in a year is probably not very great. But when we think of the thousands of scholars who have used the AV and the RV with profit and delight, when we think of the care with which these versions were prepared, does not "at least twice" seem a very meagre allowance for a work which is to compete with these standard and much cherished versions? Does it not show that the task is too great for a single scholar?

Dr. Moffatt tells us in his Preface that his aim has been "to present the books of the Old Testament in intelligible and effective English" and that such a "transcript" should be made in the light thrown upon the Old Testament by "modern research." He tells us further that "It is a fresh translation of the original, not a revision of any English version" and he vouches for its accuracy with the words, "To the best of my ability I have tried to be exact and idiomatic."

A glance at the first sentence of the translation will serve

to bring out the essential characteristics of this version. We place beside it the familiar AV rendering for purposes of comparison:

MOFFATT	A. V.
ii. 4a This is the story of how the universe was formed	ii. 4a These <i>are</i> the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created

We notice in the first place that these words are not the first verse of Gen. i but the first part of the fourth verse of chapter two, which are transferred to this place. There is no warrant for this in the Hebrew Text or in the versions. It is purely conjectural and rests on a misunderstanding of the verse.<sup>1</sup> Secondly, we notice the freedom of the translation. The average reader will hardly recognize the verse in its "modern" dress, and unless he has noted the verse enumeration he will be tempted to regard it as a new rendering of the real first verse. Thirdly, we notice the novelty of the diction. "Universe" is not a Biblical word and it lacks the concreteness which characterizes the Hebrew, "the heavens and the earth." "Story" can be gotten out of the word "generation" in the sense of "genealogy"; but it is not exactly a Biblical word and suggests the inaccuracy of the record. "Form" instead of "create" suggests an attempt to evade the argument for creation *ex nihilo*. If we read a little farther in the translation we will notice also that Dr. Moffatt seems to strive after novelty and variety at the expense of consistency. The word "story" does not occur

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<sup>1</sup> The phrase, "(and) these are the generations of," divides the book of Genesis into 10 sections: (1) ii. 4-iv. 26; (2) v. 1-vi. 8; (3) vi. 9-ix. 29; (4) x. 1-xi. 9; (5) xi. 10-26; (6) xi. 27-xxv. 11; (7) xxv. 12-18; (8) xxv. 19-xxxv. 29; (9) xxxvi. 1-xxxvii. 1; (10) xxxvii. 2-1. 26. The manner of statement differs only in this that in some instances there is no "and" to connect with what precedes, and further that in v. 1 the expression is "this is the book of the generations." In the case of the last nine it is perfectly plain that the phrase is intended to summarize what follows. Thus "these are the generations of Terah" (xi. 27) introduces the story of Abraham. Consequently in placing vs ii 4a at the beginning of chap. i, Dr. Moffatt ignores the fact that it presupposes the existence of heaven and earth.

in any other of the ten "headings." The word "universe" occurs as the rendering of "the heavens and the earth" here and in i. 1 and ii. 1; but in ii. 4<sup>b</sup> the familiar "earth and heaven" reappears. The word "formed" is substituted for "created" in i. 1, 21, 27<sup>ter</sup> as here; but in ii. 3 the word is "creation."

When we compare Dr. Moffatt's treatment of this verse with that of the AV with a view to ascertaining the particulars in which the *New Translation* differs from the 1611 Bible, we are impressed with the following facts. In the first place, it is to be remembered that the AV owes its enduring popularity primarily to its fidelity to the original. It is described on the title page as "Newly Translated out of the Originall tongues: & with the former translations diligently compared and revised," and in the dedication to King James it is declared to be the fulfilment of the King's desire that there should be "one more exact Translation of the holy Scriptures into the *English tongue*." The AV translators had the greatest reverence for what Jerome called "the Hebrew verity." They were supremely concerned to render it correctly, to tell the reader exactly what it meant. The *New Translation* assumes the right of the translator to make such changes in the text as the "assured results" of "modern research" may seem to him to require, even when there is no objective warrant in text or versions for such changes. Dr. Moffatt shares the opinion of many critics that "the traditional or 'Massoretic' text is often desperately corrupt" and he feels that "very few, apart from those who have done some firsthand work upon the subject, realize how uncertain and precarious is the traditional text of some books in the Old Testament." Naturally, then, Dr. Moffatt is constantly endeavoring to *improve* the Hebrew text. And he frankly states that "nearly every page contains some emendation of the traditional text." Consequently it is clear that what Dr. Moffatt offers us is not merely a new rendering of the "traditional text" but a translation of a "higher critically" *revised* text of the Old Testament. When a scholar holds such an

estimate of the Biblical text we are not at all surprised to find that the translation which he gives is very loose and inexact, so inexact that it is often difficult to tell whether what Dr. Moffatt gives us is a free translation of the Hebrew or an attempt to improve upon it. The reader who wants to know what the Bible actually says and not what Dr. Moffatt and the critics think it ought to say, will consequently find this *New Translation* a very unreliable version. In the second place, we notice the inconsistency of the *New Translation*. While only a hint of this is conveyed by comparing the phraseology of Dr. Moffatt's "opening verse" with that of other passages, we shall find that this is a characteristic of this volume which detracts greatly from its value. It is to be recognized of course that the charge of inconsistency can be brought against any version. Many words have several meanings and the exact *nuance* depends on the context. But Dr. Moffatt renders words in so many different ways and makes changes in spelling, diction and phraseology with so little appearance of system that this may be regarded as a distinctive feature of his version. In the third place in comparing Dr. Moffatt's *New Translation* with the AV, we may speak of the one as radical and the other as conservative. When the AV was prepared the aim was to make a version which should correct the errors of the versions then in use, notably the *Bishops' Bible* while at the same time changing as little as possible the phraseology which had become familiar to the people. Hence we find such rules as the following laid down for their procedure.

1. The ordinary Bible read in the Church, commonly called the *Bishops Bible*, to be followed, and as little altered as the Truth of the original will permit.

2. The Names of the Prophets, and the Holy Writers, with the other names of the Text, to be retained, as nigh as may be, accordingly as they were vulgarly used.

3. The old Ecclesiastical Words to be kept, viz., the Word *Church* not to be translated *congregation*, etc.

4. When a Word hath divers Significations that to be kept which hath been most commonly used by the most of the Ancient Fathers, being agreeable to the Propriety of the Place, and the Analogy of the Faith.



These rules show a commendable desire to avoid the making of unnecessary changes, and to restrict them to such as were really necessary. The fourteenth rule is also important :

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| 14. These translations to be used when they agree better with the Text than the Bishops Bible <sup>2</sup> | } | <i>Tindoll's</i><br><i>Matthews</i><br><i>Coverdale's</i><br><i>Whitchurch's</i><br><i>Geneva</i> |
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It is abundantly clear that the AV was to be a version which would not give unnecessary offense by its newness and by radical, and uncalled for changes. It was to conserve all that was best in the translations which had preceded it. The translators were to remember that "other men had labored and they had entered into their labors." And that they so understood it appears clearly in their explanatory statement, "The Translators to the Reader," where we read the following :

Truly (good Christian Reader) wee neuer thought from the beginning, that we should neede to make a new Translation, nor yet to make of a bad one a good one, (for then the imputation of *Sixtus* had bene true in some sort, that our people had bene fed with gall of Dragons in stead of wine, with whey in stead of milke :) but to make a good one better, or out of many good ones, one principall good one, not justly to be excepted against; that hath bene our indeauour, that our marke.<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Moffatt on the contrary seems to pride himself on the originality of the *New Translation*. "It is a fresh translation of the original," he tells us in the Preface, "not a revision of any English version."

We shall now proceed to examine the *New Translation* in some detail and we shall discuss it under four heads, the first three of which concern the newness, the inconsistencies, the unreliability of the version. Lastly we shall discuss what for lack of a better word we feel obliged to call the *deceptiveness* of the version.

<sup>2</sup> Cf., *The Holy Bible: A Facsimile in a reduced size of the Authorized Version published in the year 1611. With an introduction by A. W. Pollard and illustrative documents.* (Oxford: the University Press, 1911), pp. 27 f.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. "Facsimile" edition *in loco*.

## I. THE NEWNESS OF THE "NEW TRANSLATION"

That the *New Translation* is a "fresh" translation as Dr. Moffatt affirms and not dependent in any sense upon the AV or RV is apparent at once from the character of its diction. From beginning to end the reader is constantly meeting words and phrases which have a decidedly unfamiliar sound. In many instances these words are unfamiliar, it must be confessed, simply as *Biblical* words; but in a good many instances Dr. Moffatt uses words which are hardly in accord with his avowed aim to "present the books of the Old Testament in effective and intelligible English." The following are some of them: clan, creel, glen, wold, cairn, cairngorm, burgh, burgher, fastness, plaid, coronach, Trysting tent, sept, taboo, fetish, steppe, khan, wadi, sheik, hareem, Bedawin, turban, troglodytes, papyrus, dithyramb, palanquin, pilaster, pentagon, siesta, sacerdotal, sirocco, corselet, obelisk, marjoram. Many of the changes seem mainly designed to change the familiar phraseology, to "modernize" and "popularize" it, as Dr. Moffatt would say, but also as it seems, to *secularize* it as well. "Song" for "psalm," "maxim" for "proverb," "annals" for "chronicles," "desert" for "wilderness," "Dwelling" for "tabernacle," "column of cloud" for "pillar of cloud," "Presence bread" for "shewbread," "clan" for "tribe," "slave-pen" for "house of bondage," "barge" for "ark," "belt" or "waist-cloth" for "girdle," "standing order" for "ordinance forever," "comptroller" for "treasurer," "sentinel" for "watchman," "mountain of Sinai" for "Mount Sinai," "David's burg" for "the city of David," are decidedly unnecessary changes. "Cereal offering" is no real improvement on "meal offering" (RV), nor is "Trysting tent" on "tent of meeting" (RV). "Trio of knights" for "three mighty men" (2 Sam. xxiii. 17) suggests the days of chivalry; "braves" for "valiant men" (1 Sam. xxxi. 12) makes us think of the American Indians; "phalanx" for "troop" (2 Sam. ii. 25) predates the "Macedonian phalanx" by some centuries (a minor anachronism!). "Prairie," "jungle," "wold," "wadi," and "steppe," bring

together words from all parts of the world. The translation is certainly anything but classic or academic in its choice of words.

Some of these and similar changes are of comparative indifference, matters of taste and preference. But there are others such as "song" for "psalm," "ark of the compact" for "ark of the covenant," "judicial pouch" for "breastplate of judgment," "Expiation day" for "day of atonement," "cover" for "mercy seat," "property" for "inheritance," which are decidedly objectionable changes. They not only change familiar phraseology without in any way improving the sense, but, they not seldom obscure or destroy the meaning. Thus, to substitute "cover" for "mercy seat" (*kapporeth*) almost completely obscures the close connection between it and the word to "atone" (*kipper*); and save for the fact that blood was to be sprinkled upon it on the day of atonement (Lev. xvi. 14), we might think of it as merely the "lid" of the ark. This would be all the more natural since Dr. Moffatt apparently never uses the word "cover" in the sense of "expiate." "Mercy seat" calls attention to its true significance, as the place of all places where atonement was made. Again the substitution of "property" or "possession" for "inheritance" (cf. e.g. Num. xxvi) while more in accord with modern usage obscures the emphasis which the Mosaic Law placed upon *inheritance*. Thus the change from "the inheritance of my fathers" (1 Kgs. xxi. 3) to "my fathers' property" weakens not a little the force of Naboth's indignant reply to Ahab. Nothing is gained by such changes. Dr. Moffatt obviously wants to make his version as different from the AV as possible.

One of the most noticeable of all the changes is the substitution of "Eternal" for "LORD" as the rendering of the Tetragram. In this Dr. Moffatt has followed, though "with some reluctance," as he tells us, "the practice of the French scholars and of Matthew Arnold." "Eternal" is clearly a close equivalent, though in abstract terms, of the "I AM" of Ex. iii. 4 (AV), which Dr. Moffatt somewhat inconsist-

ently renders "I-will-be," since "I-will-be" makes the name as explained in the Bible descriptive of God as the *self-revealing*, rather than the *eternal* One. In favor of the word "LORD," as found in the AV and retained in the ERV, it is sufficient to point out in this connection that it has the express sanction of the New Testament. In the New Testament citations from the Old Testament the Tetragram is always rendered "LORD" (or GOD"). One of the most instructive illustrations of this is the citation from the 110th Psalm, "The LORD said unto my Lord" (Matt. xxii. 44, Mk. xii. 36, Lk. xx. 42). The fact that no effort is made in such a passage to distinguish the Tetragram from the common noun is significant. It shows conclusively that "LORD" (adopted, indeed, from the LXX, but sanctioned by the Lord and His Apostles) is the New Testament equivalent of the Covenant Name. It is this high sanction, undoubtedly, which is responsible for the usage of the AV as well as of the Vulgate, Peshitto and German versions. To intimate that this usage is due to "a Jewish superstition," as is affirmed in the Preface to the ARV, is manifestly unjust. It is the New Testament usage; and if it is the New Testament usage, why, we may ask, is it not good enough for New Testament Christians?

As was pointed out above the *New Translation* is characterized by variety of rendering. Thus, the word "fear" is a broadly indefinite word which gravitates according to the context between abject terror and adoring love.<sup>4</sup> It is used in both the religious and non-religious sense; but we shall speak here only of the former. Dr. Moffatt has rendered it variously: "fear" (Ps. xxxiii. 8, Jer. v. 22), "worship" (Ps. cxxx. 4, Jonah i. 9, Mal. iii. 16), "revere" (Josh. xxiv. 14, 1 Kg. xviii. 12, Neh. vii. 2, Ps. xxxiv. 9, cii. 15, Prov. iii. 7), "stand in awe" (Josh. iv. 24, Prov. xxiv. 21, Eccles. xii. 13). The "fear" (of the Lord) is rendered "faith" (Ps. xix. 9, cf. Ps. cxix. 38), "true religion" (Ps. xxxiv. 11), "reverence"

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<sup>4</sup> In the AV the rendering is usually "fear" or "afraid." But there are certain exceptions (cf. Lev. xix. 30, xxvi. 2, 1 Chron. xxii. 13, Job xxxii. 6) and the Niphal participle is rendered in several different ways.

(Ps. cxi. 10, Prov. i, 7, Jer. xxxii. 40). When we observe that in Ps. xxxiii. 8 "all the earth" is enjoined to "fear the Eternal" while in Ps. xxxiv. 9 his "saints" are exhorted to "revere" Him, we are tempted to think that Dr. Moffatt is seeking to distinguish between the attitude of the pagan and the Israelite toward the God of Israel. But the words "then pagans will revere thee" (Ps. cii. 15) make this improbable, unless we are to infer that Dr. Moffatt regards this verse as referring to a conversion of the heathen. Apparently, although these differences in rendering might seem to indicate a desire to attain greater precision and accuracy, Dr. Moffatt is really more concerned to secure variety than exactness of statement. This appears clearly when we find the familiar words, "but a woman that feareth the LORD she shall be praised" (Prov. xxxi. 30), *modernized* into "keep your praise for a wife with brains."

The word "servant" illustrates Dr. Moffatt's method even more clearly. It is usually the rendering of the Hebrew word עֶבֶד, which occurs about eight hundred times in the Old Testament and about nine times out of ten is rendered by the same English word. "Servant" is obviously in the Old Testament a broad and comprehensive word which has many different senses. Dr. Moffatt renders it in a number of different ways: e.g. "slave" (Ex. xxi. 2), "servant" (2 Sam. xviii. 29), "officer" (I Kings. v. 1), "bodyguard" (2 Sam. xviii. 9), "soldiers" (2 Sam. xvii. 20), "courtiers" (2 Sam. xxiv. 20, Esth. iii. 2), "adherents" (2 Sam. ii. 12), "every one at court" (for "all the servants of the king," Esth. iv. 11), "subject to" (2 Sam. x. 19); "we are at your service" (Josh. ix. 8) is certainly much weaker than "we are thy servants."

This raises the question whether this is a correct representation of the Hebrew, whether when a single word, a word of broad and general significance, is intentionally used, the translator should translate it by a number of words of more restricted meaning. Unquestionably the Hebrew had words to express all the ideas represented by the terms which Dr.

Moffatt uses here. Some of them are used when occasion requires it. But apparently the word "servant" (i.e., "slave") was the broad term which expressed the fundamental relation most clearly and satisfactorily. In the oriental state, whether Egypt, Israel, Babylon, or Persia, the courtier was a *servant* or *slave* of the king, absolutely within his power, if only that power was great enough. David is called Saul's "servant," Solomon is called David's "servant." That Haman was as completely within the power of Ahasuerus as the meanest serf is shown by the manner of his disgrace and death. "Servant" implies a general relation of inferiority and dependence which may be great or small, real or fancied, a terrible reality or the mere language of courtesy. We might wish at times that the language were more exact. But to distinguish the different shades of meaning is not easy and leads to inconsistencies which are dangerous and arbitrary.

It is not merely in the diction that the novelty of this version is strikingly apparent. The phraseology and style are even more novel. The following examples will illustrate this better than a detailed discussion. Let us look first at the words of Achish to David recorded in 1 Sam. xxix. 6, 7.

## MOFFATT

So Achish called David. "By the life of the Eternal," he said, "you are an honest fellow, and to my mind it is right that you should share all my enterprises in war, for I have never found anything wrong with you from the time you came to me up till now. But the tyrants do not approve of you. So go back, and go peaceably, not to displease the Philistine tyrants."

## A. V.

Then Achish called David, and said unto him, Surely, *as* the Lord liveth, thou hast been upright, and thy going out and thy coming in with me in the host *is* good in my sight: for I have not found evil in thee since the day of thy coming unto me unto this day: nevertheless the lords favour thee not.

Wherefore now return, and go in peace, that thou displease not the lords of the Philistines.

This shows that the translation is in modern vernacular. The quaintness of the Authorized Version is entirely gone. And the rendering is not merely modern, it is colloquial. We should dislike it for that reason if for no other. But someone will object that we should not expect Achish to be anything

else than commonplace and that therefore the translation is commendable for its realism. So we turn to the words of Hezekiah recorded in 2 Kings xx. 19.

MOFFATT

"Very good," said Hezekiah; "it is the word of the Eternal you utter!" (thinking to himself that there would be no trouble or change at least so long as he was alive)

A. V.

Then said Hezekiah unto Isaiah, Good *is* the word of the LORD which thou hast spoken. And he said, *Is it not good*, if peace and truth be in my days?

Here also the difference in tone is quite marked. Hezekiah's words sound almost contemptuous. Let us turn next to Isaiah vii. 13-15.

MOFFATT

Then I said, "Listen, you royalties. I am tired of you! And will you insist on tiring my God as well as a man like myself? An omen you shall have, and that from the Eternal himself. There is a young woman with child, who shall bear a son and call his name 'Immanuel' (God is with us); [[he shall enjoy curds and honey, whenever he knows good food from bad]] for before ever the child knows good food from bad, the land whose two kings are your terror shall be desolate."

A. V.

And he said, Hear ye now, O house of David; *Is it a small thing* for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also?

Therefore the LORD himself shall give you a sign; Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good.

For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings.

This is the language of a prophet of the Lord to a king of Israel. Yet it is undignified, insolent and vulgar. But it is not quite as bad as the following:

MOFFATT

Well, here is the reply  
of Israel's Majesty. . .

A. V.

Wherefore thus saith the Holy  
One of Israel, . . . (Isa. xxx. 12).

MOFFATT

Thou art what I get from life,  
O thou Eternal  
thou thyself art my share.

A. V.

The LORD *is* the portion of mine  
inheritance and of my cup: thou  
maintainest my lot (Ps. xvi. 5).

"Thou art what I get from life" is so slangy, irreverent and crassly utilitarian that it is passing strange Dr. Moffatt did not realize its utter inappropriateness.

Let us now turn to Ezekiel ii. 1-4.

## MOFFATT

... he said to me, "Son of man, stand up and I will speak to you." As he spoke, the Spirit entered me and made me stand upon my feet. I heard him address me. "Son of man," he said, "I am sending you to the Israelites, to a rebellious race who have rebelled against me; they and their fathers have sinned against me down to this day. I am sending you to them, impudent and obstinate that they are, and you must tell them what the Eternal says.

## A. V.

And he said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee.

And the spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me.

And he said unto me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that hath rebelled against me: they and their fathers have transgressed against me, *even* unto this very day.

For *they are* impudent children and stiffhearted. I do send thee unto them; and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God.

Schröder has remarked regarding the words "Thus saith the Lord God," as they occur in this context: "Just this short statement, without any addition, is of indescribable majesty as opposed to the rebels." But in Dr. Moffatt's rendering all the majesty is gone, much of the authority also, and the utterance becomes quite commonplace and ordinary.

A few other examples may be given: "Always rely on the Eternal for the Eternal's strength endures" for "Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength" (Isa. xxvi. 4); "'Enough of this' said the Eternal, 'say not another word about it'" (Deut. iii. 26); "He knows what we are made of," for "he knoweth our frame" (Ps. ciii. 14); "God heard it, and he was furious, he was done with Israel" (Ps. lxxviii. 59); "This was a pretty dream!" for "and my sleep was sweet unto me" (Jer. xxxi. 26); "Ahab rode for Jezreël, but the Eternal inspired Elijah till with belt tight round his waist he ran in front of Ahab as far as the entrance to Jezreël" (1 Kgs. xviii. 46); "Purge me clean with marjoram, wash me whiter than snow (Ps. li. 7).

In view of the importance which is being attached by many scholars to the subject of Hebrew Poetry, it is not surprising



that large sections of the poetical and prophetic books of the Old Testament should here be rendered into metrical or poetical form, and that poems should appear here and there in prose passages. A metrical rendering is not in itself objectionable; on the contrary it may be quite effective, provided only it is not made the warrant for changes in the text or for an undue poetic license in the rendering of the original. It should be remembered, however, that Hebrew poetry differs markedly from English. It shows very definite balance (parallelism) and rhythm. By rhyme, so characteristic of English poetry, is very rare in Hebrew poetry and alliteration, a marked feature of early English poems, is not characteristic of the Hebrew. Blank verse would be, generally speaking, the closest approximation which we could expect to make in English.

Dr. Moffatt is clearly much interested in the poetry of the Bible. Not infrequently we find him using alliteration to emphasize the poetical form. Hence such expressions as "glen of gloom" instead of the familiar "valley of the shadow of death," "a poisonous fly makes perfume putrid" (Eccles. x. 1); "and ladies at the lattice lose their lustre" (xii. 3); "fag-ends of flickering torches . . . with their blazing fury" (Isa. vii. 4); "then will I tell my fellows thy fame" (Ps. xxii. 22); "the lay of the lovesome vineyard" (Isa. xxvii. 2); "and cattle couch in Achor's glen" (Isa. lxxv. 10); "review her ramparts" (Ps. xlviii. 13); "theirs be defeat and dismay unending, disgrace and destruction" (Ps. lxxxiii. 17); "but wild words wound" (Prov. xv. 4); "rock, rescue, refuge, he is all to me" (Ps. lxii. 2); "and bathe their feet in bad men's blood" (Ps. lviii. 10); "with cruel, cutting charges" (Ps. xxxv. 15); "firm are the flakes of his flesh" (Job xli. 23a); "never envy evil men" (Prov. xxiv. 1); although in no one of these examples is alliteration prominent in the Hebrew. It is hard to see that in the majority of these passages the alliteration adds anything to the suitability of the rendering and in some instances it is so artificial as to be decidedly offensive.

But the alliteration while at times tedious and artificial, is

not nearly so objectionable as the introduction of rhyme, which, as stated above, is almost unknown in Hebrew. We shall cite a few examples :

MOFFATT

With the jaw-bone of an ass I  
have piled them in a mass  
With the jaw-bone of an ass I  
have assailed assailants

MOFFATT

When the people saw him they  
shouted in honour of their God.  
Our god has now put  
the foe in our hands  
who wasted our lands  
and slew us in bands

MOFFATT

Alas for heroes fallen low  
for weapons that once felled the foe

MOFFATT

The king also sang this dirge  
for Abner :  
Was this how Abner had to die,  
as dies a godless wretch?  
Your hand no man did tie,  
none chained your feet!—and  
then,  
as falls a godless wretch,  
You fell to ruthless men!

MOFFATT

By me the Eternal's spirit speaks,  
the word upon my lips is his.  
The God of Jacob speaks,  
the Strength of Israel told me this :

MOFFATT

My message will be wise and  
good,  
a baffling truth on which I  
brood;  
and as I catch its meaning dim,  
I render on the lyre this hymn :

A. V.

And Samson said, With the jaw-  
bone of an ass, heaps upon heaps,  
with the jaw of an ass have I slain  
a thousand men (Judges xv. 16).

A. V.

And when the people saw him,  
they praised their god: for they  
said, Our god hath delivered into  
our hands our enemy, and the de-  
stroyer of our country, which slew  
many of us. (Judges xvi. 24).

A. V.

How are the mighty fallen, and  
the weapons of war perished! (2  
Sam. i. 27).

A. V.

And the king lamented over  
Abner, and said, Died Abner as a  
fool dieth?

Thy hands *were* not bound, nor  
thy feet put into fetters: as a man  
falleth before wicked men, *so* fell-  
est thou. (2 Sam. iii. 33 f.).

A. V.

The Spirit of the LORD spake  
by me, and his word *was* in my  
tongue.

The God of Israel said, the  
Rock of Israel spake to me. (2  
Sam. xxiii. 2, 3a).

A. V.

My mouth shall speak of wis-  
dom; and the meditation of my  
heart *shall be* understanding.

I will incline mine ear to a  
parable: I will open my dark saying  
upon the harp (Ps. xlix. 3, 4).

MOFFATT

When the ark started, Moses would say,

Up, O Eternal,  
for the scattering of thy foes,  
for the routing of those who thee  
oppose!

When it halted, he would say,  
Come back, Eternal,  
to the myriad clans of Israel!

MOFFATT

'Tis like the days of Noah;  
for as then I swore  
that Noah's waters should  
flood earth no more,  
so now I swear that nevermore  
will I rebuke you in my wrath.

MOFFATT

And the Eternal told her,  
In your womb lie nations twain,  
rival races from their birth;  
one the mastery shall gain,  
the younger o'er the older reign.

MOFFATT

What part have we in David?  
We're done with Jesse's son!  
Look to your own house, David,  
now!  
Home, Israel, to your homes!  
Then all Israel went home.

MOFFATT

for his love to us is vast  
his loyalty will ever last.

MOFFATT

Set this man down as childless  
For never shall a son of his attain  
To sit on David's throne  
Or rule in Judah again.

A. V.

And it came to pass, when  
the ark set forward, that Moses  
said, Rise up, LORD, and let thine  
enemies be scattered; and let them  
that hate thee flee before thee.

And when it rested, he said,  
Return, O LORD, unto the many  
thousands of Israel (Num. x. 35,  
36).

A. V.

For this *is* as the waters of Noah  
unto me: for *as* I have sworn that  
the waters of Noah should no  
more go over the earth; so have I  
sworn that I would not be wroth  
with thee, nor rebuke thee (Isa.  
liv. 9).

A. V.

And the LORD said unto her,  
Two nations *are* in thy womb, and  
two manner of people shall be  
separated from thy bowels; and  
*the one* people shall be stronger  
than *the other* people; and the  
elder shall serve the younger (Gen.  
xxv. 23).

A. V.

What portion have we in David?  
and *we have* none inheritance in  
the son of Jesse: every man to  
your tents, O Israel: *and* now,  
David, see to thine own house. So  
all Israel went to their tents (2  
Chron. x. 16)

A. V.

For his merciful kindness is  
great toward us: and the truth of  
the LORD *endureth* for ever (Ps.  
cxvii. 2).

A. V.

Thus saith the LORD, Write ye  
this man childless, a man *that* shall  
not prosper in his days: for no  
man of his seed shall prosper, sit-  
ting upon the throne of David, and  
ruling any more in Judah (Jer.  
xxii. 30).

In view of the liberties which Dr. Moffatt has taken with the text in achieving these renderings—they can be easily recognized in most cases by comparing the AV—the surprising thing is that they are such mediocre poetry. But perhaps Dr. Moffatt intended them to be crude! We shall pause only to speak of the first of these metrical renderings (Judg. xv. 16). It looks as if the printer had blundered here. Clearly the first and third lines should end in “ass” not in “I.” In the Hebrew the “I” is not emphatic. Dr. Moffatt is here endeavoring by a pun on the words “ass,” “mass,” “assailed” and “assailants,” to reproduce the word play in the Hebrew which arises from the fact that the words for “ass” and “heap” (or as he renders it “mass”) are exactly alike. Samson says, “With the jawbone of an ass (המור), a heap (המור), two heaps (המרתים),<sup>5</sup> with the jaw of an ass (המור) I have slain a thousand men.” But we are inclined to think that the average reader will probably overlook the pun and see only the rhyme which as stated above is foreign to Hebrew poetry. It is to be noted further that Dr. Moffatt has overdone the pun. There is no word-play corresponding to the words “assailed” and “assailants”; and the latter word is a very free rendering of “a thousand men.”

A still more infelicitous attempt to reproduce a word-play is found in Gen. v. 29. The AV reads: “And he called his name Noah ( נוח ) saying, This *same* shall comfort us ( נחם ).” Here the resemblance in sound between נוח and נחם is paralleled by the similarity in meaning between “rest” and “comfort.” Dr. Moffatt renders it, “And his name was called Noah saying, We shall ‘know a’ respite.” This is both crude and misleading.

In view of Dr. Moffatt’s attempt to reproduce and introduce alliteration and to render the puns into English, it is

<sup>5</sup> “I have piled them in a mass” is justified by the fact that the ancient versions have apparently taken “two heaps” (המרתים) as a verb, either reading “I have piled them up” (cf. Targum), which involves merely a change in pointing, or “I have utterly destroyed them” (cf. LXX) which would suggest a reading (חרום חרמתים) and so involve a meta-thesis.

rather remarkable that he not merely makes no attempt to reproduce but does not even call attention to the acrostic feature in the Alphabet Psalms. Many English Bibles insert the Hebrew letter before each of the 22 groups into which the 119th Psalm is divided. Dr. Moffatt omits this (there is of course no strict warrant for its presence) and simply "spaces" the sections. This is rather remarkable in view of his eagerness to introduce alliteration and rhyme.

This leads us to speak finally of Isaiah xl. There are few, if any, more beautiful passages in the whole Old Testament than this splendid chapter, and the Authorized Version's rendering has been little changed in the ARV, which is a clear indication of its superlative excellence. And the language of the opening verses—"Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God"—has been made doubly precious to us by the music of Handel's oratorio. Dr. Moffatt makes this read:

## MOFFATT

Console my people, console them,  
It is the voice of your God—  
speak to Jerusalem tenderly,  
proclaim to her  
that her hard days are ended,  
her guilt paid off,  
that she has received from the  
Eternal's hand  
full punishment for all her sins.

## A. V.

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people,  
saith your God.

Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem,  
and cry unto her, that her  
warfare is accomplished, that her  
iniquity is pardoned: for she hath  
received of the Lord's hand double  
for all her sins (Isa. xl. 1, 2).

In the entire chapter there is not a verse which he has left unchanged. Nothing perhaps in the whole translation shows more clearly how applicable to Dr. Moffatt are the words which Professor McMaster has used of Benjamin Franklin:

In no book, it is safe to say, are the force and beauty of the English tongue so finely shown as in King James's Bible. But on Franklin that force and beauty were wholly lost. The style he thought not agreeable, and he was for a new rendering, in which the turn of phrase and manner of expression should be modern.

On the other hand, for many people it is just the quaint old-fashionedness of the Authorized Version that gives it a peculiar charm. This side of the question has been aptly expressed as follows:

It may be argued that the archaisms of the Bible are so outside the

vocabulary of the day that they sound stilted, rhetorical and pedantic. But for most people, the archaic forms are a great charm. They give the book the detachment from current literature that sets it apart, that makes it "the" Book. To modernize the phraseology would be to rob the Bible of something of its sacredness for many people, to reduce it to the level of a "best seller" and take from it the comfort it brings to millions of men and women.<sup>5a</sup>

Certainly there is something radically wrong with a translation when a literary critic writing in the secular press<sup>5b</sup> is constrained to remark upon the "colossal assurance" of the translator, and to assert that he "cannot escape the charge of stark vulgarity." It is one thing to maintain that the Bible should be given to all nations in their vernacular, so that they may readily understand it and learn to love it. It is quite another thing to assert that it should be vulgarized and cheapened. The Bible is the most educating, elevating, culture-producing book in the world. It should be treated with respect and courtesy by the translator as well as by the reader.

## II. THE INCONSISTENCIES OF THE "NEW TRANSLATION"

One of the clearest marks of a careful and scholarly translation is consistency. To be even reasonably consistent is difficult, especially in the case of such a large book as the Bible; and consequently we can form a fairly correct idea of the pains which have been devoted to the work of translating and of the competence of the translator for his task by ascertaining whether the translation is consistent. Judged by this standard Dr. Moffatt's version does not rank very high. On the contrary it shows unmistakable evidence of being a decidedly careless piece of work.

The proof of this lies in the fact that Professor Moffatt's translation is full of inconsistencies. This appears clearly, for example, in the *spelling* of proper names and foreign words. Usually the spelling is the familiar one. But there

<sup>5a</sup> From an editorial appearing in the *Evening Bulletin* (Philadelphia) and quoted in *The Presbyterian* (January 22, 1925). The occasion of the editorial was the publication of Dr. Moffatt's *New Testament* (Vol. I).

<sup>5b</sup> "The Literary Review" of the *New York Evening Post* (January 24, 1925), p. 1f.

are many exceptions. Thus in Gen. v. five of the names are changed more or less. But the changes are not consistent. "Enoch" becomes "Hanôk." "Enos" is changed to "Enosh"; but the "s" (also an "sh" in Hebrew) in "Seth" and "Methuselah" is allowed to remain. "Lamech" is changed to "Lemek"; but "Jared" and "Japheth" do not become "Jered" and "Jepheth." Similarly, in Karmel, Kherub, Karkhemish, Kinnereth, Karmi, etc., the spelling has been changed; but Caleb, Cabul, Canaanite, Chaldean, etc., are left unchanged, though all have the same initial consonant in Hebrew. "Jehoiachin" is changed to "Jehoiakin"; but "Jachin" (identical with the second part of "Jehoiachin") is found six times as against "Jakin" twice.<sup>6</sup> "Zion" is changed to "Sion"; but Ziba, Ziklag, Zoar, Zophar, Zeruah, etc., remain the same. "Jehovah-jireh" becomes "Yahweh-yireh" (cf. Shear-yashub), although in Jerusalem, Joshua, Jeremiah, Jonathan, etc., the spelling is unchanged (cf. Jared, Japheth, Jakin, above). "Job" becomes "Eyob," although the title of the book remains "Job." "Ismachiah" is changed to "Ismakjahu" and "Dodavah" to "Dodavahu" to accord more closely with the Hebrew; but "Isaiah" is not changed to "Yesha'yahu."

The same inconsistency appears as regards the *form* in which words are given, whether the Hebrew or some other spelling is adopted. "Sennacherib" is changed to "Sanchêrib" to accord with the Massoretic pointing, although the AV spelling, which follows the Greek, is at least as close to the Assyrian (*Sin-ahê-eri-ba*). In "Pulu" for "Pul" the Assyrian spelling is preferred to the Hebrew. On the other hand "Astartê" (Greek form) is substituted for "Ash-

<sup>6</sup> Whether the inconsistency is to be ascribed in all such instances to Dr. Moffatt or whether in some instances the compositor and proof reader are to blame is sometimes uncertain. On the whole the printer seems to have done his work well. Such inconsistencies as "mercy-seat" found once (1 Chron. xxviii. 11) instead of the usual "cover" and "chronicles" (Esther x. 2) instead of "annals," "Bozrah" instead of "Busaireh" (1 Chron. i. 44) are clearly blunders of the translator. On the other hand it seems probable that the double appearance of Isa. ii. 10 (once in its proper place and again between vss. 5 & 6) is intended by Dr. Moffatt.

tooth" of the MT. "Xerxes" for "Ahasuerus" and "Mithradates" for "Mithradath" substitute the Greek for the Hebrew spelling of Persian names, despite the fact that in both instances the Hebrew spelling is nearer to the Persian than is the Greek. "Haran" (Gen. xi. 32) is changed to "Harran" since the Babylonian spelling (*Harrân* cf. LXX, *Χαρράν*) indicates that the "r" should be doubled; and "Erech" becomes "Uruk" (Gen. x. 10). But in the case of "Ekron" the Massoretic pointing is followed although the LXX *Ἐκκάρων* (cf. Assy. *Amkarruna*) indicates clearly that it was pronounced "Akkaron."

As regards the *anglicizing* of the proper names there is also no consistency observable. We shall look first at some place names. Often when Dr. Moffatt retains the Hebrew form of a word he *inserts* the meaning in parenthesis (in the *text*, not the margin). Thus we meet such expressions as "Beer (Welltown)," "Meribah (Complaint)," "Eshcol (Cluster)," "the valley of Berakah (Blessvale)," "Tabêrah (Burning)," "Baal-perazim (or lord of bursts)," "Bochim (or Weepers)"; "Hormah or Doom" omits the parenthesis. On the other hand Dr. Moffatt sometimes translates the name and puts the Hebrew in parenthesis: "Jawbonethrow (Ramath-lehi)," "Rollstone (Gilgal)," "Caller-spring (Enhakkore)." Or, again the name is simply translated. "Ebenezer" (doubly familiar to hosts of Christians because of the line of the well known hymn: "Here I raise my Ebenezer") becomes "Helpstone"; "the vallew of Baca" appears as "Weary-glen," "Jehovah-shalom" as "Allswell-Eternal," "the ascent of Akrabbim" as "the Scorpion Pass," "En-rogel" as "Fuller's Spring."

Sometimes Dr. Moffatt substitutes the *modern* for the *ancient* geographical name, or vice versa as the case may be. The "brook of Egypt" becomes the "Wady-el-Arish" (2 Kgs. xxiv. 7); and "Bozrah" appears several times as "Buisaireh." The "great sea" becomes "the Mediterranean Sea" (Numb. xxxiv. 6), "the Mediterranean" (vs. 7), "the great Mediterranean Sea" (Josh. i. 4); cf. Deut. xi. 24 where



“Mediterranean Sea” represents “uttermost sea” (AV). On the other hand the name “Red Sea,” which is the modern name of that body of water which empties into the Persian Gulf, and a designation going back at least to the time of the LXX version, is apparently not sufficiently accurate and Dr. Moffatt substitutes “Reed Sea” as the correct rendering of the Hebrew (יַם סוּף), despite the fact that the “Red Sea” has the sanction of NT usage (Acts vii. 36, Heb. xi. 29). Yet even here he is not consistent for although the Old Testament writers apply the name Reed Sea *equally* to the Gulf of Suez and the Gulf of Akâbah, Dr. Moffatt gives it only to the former and calls the latter by its modern name. Yet surely if the latter is called Gulf of Akâbah, as it is four times (Numb. xiv. 25, xxi. 4, Deut. i. 40, ii. 1), consistency would seem to require that the former be called Gulf of Suez. Another example of return to the Hebrew form is “Salt Sea” for “Dead Sea.” But in “Tartessus” for “Tarshish” (Gen. x. 4), “Pelusium” for “Sin” (Ezek. xxx. 15), “Ethiopia” for “Cush” (1 Chron. i. 8), “Arabia” for “Seba” (Ps. lxxii. 10), “Daphne” for “Tehaphnehes” (Ezek. xxx. 18), the Greek spelling is preferred to the Hebrew. In “Pukûdu” for “Pekod,” “Sutu” for “Shoa” and “Kutu” for “Koa” (Ezek. xxiii. 23) the Assyrian spelling is adopted instead of the Hebrew.

The same inconsistency appears in the treatment of personal names. In “Moab (from father),” “Reuben (Lookson),” “Joseph (Add),” “Jerubbaal (or Baal-fight)” the Hebrew is retained and the English *added* in parenthesis. In “Ichabod or Noglory,” “Jedidiah or ‘Loved by the Eternal,’ ” there is no parenthesis. Sometimes names are simply translated, but not consistently. The names of the three daughters of Eyob (= Job) are rendered “Ringdove, Cassia and Applescent,” despite the fact that the first is doubtful and the last rests upon a conjectural alteration of the text. Yet “Rachel” (Ewe) and “Deborah” (Bee), the meanings of which are certain, and “Hannah” and “Hadassah,” which would be quite familiar to us as “Grace” and “Myrtle,” are left unchanged. “Shear-

jashub" is only slightly changed (into "Shear-yashub"); but "Maher-shalal-hash-baz" becomes "Spoilsoonpreyquick," a combination which has a fearsome look to the uninitiated. Similarly "Nehushtan" (cf. AV margin "a piece of brass") is not explained in 2 Kgs. xviii. 4 where the meaning is certain, nor is the name "Solomon" explained in 2 Sam. xii. 14 or 1 Chron. xxii. 9; but "Cabul" (1 Kgs. ix. 13), the exact meaning of which is doubtful, is given the parenthesis "good-for-nothing." "Ishbaal"<sup>7</sup> is regularly substituted for Ishbosheth in Second Samuel on the authority of Eshbaal (1 Chron. viii. 33); but "Mephibosheth" is not changed to "Meri(b)baal." In all this there seems to be no rule or consistency discernible and Professor Moffatt's insertion of parentheses in the text shows how little respect he has for its integrity.

While we shall discuss the accuracy of the version later on, it may be remarked that in some instances Dr. Moffatt's anglicizing of the Hebrew words is either inaccurate, doubtful, or wrong. Thus "Abel-Mizraim" does not mean "Mourning field" but "Mourning of Egypt"; "Magor missabib" does not mean "Terror" but "Terror round about." "Hephshibah" (Isa. lxii. 4) means "my delight is in her" not simply "my delight"; "Beulah" does not mean "my wedded wife" but simply "wedded (wife)"; "Lo-ammi" (Hos. i. 19) does not mean "Nofolk," but "Not my people." "Moses (Removed)," "Benammi (Son-of-my-father's-kin)," "Beerlahai-roi (well of life and vision)," "Zera (Scarlet)" (Gen. xxxviii. 30), "Gad (Luck)" (Gen. xxx. 11), "Jabez (Hurt)"<sup>8</sup> are all doubtful etymologies; as are also "The field of Sides" (2 Sam. ii. 16) and "City of the Sun" for "city of

<sup>7</sup> This is probably due to acceptance of the view that the Massoretic vowel pointings "give the word the vowels of *bosheth* 'scandalous thing' (cf. Molech for Melek)." But the change is hardly consistent when Molech, Topheth and Mephibosheth are retained.

<sup>8</sup> "And his mother called his name Jabez (יֵבֶזַע), saying because I bare him with sorrow (צַעַר)." The play upon words is obvious but the meaning of the name is uncertain; and we are not justified in inferring that it means "Hurt" because of the explanation which is appended.

destruction" (Isa. xix. 18). The exact difference between "Elishah" and "Kittim" (Gen. x. 4) is uncertain. Yet "Kittim" is rendered by "Cyprus" and "Elisha" is retained. "Ringdove" for "Jemima," while favored as some think by an Arabic etymology, is opposed by the ancient versions.<sup>9</sup>

As a further illustration of the uncertainty of some of Dr. Moffatt's etymologies of names we turn to Micah. In chap. i. 10ff we have a series of word-plays, e.g. vs. 11b, "the inhabitant of Zaanan ( צֵאנָן ) came not forth ( יצאה ) in the mourning of Beth-ezel." There is clearly a play upon words here; but that "Zaanan" is to be derived from the root "to go forth" ( יצא ) is highly improbable. It seems more likely that it is connected with the word for "flock" ( צֵאן ) Yet Dr. Moffatt renders the line by "Stirtown (Zaanan) dare not stir," as if he were giving the real meaning of Zaanan. The first line of vs. 13, "O thou inhabitant of Lachish ( לַכִּישׁ ), bind the chariot to the swift steed ( לַרְכֶּשֶׁת ) is rendered thus, "Harness your steeds and away, O Horse-town (Lakhish)." The play upon words is obvious; but the meaning of Lachish is quite uncertain. We do not even know that it is a Hebrew word; it may be Philistine. That this pun is to be made the basis of a serious etymology is preposterous, and cannot have been intended by Dr. Moffatt. Yet many of his readers will suppose that he so intended it. If he wished to call attention to the word-play he could have rendered these passages thus "Zaanan dare not stir (Yaza'ah); "Harness your steeds (larechesh) and away, O Lachish."<sup>10</sup> This would at least avoid conveying the impression that the real meaning of the names is being given.

<sup>9</sup> The Targum tells us that "she was called Jemima because she was as beautiful as the day"; and this explanation is favored by the fact that the LXX, Vulg., Syr. and Arabic render it by "Day." Whether they derived it from the common Hebrew root יום (an intensive plural, with feminine ending added?) or from the root יום which is found in Aramaic, Babylonian and Arabic is not clear. But this evidence is certainly too important to be simply ignored.

<sup>10</sup> "Grovel in the dust at Dustown (Beth-ophrah)" (vs. 10) might also be more accurately given as "grovel in the dust (*aphar*) at the house of Aphrah."

A good example of the inconsistent way in which Dr. Moffatt seeks to improve on previous translations is found in the names which he gives to the twelve stones in the high priest's breastplate or "pouch" (Ex. xxviii. 17-20). The identification of some of these stones is admittedly uncertain. In three instances Dr. Moffatt gives the same rendering as the AV: sapphire, agate, amethyst. In four others he uses names occurring in the AV but assigns them to different stones: viz. jasper for sardius, topaz for beryl, beryl for onyx, onyx for jasper. This looks as if Dr. Moffatt had made a very careful study of the precious stones of Scripture. But when we notice that sapphire is retained in his list despite the fact that there seems to be pretty general agreement that sapphires were unknown in ancient times and that the stone meant is the lapis lazuli, while on the other hand cairngorm is substituted for ligure despite the fact that the meaning is much less certain, we feel obliged to doubt both the accuracy and the consistency of the rendering.

And this inconsistency which in some instances is due to carelessness, in others to personal bias, appears in other things than proper names, and names of objects. Specially interesting are the words "Amen," "Hallelujah" and "Selah." There is probably no Hebrew word which is less in need of translation than "Amen"; at least there should be none. It is not merely an Old Testament word, it is found—and twice as often—in the New Testament. Yet Dr. Moffatt contrary to the AV usage usually translates it by "So be it."<sup>11</sup> On the other hand he retains the certainly no more familiar Hebrew word "Hallelujah" which the AV has rendered by "Praise ye the Lord."<sup>12</sup> How he would treat "Selah" we cannot tell since he simply omits it altogether. We read in Exodus of Moses' "stick," but of Aaron's "rod," although the Hebrew word is the same for both. Certainly the expressions

<sup>11</sup> Exceptions are in Chron. xvi. 36, Neh. v. 13, vii. 6<sup>bis</sup>, Ps. cvi. 48, Jer. xxviii. 6.

<sup>12</sup> It is interesting to note that in his *New Testament* he has substituted the Hebrew spelling (or a close approximation to it) for the Greek.

“stick of God” (iv. 20) and the “divine stick” (xvii. 9) offend against good taste and are decidedly undignified. The word “create” is avoided, apparently intentionally, in Gen. i, where it occurs four times. But we meet the word “creation” in ii. 3. The word “shepherd” occurs more than a dozen times in Ezek. xxxiv. Dr. Moffatt renders it “shepherd” with two exceptions: in verse 2 (at its first occurrence) the phrase “shepherds of Israel” is rendered “rulers of Israel” and in verse 23 “one shepherd” is changed to “a single ruler.” This is both confusing and arbitrary. In the rendering of 2 Sam. xi. 11 we find the words “my master Joab and my lord’s officers are camping in the open.” Here the Hebrew uses the *same* word for “master” and “lord” (cf. AV). Whether the latter, as Dr. Moffatt apparently believes, refers not to Joab but to David is not clear in the Hebrew and the English rendering should indicate this fact. The Old Testament writers call Jehu the “son” of Nimshi despite the fact, clearly stated in 2 Kings ix. 2, that he was his “grandson”; Dr. Moffatt twice calls him “grandson of Nimshi” (1 Kings xix. 16, 2 Kings ix. 14) and once “son” (2 Chron. xxii. 7).

We would not, of course, maintain that the same Hebrew word is always to be rendered by the same English word, since a word may have several different meanings. But it is decidedly arbitrary to change or vary the rendering when there is no real warrant for so doing. The word “glory” (*kavôdh*) when used of God is rendered in the Pentateuch as follows: “might” (Ex. xvi. 7), “radiance” (Ex. xvi. 10, xxiv. 16, 17, xl. 35), “splendour” (Lev. ix. 6, 23), “glory” (Ex. xxix. 43, Num. xiv. 21, Deut. v. 24, also Isa. vi. 3), “majesty” (Ex. xxxiii. 18, 22, Num. xiv. 10, xvi. 19, 42, xx. 6), “radiant majesty” (Ex. xl. 34). The word “holy” is similarly treated. The verb, used intransitively (*Kal*), is rendered by “doomed” (Ex. xxix. 37, xxx. 29), “taboo” (Lev. vi. 18, 27), “forfeit” (Num. xvi. 37, 38), “consecrated” (Hag. ii. 13). The adjective (*ḳadhôsh*) is rendered in various ways: “a dread God” (Josh. xxiv. 19, cf. 1 Sam.

vii. 20), "no one is *divine* like the Eternal" (1 Sam. ii. 2), "a mighty majesty is he" (Ps. xcix. 5, cf. AV "for the Lord our God is holy"), "a God majestic, terrible" (Ps. cxi. 9, cf. AV "holy and reverend is his name"), "Israel's majestic One" (Isa. xliii. 14, cf. AV "the holy One of Israel"), "and you shall be a dynasty of priests for me, a sacred nation" (Ex. xix. 6), "in a sacred spot" (Ex. xxix. 31), "You must be sacred, for I, the Eternal, your God, am sacred" (Lev. xx. 26). The noun (*kodhesh*) is apparently usually rendered "sacred" where the AV has "holy," e.g. "sacred ground" (Ex. iii. 6), "sacred" (vs. 14, 21, 23, 30, 32), "sacred palace" (Ps. xi. 4, cf. AV "holy temple"), "sacred name" (1 Chron. xvi. 10), "sacred arm" (Isa. lii. 10). But as in the case of the AV other renderings occur: "his glorious majesty" (Jer. xxiii. 9 for AV "the words of his holiness"), "consecrated" (2 Chron. xxiii. 6), "taboo" (Lev. xxvii. 9, 10, 33). Dr. Moffatt shows what seems to be a decided unwillingness to use the word "holy."

The inconsistency appears further in an occasional meticulous accuracy which contrasts strangely with the freedom which is usually characteristic of this version: an attempt to improve on the *Hebrew* text as if it were not sufficiently exact in its phrasing. Dr. Moffatt speaks of "the Pharaoh" where the AV has "Pharaoh." This is because he regards the name as an appellative rather than a proper name. It means of course "Great House" and is most naturally to be compared with "Sublime Porte" as a name of the Sultan of Turkey. But the article is never used in the Hebrew, which indicates that to the Hebrews it was a proper name. Similarly "knob" is substituted for "horn" as a name for the elevated corners of the altar. The word used in the Hebrew is the regular word for "horn" (קַרְנֵי). Apparently the sacred writers who might be expected to know what an altar looked like thought the word "horn" a sufficiently accurate form of expression; and it is the word used in the "pattern" given to Moses on the Mount. Professor Moffatt apparently considers "knob" a better designation. We seem, as has been said, to

detect here a striving after greater accuracy of description. Yet when we notice that both "*horn* of my salvation" (2 Sam. xxii. 3) and "*rock* of our salvation" (Ps. xcv. 1) are rendered by "saving strength" we feel disposed to dismiss such a thought from our minds and to regard "knob" as simply an attempt to be different from the AV. But this reminds us again that such renderings as this may have far reaching consequences. Whether "horn" as used of the altar implies primarily the idea of "divine power of salvation and help" or the idea of "nearness" to God, the designation is a significant one which figures in the symbolism of the Old Testament. This symbolism is lost in such renderings as "knob" and "saving strength."

The Hebrew or Semitic figure, in some instances a suggestive and beautiful one, is obscured or entirely lost in such expressions as "Edom I claim as subject" for "over Edom I cast my shoe"; "in mourning all of them" for "yea, they shall all cover their lips" (Mic. iii. 7); "let none of his words prove a failure" for "none of his words fell to the ground" (1 Sam. iii. 19); "appoint" for "anoint" (1 Kgs. xxi. 15); "and enjoy thyself" for "and wash thy feet" (2 Sam. xi. 4); "for he will clear me from perplexities" for "for he will pluck my feet out of the net" (Ps. xxv. 15); "my soul is richly fed" for "my soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness" (Ps. lxiii. 5); "he took the line taken at first by his father" for "he walked in the first ways of his father David" (2 Chron. xvii. 3, cf. Isa. viii. 11); "leave all to him" for "commit thy way unto the Lord" (Ps. xxxvii. 5); "men of integrity" for "he that walketh in a perfect way" (Ps. ci. 6). Why spoil the fine metaphor which describes life as a journey? Is the Priestly Benediction really improved by avoiding the picturesque language of the original, as is done in the following rendering?

## MOFFATT

May the Eternal bless you and protect you!

May the Eternal smile on you and favour you!

May the Eternal befriend you and prosper you!

## A.V.

The LORD bless thee, and keep thee:

The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee:

The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace (Num. vi. 24-26).

Such renderings as these seem to indicate a desire on the part of the translator to avoid the use of oriental and Biblical expressions. Yet Dr. Moffatt insists on introducing such orientalisms as wady, sheik, hareem, khan, Bedawin, because of their superior accuracy and local color.

On the other hand it is to be noted that back of Dr. Moffatt's apparent inconsistency there may lie the attempt to read critical theories into the Old Testament. Thus the word "ephod" is changed to "apron" (Pentateuch and 1 Sam. ii. 18), "sacerdotal apron" (1 Sam. xxii. 18), "linen kilt" (2 Sam. vi. 14, 1 Chron. xv. 27), "ornamental idol" (Judg. viii. 27). In the remaining passages (Judg. xvii. 7, xviii. 14, 17, 18, 20, 1 Sam. ii. 28, xiv. 3, xxi. 9, xxiii. 6, 9, xxx. 7, Hos. iii. 4) the word "ephod" is retained. Here we have clearly an attempt to distinguish between a *garment* and an *image*, despite the fact that it has never been shown that by the *image* anything more is meant than the sacred garment as the object of an idolatrous cult. Yet if by "ephod" Dr. Moffatt means an "idol" or "image," why not use the word in Judg. viii. 27 instead of rendering it by "ornamental idol"?

The AV translators were divided into six companies. "The results of their several labors were subjected to mutual criticism, and then underwent nine month's final revision by a representative committee of six members." Had some such method been adopted in the case of the *New Translation*, the glaring inconsistencies of the one-man version would have been avoided.



## III. THE UNRELIABILITY OF THE "NEW TRANSLATION"

The final test of a translation is its accuracy. The translator is the custodian or steward, authorized or self-appointed as the case may be, of that which is another man's and "it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." While we have been considering Dr. Moffatt's *New Translation* thus far more especially from the literary viewpoint, it has been made sufficiently clear we believe that it is characterized by a freedom amounting at times to license which sets it in marked contrast with the AV. We shall now proceed to test it with especial reference to its accuracy and reliability. We observe:

a. The translation is at times so loose that it may be called a *paraphrase* rather than a translation.

Gen. xxxi. 47 reads, "Witness-cairn, they called it, Laban in Aramaic, Jacob in Hebrew." The AV has "and Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha: but Jacob called it Galeed"; and the *margin* states that these words are respectively the Chaldee (i.e., Aramaic) and the Hebrew for "heap of witness." Professor Moffatt has *inserted* the margin in the text. "My father, my father, *worth* chariots and horsemen to Israel" (cf. 2 Kgs. xiii. 14 "*you are worth*") as a rendering of "My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof" (2 Kgs. ii. 12), is paraphrase not translation. Especially instructive is the following:

MOFFATT

The Eternal's sword is gorged  
with blood,  
greased with the fat of its victims,  
with blood of common human folk,  
with fat of the low crowd;  
and leaders shall be struck down  
too,  
nobles and notables;  
for the Eternal holds a sacrifice at  
Busaireh,  
and slaughters victims in the  
land of Edom;  
their blood shall soak the country,  
and their fat shall smear the dust;

A.V.

The sword of the LORD is filled  
with blood, it is made fat with fat-  
ness, *and* with the blood of lambs  
and goats, with the fat of the  
kidneys of rams: for the LORD hath  
a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great  
slaughter in the land of Idumea.  
And the unicorns come down  
with them, and the bullocks with  
the bulls; and their land shall be  
soaked with blood, and their dust  
made fat with fatness (Isa. xxiv. 6,  
7).

Here Dr. Moffatt in paraphrasing the passage spoils the figure, which describes the Lord's vengeance upon his enemies as "a great sacrifice or slaughter." The mention of the different animals—the lambs, goats, bulls, etc.—is in keeping with the picture. The mention of "common human folk," etc., is not. Instead of spoiling the metaphor it would have been better to trust to the commonsense of the reader.

The substitution of "Euphrates" for "the river" (Isa. xi. 15, Ps. lxxii. 8), of "the west" for "Tarshish" (Ps. lxxii. 10), of "Joseph" for "he" (Gen. i. 10), and of "Jehoiakin" for the pronouns "him" and "he" (2 Kgs. xxv. 28, 29) may also be classed as paraphrase. But such changes suggest that the *New Translation* is intended for children and not for adults.

As paraphrase may also be classed the reversing of the form of statement in such passages as: "they are not cheap to him" for "and precious shall their blood be in his sight" (Ps. lxxii. 14), "speak" for "hold not thy peace" (Ps. lxxxii. 1), "and I will keep my word" for "that I will not lie" (Ps. lxxxix. 35), "remember" for "and forget not" (Ps. ciii. 2).

*b.* Words are *inserted* which are not in the original.

When a translator allows himself such liberty in the rendering of the text, it is only to be expected that he will frequently yield to the temptation of reading his own ideas into it. The following examples will illustrate the lengths to which Dr. Moffatt is prepared to go in this regard. The title of Psalm xlv., "From the Choirmaster's *collection* of Korahite songs. To the *tune* of 'The Lilies.' An ode or love song," is also paraphrase; it gives us Dr. Moffatt's *idea* of the meaning of the title. The words "collection," "songs," "tune" and "or" are not in the original; but Professor Moffatt has not indicated this in any way. The same applies to such passages as: "Before ever the child knows good *food* from bad"<sup>13</sup> (Isa. vii. 15); "The river *divine* has streams" (Ps.

<sup>13</sup> The view that "evil" and "good" refers to food was advocated by Clericus (cf. Alexander's Isaiah *in loco*). While a superficial argument in its favor may be derived from the fact that *food* is referred to in the context, it is far more natural to refer it to moral distinctions. It is

xlvi. 4); "so they pitched a *bridal* tent for Absalom on the top of the *palace*" (2 Sam. xvi. 22); "wearing *only* a linen kilt round his middle" (2 Sam. vi. 14); "I am *only* a blossom of the plain, a *mere* lily of the dale" (Song ii. 1); "Your *humble* servant is *but* a cur" (2 Kgs. viii. 13); "all were handed over to them *by God*" for "he gave (them) all into his hand" (2 Chron. xxxvi. 17); "this *girl's* marriage-week" (Gen. xxix. 27); "and the other for Azazel *the demon*" (Lev. xvi. 8); "burnt their children *alive* in sacrifice"<sup>14</sup> (2 Kgs. xvii. 31); "inscribed with God's *own* finger" (Ex. xxxi. 18); "In *the land of* Eden to the *far east*, God the Eternal then planted a park" (Gen. ii. 8); "a *bit of* land worth fifty pounds, what is a *trifle like* that between me and you" (Gen. xxiii. 15); "'Go,' said *Elijah*, 'but *consider* what I have done to you!'" for "And he said unto him, Go back again (lit., Go, return): for what have I done to thee?" (1 Kgs. xix. 20); "retire, leaving him *in the lurch*" for "retire from him" (2 Sam. xi. 15); "taking the *usual* fee for cursing" (Numb. xxii. 7); "their spoil is divided by Israel, the fair Dove<sup>15</sup> at home" for "and she that dwelleth at home divideth the spoil" (Ps. lxxviii. 12); "his arm is stretched out still *to strike*" (Isa. ix. 12); "his trailing robes spread over the temple-floor" for "and his train filled the temple" (Isa. vi. 1); "ye are my *trusty* witnesses" (Isa. xliii. 10); "for my plans are not *like* your plans, nor your ways *like* my ways" (Isa. lv. 8); "that a *mere* child can

singular that Dr. Moffatt should introduce this questionable interpretation here while at the same time rendering Deut. i. 39 by "and the children who know no difference yet between good and evil." In 2 Sam. xix. 35 the translation is, "Have I a taste for pleasures?"

<sup>14</sup> Dr. Moffatt here inserts the word "alive" which does not appear in the Hebrew; but omits the phrase "in fire" which does.

<sup>15</sup> "Israel" is inserted on the basis of the Targum paraphrase which is more or less of an interpretation; "dove" is apparently derived conjecturally from "she that dwelleth" by a metathesis ( ונת being apparently changed to נת ); and "fair" is simply thrown in for good measure as an appropriate epithet. In Ps. lxxiv. 19 "thy Dove *Israel*" does not even have the support of the Targum.

count them" (Isa. x. 19). The words which are *here* italicized are all supplied by Dr. Moffatt as if they were in the original and he makes other changes which we shall not now pause to consider.

When we remember that the AV translators were very careful to indicate (by the use of different type) the supplying of words not found in the original even when clearly favored by the context and required by the English idiom, e.g. "and he saw that *it was* good" (Gen. i. 4), we are impressed with the difference between their conception of the duties of a translator and that of Dr. Moffatt. They allowed themselves no such freedom as Dr. Moffatt claims; and yet Dr. Moffatt makes no effort to indicate how much of his rendering is his own interpretation.

c. The translation contains *interpolations*.

In addition to the interpretive insertions in the text which are not indicated in any way, the *New Translation* contains many explanatory parentheses. Thus, as we have seen, the meanings of names not translated, e.g. "Cain (Got)," or the Hebrew of names which are translated, e.g. "Glen-Undoing (Achor-vale)," are often inserted in the *text*. This is done with the names of all of Jacob's sons. Yet Dr. Moffatt constantly uses the parenthesis to enclose words or phrases which actually occur in the text: e.g. "that is, Zoar" (Gen. xiii. 8); "and she was a shepherdess" (xxix. 9); "the Eternal declares" (Jer. xxix. 32, cf. Hag. i. 5, 9, ii. 7, 9); "the son of Ahitub" (2 Sam. viii. 16); "having no children" (Lev. xxii. 13). Sometimes the parenthesis covers a verse (e.g. 1 Sam. xviii. 21, xxi. 7, 1 Kgs. ii. 27) or more (cf. 2 Chron. v. 11-13). This cannot fail to cause confusion and uncertainty in the mind of the reader. For the reader cannot tell without comparing the original or a *reliable* translation whether a parenthesis is actually a part of the text or an insertion of the translator. The only proper place for a translator's comments is in the margin or in a separate section clearly distinguished from the text. But, if explanations are

to be inserted in the text, we might at least expect that they would be clearly designated as such.

d. The translation involves *omissions* or *excisions*.

This may be the first part of the verse: "And he discovered the covering of Judah" (Isa. xxii. 8), "one thousand *shall flee* at the rebuke of one" (Isa. xxx. 17), "thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen" (Isa. xlvii. 3). Or it may be the last part of the verse: "Bless the LORD, O my soul!" (Ps. ciii. 22), "in the Red [Reed] Sea" (Ps. cxxxvi. 15), "and it shall be as he that gathereth ears in the valley of Rephaim" (Isa. xvii. 5), "all the merry hearted do sigh" (Isa. xxiv. 7), "now I will lift up myself" (Isa. xxxiii. 11), "an abomination is he that chooseth you" (Isa. xli. 24), "did not the LORD, he against whom we have sinned? for they would not walk in his ways, neither were they obedient unto his law" (Isa. xlii. 24). Or it may be the first part and the last part: "Come ye near unto me, hear ye this . . . and now the Lord God and his Spirit, hath sent me" (Isa. xlvi. 16). Compare also: "the woman said to them, Over the water!" for "and the woman said to them, they be gone over the brook of water" (2 Sam. xvii. 20); "I cannot!" for "I will not do this thing" (2 Sam. xi. 11); "Yours indeed the God of mystery, a God who saves" for "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour" (Isa. xlv. 15). The rendering "whenever he knows good food from bad" instead of "that he may know (or, when he knows) to refuse the evil, and choose the good" (Isa. vii. 16) involves elision and transposition as well as the interpolation referred to above. "Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth," (Prov. iv. 5), is changed into "swerve not from my orders. Get sense, get knowledge," by reversing the order of the lines and omitting the words "forget it not."

It is to be carefully noted that these omissions are not, as in many instances, due to the fact that Dr. Moffatt has followed one or more of the versions, notably the LXX, in

preference to the Hebrew. He has done this in many instances. But in the passages above cited the evidence of the versions despite occasional variations supports the Massoretic Text as against these "short" readings of Dr. Moffatt.

*e.* The translation involves in many instances a *rearrangement* of the text.

(1) This may be a *whole chapter*: thus, Lev. iii is placed between chaps. i and ii, and xii between xv and xvi; in 1 Sam. chaps. viii-xii are recast as follows: viii. 1-9, x. 17-19a, viii. 11-22, x. 19b-24, xii., x. 25-27, ix., x. 1-16, xi.; in 2 Sam. the sequence of the concluding chapters is xxi., xxiv., xxiii. 8-39, xxii., xxiii. 1-7; 1 Kings xxi precedes chapter xx. Jeremiah xlv. is inserted after xxxvi. 7, etc. That verses may be "lost" in this process of rearrangement—1 Sam. viii. 10 is apparently missing; so also are Jer. xx. 12-13, Prov. iv. 7a—is not the least dangerous feature of this "critical" manipulation of the text. (2) Verses are transposed. This fact meets us in the translation at the very outset. The opening words, "This is the story of how the universe was formed" are, as we have seen, not a rendering of the first verse of Gen. i. but a loose and inaccurate rendering of ii. 4a which has been transferred to this place. In Gen. vii. the order of verses is 1-5, 10, 7-9, 16b, 12, 17, 22-23, 6, 11, 13-16a, 17a, 18-21, 24.<sup>16</sup> Jer. xxxi. 15-17 is sandwiched in between vss. 1 and 2 of chap. xl., Gen. xxv. 5 is put after xxiv. 1. (3) Parts of verses are transposed: e.g. in Nahum the order is: i. 1, 2a, 2b, 3c, 3d, 4-7, 8a, 3a, 3b, 8b, 9c, 9b, 9a, 2c, 2d, 10, 12-13, 15, ii. 2, i. 11, 14, ii. 1, 3-13, iii. 1-19.<sup>17</sup> Verse 9

<sup>16</sup> While this rearrangement is mainly due to Professor Moffatt's acceptance of the documentary analysis of this account, it is noteworthy that we find instances of this transposition even in passages which he apparently assigns to a single author.

<sup>17</sup> It is interesting to note that in his recasting of Gen. xxxiv, he has made the narrative self-contradictory. Vs. 24, states that "the citizens (of Shechem) all" agreed to comply with the proposal of Hamor and his son Shechem. Vs. 27 tells us that shortly thereafter the sons of Jacob "fell on them in their pain, murdered every male in the town and sacked it." Yet in verses 3a, 2b, and 3b, which in Dr. Moffatt's version are placed *after* the passage just quoted, we read of Shechem's intrigue with Dinah.

of chap. i is especially interesting because in it the three parts are arranged in the reverse order. Cf. Ps. iii where vs. 7*b* follows 7*a* and Job xxviii. where vss. 10-11 are arranged thus, 10*a*, 11*a*, 10*b*, 11*b*; and Isa. xi. where the order of vss. 6-7 is: 6*a*, 7*b*, 6*b*, 7*a*.

f. The translation is at times not a rendering of the Hebrew, but a *reading into* the Hebrew of conjectural meanings which have found favor with the critics. "Angels" (for "sons of God") points to a mythological interpretation of Gen. vi. 2 (cf. "Titans," xiv. 5); "oracular oak" (Gen. xii. 6) to a belief in tree worship; "household gods" (Gen. xxxi. 9) to patriarchal polytheism; "dervishes" (I Sam. x. 11, cf. espec. xix. 20) to the theory that prophetism developed out of such *ecstatic* phenomena as are found today among the howling dervishes; "local sanctuary" (for "judges," Ex. xxi. 6) to the theory that the law regarding the central sanctuary (Deut. xii. 11, etc.) belongs to the period of Josiah (7th century) and is non-Mosaic; "and when the king desires your beauty, yield to him" (Ps. xlv. 11), to the view that this psalm is a marriage ode. "Of every kind" (Gen. i. 11, 12, cf. vs. 21) seems to be a deliberate attempt to escape the argument for stability of species contained in the literal rendering "after his kind," which has been so strongly stated by Mr. Bryan. The substitution of "sacred" for "holy," referred to above, is due probably to the acceptance of the theory of students of "comparative religion" that the idea of holiness was originally without ethical significance and amounted merely to a taboo. Compare also: "Yet at Adam-town they broke their bond" for "but they like men [AV margin, "like

In other words, unless we regard Shechem as having refused to comply with the conditions which he himself had proposed to the citizens of Shechem, or assume that the "every male" does not include Shechem, his intrigue with Dinah took place *after* he had been killed by her brothers. This is called *disentangling* "two separate forms or fragments of a story"; and the reader is supposed to recognize that the J account (printed in italics) represents a different and quite divergent account from the E narrative which precedes. But it will be very confusing, to say the least, to many readers who have had no difficulty at all with the simple, self-consistent narrative of the AV.

Adam"] have transgressed the covenant" (Hos. vi. 7); "ever since Egypt I called him my son" for "and called my son out of Egypt" (Hos. xi. 1, cf. Matt. ii. 15); "for I am mortal as my fathers were" for "for I am not better than my fathers were" (1 Kgs. xix. 4); "I am out against your ancient foe" for "but against the house wherewith I have war" (lit. "house of my warfare," 2 Chron. xxxv. 21); "my spirit shall not be immortal in them" (Gen. vi. 3); "who counted his trust for true religion" for "and he counted it unto him for righteousness" (Gen. xv. 6).

We notice also that Dr. Moffatt does not hesitate to dogmatize in rendering words and passages the meaning of which is generally regarded as uncertain. Thus, "Sacred lots" for "Urim and Thummim" (cf. "judicial pouch"), "outlawed" for "cut off from his people," "apron" for "ephod," "pilgrim song" for "song of ascents," "acacia" for "shittim," "Romans" for "ships of Chittim" (Dan. xi. 30), "Parah"<sup>18</sup> for "Euphrates" (Jer. xiii. 4 ff), "sacred pole" for "grove," "foreign bodyguard" for "Cherethites and Pelethites" (2 Sam. xx. 7, etc.), "ode" for "maschil," "golden ode" for "michtam," "his guardian" for "Melzar" (Dan. i. 11), "sandal wood" for "almug" (1 Kgs. x), etc., are arbitrary because more or less doubtful renderings.<sup>19</sup>

g. The tendency to *minimize*. In Dr. Moffatt's translation

<sup>18</sup> In the Hebrew the word is *Perath* which is the regular name for the Euphrates, although it was also called "the River" and "the Great River" by way of eminence. The reader might suppose that Parah is an attempt to reproduce the Hebrew form of the word. But this is not the case. Dr. Moffatt is here advocating the theory of a number of the critics (cf. G. A. Smith, *Jeremiah*, p. 183 f) that the reference is not to the Euphrates but to the Wady Farah a wady "within an hour of Anathoth." While this may be regarded as possible, it would certainly seem that the reader is entitled to a word of explanation.

<sup>19</sup> We notice that Dr. Moffatt substitutes "Babylon" for "Sheshach" (Jer. xxv. 26; li. 41) on the assumption that the latter is a cryptographic expression (Athbash), although this is a theory which has never been proved. He even substitutes "Chaldea" for "in the midst of those that rise up against me" (Jer. li. 1)—a still more doubtful cryptogram—despite the fact that the mention of Babylon in the immediate context makes the theory in this case still more improbable.



there is a decided tendency to tone down words and phrases, to empty them of much of their meaning. Thus, "young woman" is substituted for "virgin" (Isa. vii. 14) despite the fact that the use of the word in the Old Testament warrants the latter rendering<sup>20</sup> and is supported by the LXX and the N.T. In Ps. cx. 4 "Thou are a priest for ever" is changed to "You are to be a priest for life." This is very significant. The versions support the rendering "for ever." Four times in Hebrews this verse is quoted or cited as referring to the eternal priesthood of Christ; and Dr. Moffatt has there rendered it "for ever." Here simply in order to escape the Messianic reference he renders it "for life." This cannot be said to be demonstrably wrong. The words "for ever" may be used in a restricted sense. Dr. Pusey has laid down what we regard as the proper rule of interpretation in the following words: "But the words of Holy Scripture have their full meaning, unless it appears from the passage itself that they have not. In the passages where the words, *for ever, from afore*, do not mean eternity, the subject itself restrains them. Thus, *for ever*, looking onward, is used of time, equal in duration with the being of whom it is written, as, *he shall be thy servant for ever*, i.e., so long as he lives in the body. So when it is said to the Son, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever it speaks of a kingdom which shall have no end."<sup>21</sup> The whole question then turns upon the identity of the person here referred to. The Messianic interpretation is very old and has New Testament authority. And the use of language which as Dr. Pusey points out is unrestricted in itself favors this interpretation. On the other hand if the writer had wished to say "for life" he could have expressed this in a way which would have been open to only one interpretation. Is it fair to introduce into this important verse such a radical change in direct defiance of the New Testament? Is it fair to the reader to make such a change without a word of explanation?

<sup>20</sup> Certainly in the case of Rebecca (Gen. xxiv. 43 cf. vs. 16) and of Moses' sister (Ex. ii. 8) it refers to unmarried women or maidens, and in the other passages where it occurs it may have that meaning.

<sup>21</sup> *Minor Prophets*, II. p. 71a.

We notice this same tendency in other expressions "a divine hero" for "mighty God" (Isa. ix. 6), "right zealous" for "very jealous" (1 Kgs. xix. 10), "and then he disappeared" for "and he was not" (Gen. v. 24), "happy" for "blessed," "sacred" for "holy," "loyal" for "righteous." "The Eternal alone is your God" (Deut. vi. 4) is twisted from an assertion of the Oneness of Jehovah into a mere affirmation of *henotheism*. "I have found a law-book" (2 Kgs. xxii. 8) deliberately tones down "I have found *the* book of the law" in the interest of the critical theory of the late date of the Priest Code.

Clearly the *New Translation* is a very free, inaccurate and unreliable version of the Old Testament.

#### IV. THE DECEPTIVENESS OF THE "NEW TRANSLATION"

The last subject discussed was the "unreliability" of the *New Translation*. "Unreliable" would seem to be a sufficiently serious charge to bring against the work of any translator of competent scholarship. We would gladly stop there. But some of Dr. Moffatt's translations are more than unreliable; they are deceptive. Dr. Moffatt not merely uses at times great freedom in rendering the Hebrew original, he not merely claims the right to introduce renderings which are highly questionable because based on meagre textual evidence or pure conjecture; but he even claims the right to alter the text in the interest of critical theory, without indicating in any way to the reader that he has substituted a conjectural reading for the one which has the support of Hebrew Text and versions. This can be said of some of the "renderings" already cited. But we shall here present several specific examples of this critical manipulation of the text.

As the first specification in our indictment we cite one of those proper names which Dr. Moffatt has rendered into such startling English, the name "Applescent." Since the name given in the AV to the last of the three daughters of Job is Keren-happuk, the English reader would naturally suppose that "Applescent" is its English equivalent. But

such is not the case. *Keren happuk* (קרן הפוך) apparently means "horn of antimony (*stibium*)" and may be used in the sense of "beautifier," i. e., one who could add to, in the sense of surpass, the charms of the most beautiful. The Targum explains the name as implying that "the beauty of her countenance was as great as a smaragd." The LXX and the Vulgate translate the name; the Syriac, gives it as *Kerenpuk*, the Arabic as *Karna Napuka*. On the other hand "Applescent" is the rendering of ריה תפוחים a conjectural emendation favored by Cheyne.<sup>22</sup> This emendation retains only one consonant of each word. Yet Dr. Moffatt adopts it for his *New Translation*; and the general reader who trusts to Dr. Moffatt will suppose that "Applescent" is the meaning of *Keren-happuk*. Is it fair to mislead the reader in this way?

In 2 Sam. viii. 17 the AV correctly renders the Hebrew as follows: "And Zadok the son of Ahitub, and Ahimelech the son of Abiathar were the priests." Wellhausen objected to this reading because it did not fit into his theory that Zadok was not of priestly descent. So he arbitrarily changed the order of the words. Dr. Moffatt in his rendering "Abiathar the son of Ahimelek (the son of Ahitub) and Zadok were his priests" simply adopts Wellhausen's conjectural revision (it is not supported by the versions); and he goes a step further by changing "the priests" to "his priests" (cf. 1 Chron. xviii. 16), a change which has no bearing on the theory. In other words he arbitrarily changes this passage to make it say what the critics of the Wellhausen school want it to say.

This passage is especially noteworthy because it furnishes us with a striking illustration of the unscholarly inconsistency of the author of the *New Translation*. Here in Samuel, Dr. Moffatt changes the order of words in order to avoid the admission that Zadok was the son of Ahitub. Yet in 1 Chron. xviii. 16 he accepts the reading of the Massoretic Text: "Zadok the son of Ahitub and Abimelek the son of Abiathar were his priests." This might be regarded as due to the fact that Dr. Moffatt as a member of the Wellhausen School entertains a very low estimate of Chronicles and is therefore

<sup>22</sup> Cf. *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, 2569.

in no wise concerned to harmonize it with Samuel. It is more probable that it is simply due to carelessness. We might be tempted to think that when Dr. Moffatt reached this passage in Chronicles he had forgotten how he had treated the one in Samuel. But that he had not entirely forgotten it is indicated by a further point which arises in connection with it. In 1 Chron. xxiv. 3, 6, 31 mention is made of "Ahimelek the son of Abiathar" and this reading is supported by LXX, Vulgate, Syriac and Arabic. On the other hand in 1 Chron. xviii. 16, as we have seen, the name is given as "Abimelek." Since the versions (LXX, Vulg., Syr., Arab.) read there, as in xxiv. 3, 6, 31, "Ahimelek," many scholars regard the "Abimelek" as a scribal error. Dr. Moffatt who often follows the LXX against the Hebrew might be expected to do so. But he does not. Instead he changes the "Ahimelek" of xxiv. 3, 6, 31 to Abimelek! Apparently he is unwilling to admit that Abiathar could have had a son "Ahimelek" lest this confirmation of 2 Sam. viii. 17 might endanger the conjectural reading which he has adopted for that passage. It would be hard to find a better proof of the fact that as a critic of the Old Testament Dr. Moffatt is guided by theoretical considerations rather than by objective evidence.

We turn now to Ps. xlv. 6. There the familiar rendering of the AV "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," which accurately renders the Hebrew original, is changed to read, "Your throne shall stand for evermore." This change rests upon the assumption that the vocative "O God" is not original, but due to an Elohist redactor. The text, it is claimed, originally read "shall be" (YHYH). The redactor either mistook this word for the Tetragram "Jehovah" (YHWH) or sought to avoid its use because it looked like the Tetragram. So he changed it into "God" (Elohim). No objective proof has been cited in support of this claim that the text has been tampered with. The evidence in support of the Massoretic Text is singularly strong; and its correctness is confirmed by the New Testament (Heb. i. 8). Yet at least seven different emendations have been proposed which avoid the Messianic reference. Dr. Moffatt has adopted one of them, an emenda-

tion which has been described by Kirkpatrick as "ingenious" and has consequently considerable vogue, but which owing to its highly speculative character has never been generally accepted by the critics. This should of course occasion no surprise since, in adopting the unnatural rendering "God is thy throne" for Heb. i. 8,—a rendering which accepts the traditional text although it twists its meaning,—Dr. Moffatt clearly showed that he was determined to avoid at all costs the obvious and natural reference of this passage to the deity of the Messiah.<sup>23</sup>

We shall cite one other passage, Isa. lii. 13-liii. 12. That this prophecy is Messianic has been the faith of the Christian Church from the earliest times. This is clearly taught in Acts viii. 35 and it was only with the rise of rationalism in Germany toward the end of the eighteenth century that it began to be seriously questioned. Certainly it is an interpretation which should be considered as deserving at least a fair hearing. Yet Dr. Moffatt deliberately changes the text in such a way as to make it appear to the reader that the passage *must* refer to Israel.

## MOFFATT

Behold, my servant Israel yet shall  
rise,  
he shall be raised on high;  
\* \* \*

"Who could have believed," they  
cry,  
"what we have heard?"

Whoever had the Eternal's power  
so revealed to them?

Why, Israel of old grew like a sap-  
ling,

like a shoot springing from dry  
soil;

he had no beauty to attract our  
eyes,

no charm to make us choose  
him—  
\* \* \*

Therefore shall he win victory,  
he shall succeed triumphantly,  
since he has shed his life-blood,  
and let himself be numbered  
among rebels,

bearing the great world's sins,  
and interposing for rebellious  
men.

## A. V.

Behold, my servant shall deal  
prudently, he shall be exalted and  
extolled, and be very high. (lii. 13)  
\* \* \*

Who hath believed our report?  
and to whom is the arm of the  
LORD revealed.

For he shall grow up before him  
as a tender plant, and as a root out  
of a dry ground: he hath no form  
nor comeliness; and when we shall  
see him, there is no beauty that we  
should desire him (liii. 2).  
\* \* \*

Therefore will I divide him a  
portion with the great, and he shall  
divide the spoil with the strong;  
because he hath poured out his  
soul unto death: and he was num-  
bered with the transgressors; and  
he bare the sin of many, and made  
intercession for the transgressors  
(liii. 12).

<sup>23</sup> For a fuller discussion of this passage by the present writer see this REVIEW for April 1923.

We notice first of all that Dr. Moffatt introduces the word "Israel" twice into this passage. In lii. 13 his reading is secured apparently by changing "shall act wisely" ( *ישכיל* ) into "Israel" ( *ישראל* ) although there is no warrant for this in the versions. If Dr. Moffatt were to follow the Targum as he has in some cases, he would read here "my servant the Messiah." In liii. 2 the word "Israel" is simply inserted, in order to make the *national* interpretation of this intensely *personal* utterance clear to the reader. Furthermore this national interpretation is supported by three further changes in the text. "Who hath believed our report?" To whom does the "our" refer? Alexander regards it as referring to "the Prophet as speaking in his own name or in that of the prophets generally." Of the view that the nations are meant he says "But this hypothesis, besides being arbitrary in itself, and unsustained by any parallel case in which the heathen are thus introduced as speaking, requires a forced interpretation to be put upon the language of the verse." Yet Dr. Moffatt by rendering " 'Who could have believed,' they cry, 'what we have heard' " makes it natural to the reader to suppose that the nations (twice referred to by "they" in lii. 15) are speaking. Similarly in vs. 8, the words "for the transgression of my people was he smitten" (cf. ARV, "to whom the stroke *was due*") is changed to "struck down for sins of ours," which again makes it most natural to think of the nations as speaking.<sup>24</sup> And finally in liii. 12 the words "bearing the great world's sins," seem intended to stress this national aspect more than would be done by the word "many." In this way and by the use of such methods Dr. Moffatt changes a passage which the Christian Church from the days of the Apostles has regarded as prophetic of the sufferings of Christ for Israel and the world into a glorification of Israel as the innocent sufferer for the sins

<sup>24</sup> The versions clearly confirm the reading "my people" for the Hebrew text. It is interesting to note that the Targum instead of thinking of Israel as bearing the sins of the nations explains this verse as referring to the time when the Messiah shall deliver Israel from the thralldom of the nations and the nations shall bear the penalty for Israel's sins.

of the nations. Dr. Moffatt does not intend to be dishonest; but from the standpoint of the "ordinary reader" for whom the *New Translation* is avowedly prepared, such translations amount to nothing less than a deliberate falsification of the text of the Old Testament.

Dr. Moffatt's treatment of this passage is the more remarkable because he has dedicated his *New Translation* to Principal Smith of Aberdeen University. The dedication reads as follows: "To the very Rev. Sir George Adam Smith from whom I learned Hebrew and more than Hebrew." What does this dedication mean? When we turn to Principal's Smith's *The Book of Isaiah*, a book which Dr. Moffatt probably studied under the guidance of its author in student days at Glasgow, we find that Dr. Moffatt differs radically from his teacher. Dr. Smith has told us plainly that "the mass of Christian critics at the present day are probably right when they assume that Israel are the speakers in vss. 1-6"<sup>25</sup> of Isa. liii. Dr. Moffatt changes the text so as to make the nations the speakers. Dr. Smith has declared further that the picture of the servant is individualistic and personal. This appears clearly in the rhetorical question "Was it very wonderful that a people with such an experience, and with such examples, both human and Divine, should at last be led to the thought of One Sufferer, who would exhibit in Himself all the meaning, and procure for His people all the virtue, of that vicarious reproach and sorrow, which a long line of their martyrs had illustrated, and which God had revealed as the passion of His own love?"<sup>26</sup> Dr. Moffatt on the contrary twice introduces the word "Israel" into this passage, clearly with a view to avoiding that individualistic, or Messianic interpretation of this passage which is so precious to hosts of Christian believers. This is quite instructive in view of the oft-repeated claims

<sup>25</sup> *The Book of Isaiah*, II, p. 349.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 358 f. Dr. Smith is inclined to see in this passage a picture of the Messiah as foreshadowed in the sufferings of the prophets, notably Jeremiah. For a discussion of this problem see this REVIEW for January 1925, pp. 99 f.

of the critics that "all scholars are agreed" and that the important results of criticism are "assured." But it is also instructive because it suggests how we should understand the words of the "dedication"—"from whom I learned Hebrew *and more than Hebrew.*" What was the more than Hebrew which Dr. Moffatt learned from Dr. Smith? Clearly it was not any of the details of exegesis. For in this passage the pupil shows entire disregard for the views of the master. What was it then? In what do teacher and pupil agree? In what can we trace most clearly the influence of Dr. Smith? The answer is obvious. Dr. Moffatt learned from his teacher the art of "interpretation," the right of the scholar to make any passage, no matter how sacred, no matter how precious it may have proved itself to generations of Christians, say whatever he may want it to say. In a word, Dr. Moffatt learned "higher criticism" from Dr. Smith and as far as we can judge from this passage, it has happened in his case as in that of many another, that the pupil has outstripped the master.

#### CONCLUSION

The *New Translation* is being widely advertised and actively discussed, extravagantly praised and vigorously condemned. The publishers describe it as a "monumental work." Our principal reason for devoting so much attention to it, is because we believe that in a sense their estimate of it is correct. We do not mean by this that we regard it as a work of such conspicuous scholarship that it will obtain, or permanently hold, a place among the great translations of Holy Writ. On the contrary a translation which aims primarily at novelty, which is full of inconsistencies and doubtful renderings and which does not deal fairly with the original of which it purports to be a translation, cannot be expected to have more than ephemeral popularity. It will prepare the way for a whole series of *new translations*, each striving to outdo its predecessors in novelty and originality. Or it will arouse Christian people who love the Bible to protest in no uncer-



tain terms against this popular pastime of the critics, the "wresting" of the Scriptures in the interest of "modern thought." This book is momentous because it is, we believe, the boldest and most ambitious attempt that has yet been made to *rewrite* the Bible in the light of rationalistic criticism, to introduce purely conjectural changes into a *translation* of the Old Testament not merely without explaining or justifying them, but even without *indicating* their presence in any way. Except for the general statements in the brief (four page) preface in which Dr. Moffatt states his acceptance of the views of radical critics as to the unreliability of the text and his attempts to emend it, there is nothing which could give the "ordinary reader" whom Dr. Moffatt tells us he has particularly in view the slightest hint that he has changed the text of a passage. The use of "dots" to indicate that the text is "corrupt" and of italics and brackets to discriminate "documents" and "editorial additions or later interpolations" may lead him to feel doubtful of the *text* of a passage. But there is nothing to indicate that the *translation* is at all uncertain—no question-marks, no footnotes; nothing. There is not even an index.<sup>27</sup> Yet Dr. Moffatt frankly characterizes some of his renderings as "guesses." And he tells us: "When the choice lay between a guess or a gap, I inclined to prefer the former, feeling that the ordinary reader, for whom this version is designed, would have a proper dislike of gaps." This is in a sense true. A gap looks ugly and we "dislike" it because it is so conspicuous to the eye and because it so obviously breaks the connection. But a "guess" is dangerous just because it is not obvious to the eye and may make excellent sense and therefore pass muster as something more than a guess. If Dr. Moffatt's *translation* had more obvious "gaps" and fewer unrecognizable "guesses" it would not be so deceptive a version of the Old

<sup>27</sup> This is inconvenient to say the least. When, for example, Dr. Moffatt places Isa. x. 20-23 after xxiii. 22 he certainly owes it to his readers to tell them where to find it. The *Shorter Bible* radical as it is in many ways has at least this in its favor that it provides an index to tell the reader what passages are given and *where* they are to be found.

Testament. Dr. Moffatt excuses himself from what would seem the obvious duty of calling attention to these "guesses," on the ground that there are so many of them. "Since nearly every page," he tells us, "contains some emendation of the traditional text in the interests of accuracy and point, it has been impossible to annotate them."<sup>28</sup> This is unfortunate, to say the least. For we believe that if all the "guesses" were "annotated," the "ordinary reader" would be able to see what havoc "criticism" has played with the Scriptures and would revolt against it. As it is he must either follow Dr. Moffatt blindly, accepting without question his statement that no emendations of the traditional text have been made "except upon what the translator regards as sufficient evidence," or else he must compare every passage with a *reliable* translation or have recourse to a scholarly commentary to find out whether the surprisingly "fresh" rendering which Dr. Moffatt gives of a passage has substantial evidence back of it or is simply a "guess" of the critic.

<sup>28</sup> As an indication of the difference between Dr. Moffatt's attitude toward the Old Testament and his treatment of the New, it is noteworthy, that while as we have stated there is not a single footnote in his *Old Testament* (1031 pages) his *New Testament* (327 pages) has about two hundred marginal notes. Yet the difference is not really as great as this would seem to indicate for the same inconsistency which we have found to figure so prominently in Dr. Moffatt's *Old Testament* is no new feature in it, but one which is also observable in his *New Testament*. The star example of this is Matt. i. 16, which Dr. Moffatt renders "Jacob [was] the father of Joseph, and Joseph (to whom the virgin Mary was betrothed) [was] the father of Jesus who is called 'Christ.'" This is a rendering of von Soden's text, regarding which Professor Armstrong tells us, "In Matt. i. 16 von Soden inserts in his text the reading supposedly underlying the rendering in the Sinaitic Syriac,—a reading which is not found in any primary authority" (cf. this REVIEW, for July 1915, p. 464). This extremely questionable reading which makes Jesus to be the son of Joseph in a literal physical sense, Dr. Moffatt adopted without mentioning the vitally important fact that he was following von Soden in the use of a reading "not found in any primary authority." He did not add any footnote at all! But in the case of 1 Thess. v. 4, for example, he carefully stated that he read "thieves" (κλέπτας) instead of "thief" (κλέπτης) on the authority of "A B and the Bohairic version." It is hard to avoid the impression that such inconsistency is more than mere inconsistency.

In stating that Dr. Moffatt has deliberately "falsified" the text in such passages as those just cited, we have no intention of bringing a railing accusation against a distinguished scholar. Dr. Moffatt has no intention of being dishonest. He speaks of himself as an "honest translator," who must recognize that "the books of the Old Testament are, for the most part, books which have been either made out of books, or edited more or less drastically by later hands." He has become so imbued with the spirit of conjectural criticism that he perhaps thinks his *New Translation* a decidedly conservative piece of work. He doubtless aims to be candid when he assures the reader that no emendation of the traditional text "has been admitted except upon what the translator regards as sufficient evidence." He can cite the names of eminent scholars in favor of his rendering of Ps. xlv. 6, and of his interpretation of Isa. liii. But that does not alter the fact that his rendering of these and of other verses, is a literal forgery, i. e., the substitution of a purely conjectural reading for one the correctness of which cannot be questioned on objective grounds. Dr. Moffatt like many others does not recognize that the fact that he feels that he can improve on a passage of the Bible is in itself no sufficient *proof* that the passage in question is corrupt or that his emendation would be an improvement upon it. But our quarrel is not with Dr. Moffatt personally but with his method; and Dr. Moffatt learned his method in a celebrated school of theology in Scotland, sitting at the feet of one of the most widely known Bible scholars of today. It is the method of rationalism. Yet it is being taught in theological seminaries and finding expression in *new translations* of the Bible. This shows the seriousness of the issue with which Protestantism is confronted.

Mohammed in the Koran classes the Jews and the Christians with his own followers as people of a *book*. Radically as Islam differs from Judaism and Christianity, Mohammed recognized that the Jew and the Christian shared that belief in and reverence for a Divinely authoritative revelation which is characteristic of the followers of the crescent. The

most noticeable thing about the "higher critic" of today and his pupil, the "liberal" Christian, is his slight regard or, to put it more strongly, his entire disregard for the authority of Scripture, for all external authority. He is a law unto himself. A hundred years ago, even fifty years, such a translation as Dr. Moffatt's would have aroused a storm of protest. How it will be received today is not yet clear. One thing is certain. If the generations that are gone had permitted themselves the same liberties with the Scriptures which Dr. Moffatt and other critics are taking today, there would now be no Old Testament, no Bible to which to appeal. The mass of conjectural changes would be so great that it would be impossible to get back to the original. We are heirs of those who even in the face of persecution cherished the Bible as the Word of God. It is because of the care with which they treasured it that we can say today, as we read its precious pages, "Thus saith the Lord God!" The question for us is this, Shall we allow this Bible after nineteen Christian centuries of blessed witness to the things of God to be at the mercy of any and every critic who has a new theory as to what it ought to say and mean? Or shall we expect as our fathers did three centuries ago that a version which is to gain acceptance with Christian people will be one of which it can honestly be said that it is "translated out of the Original Tongues; and with the former translations diligently compared and revised" by the command, not of king or prince however "Christian," but of Christian people who love the Bible and will tolerate no substitute for it however "modern" or "scholarly" it may claim to be? Our answer to this question will determine whether our faith is to rest upon the wisdom of men or upon the Word of the Living God!

*Princeton.*

OSWALD T. ALLIS.