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I.

THE FUTURE OF HUMANITY ON EARTH.

HE would be a bold thinker who should undertake to foretell the fortunes and the state of an American Republic five or ten centuries hence:—who should attempt not only to describe the type or types of government which may then exist here, but also to delineate the personal characteristics of the men and women of that distant era, the social life of the period, the grade of development and of civilization which our humanity will then have attained on this broad and elect continent. How much bolder would he be who, in full view of the present medley of antagonistic elements, religious, political, social, in European society and life, should propose to tell us what Europe will have become, after the agitations and the mutations of the next thousand years! Bolder still would he be deemed who should attempt to prognosticate the future at that distant period, not of any single nation or continent, but of all the continents and all the races of mankind: who should assume to say what this world, in its controlling elements and tendencies, its prevailing spirit and principles and life, will be at the end of five or ten more centuries of activity and of growth. But would not he be boldest of all—daring beyond all comparison—who should venture to prophesy concerning the career and development of our humanity, not for any such given period however prolonged, but down to the last century and the last hour of recorded time: unfolding before our vision that ultimate issue in which the whole of human life on earth shall be consummated, in the decisive day

V.

BIBLE REVISION AND THE PSALMS.

IT is proposed in this paper to begin with Bible Revision in its general aspects, and then to offer some thoughts upon the revision of the Psalms.

The completion of the Revised New Testament, after more than seven years' labor, gives great satisfaction on all sides. At first, there was some complaining against the secrecy imposed upon the Revisers. But a fuller knowledge of their plan and methods has produced apparent acquiescence. Inasmuch as the rules contemplate successive revisions by the companies, before a final vote, and everything is provisional and undetermined till such vote is taken, it seemed better that they should come to an agreement among themselves before inviting outside opinion. This obviates much profitless discussion, with possible prejudice, over proposals many of which are merely tentative and will never be adopted.

The long suspense, however, with scanty information about the progress of the work, has stimulated the desire of all interested in it, to know what conclusions have been reached, and presently the Revision of the New Testament will be upon trial.

Those by whom the labor has been performed, can neither affect indifference nor presume a favorable verdict. Their task in its magnitude, difficulties, and abundant compensations, has exceeded all their thoughts. The call came unexpectedly, and they obeyed it as from God. As they advanced, their interest deepened and their hearts warmed. It cannot be otherwise, when men of like faith and hope engage continuously in such work. There can scarcely be one of them who has not become more catholic, who has not been drawn into closer sympathy with those whose theological definitions differ somewhat, not one who has not been greatly profited in various ways by this employment.

They have been encouraged by the hearty appreciation of an increasing multitude of the best men, although a multitude not inferior in gifts, grace, or influence, were looking on doubtfully. They could only leave the issue with God, satisfied that those who were not yet heartily with them, were willing to wait patiently without committing themselves to absolute dissent and opposition. Many of these are now ready to welcome and to adopt the new version if found worthy. Everywhere increased interest is manifest, and general expectation of a satisfactory result. Not a few are prepared to endorse the Revision in advance, and to institute measures tending to its immediate adoption, as a substitute for the English Bible now in use.

Meanwhile the Revisers themselves are less sanguine, and regard such proposals as premature. Willing that the public should be predisposed to kind judgment, and supremely anxious that their labor shall prove to have been not in vain, they greatly prefer a suspension even of decisively favorable judgment until their work has been carefully examined. They scarcely dare form a positive opinion. They can only claim to have labored faithfully in reliance upon Divine help, realizing more fully than most others the inherent difficulty that lies in the way of their success. It is not principally philological, as if depending upon unknown forms and intricate constructions in the original languages of Scripture, or upon want of flexibility and copiousness in our own tongue. It lies in the necessity of giving a single version that shall harmonize and satisfy widely discordant views.

If a version could be produced that should give in English an impress of inspired thought, originally conveyed in Hebrew and Greek, as exact as the imitation of writing or picture by photograph, this would be the consummation of all possible desire. But in the organic and radical differences of the languages involved, it would require a greater miracle than inspiration itself. It is universally agreed, that the highest attainable excellence is to be sought, not in a new translation, but in the revision of an English text that is itself the result of revision upon revision, beginning with John Wycliffe's translation from the Latin Vulgate, five hundred years ago. The body of rich, sweet, and pure old Saxon

English, in which the thoughts of God stand before our eyes, could not have been collected in the time of King James. His translators, as they are called, say candidly, "We never thought from the beginning that we should need to make a new translation, nor yet to make of a bad one a good one; but to make a good one better, or out of many good ones, one principal good one." So it must continue for the future. We may claim that the Authorized Version admits of great improvement, even beyond what will be reached or is proposed in the present Revision, and yet consistently hold that in its body and substance it is incomparable and can never be set aside.

Yet views may differ widely as to how far revision should go. Many would be glad to see a version in which the changes should be far more numerous than is possible under the restrictive rules that have been adopted. But it is certain that no revision that proposes any but the most carefully guarded departures from the Authorized Version could be accepted. The very conservative rules adopted by the Convocation of Canterbury, in 1870, under which the British and American Companies have consented to work, propose "to introduce as few changes as possible consistent with faithfulness." By implication they forbid the attempt to give the best possible translation into the English tongue, commanding the highest regard in the choice of language for "the Authorized and earlier versions." In order to make sure that no changes shall be made that are not imperative, it is provided that no alteration shall be finally adopted except by a majority of two-thirds. This rule, added to the attachment to our dear old English Bible, which none feel more strongly than the Revisers, gives ample security against rash innovation.

But these judicious rules present no fixed standard by which the Revisers may be governed, or may be judged. It could not be otherwise. The multitudes whose competence to judge intelligently is indisputable, have no criterion save the opinion of the individual. This might be quite different if he had set himself down with the Revisers to the actual work. It might have been greatly modified by continued thought and investigation, especially when tested by the con-

clusions of other acute and independent minds similarly engaged.

In the light of their own experience, the Revisers will deprecate hasty conclusions. Moreover, if the first verdict should be less unanimously favorable than some have anticipated, they will not despair of a different result from more mature thought, with such comparison of views by the outside public, as has often resulted in change of opinion in their own confidential consultations.

Thus far we have remarked upon the general subject of Bible revision, in view of the near completion of the New Testament. Some thoughts upon the revision of the Old Testament may be acceptable to those who appreciate the intimate relation between the earlier and the later Revelation, and who wish to possess the whole Bible in a more faithful and intelligible rendering.

We hear constant questioning about the amount and character of the changes that will be made. Most of the examples of inaccurate or infelicitous rendering that were given in the able treatises that prepared the way for revision were from the New Testament. This is simply due to the fact that the studies of Trench, Lightfoot, Ellicott, etc., had taken that direction. Perhaps the examples that may be drawn from the Old Testament are even more conclusive. It is difficult to answer some of the questions that are asked, not so much on account of an obligation to secrecy, as because scarcely anything can be said to be settled till the final vote adopting the work as a whole. A few sentences will show that at present it is impossible to estimate the number of changes within many thousands.

First may be mentioned the question whether the name Jehovah shall hereafter appear in the English Bible wherever it occurs in the Hebrew, or whether it shall continue to be hidden under the name LORD. It is a point not yet determined by the Companies, and more than six thousand changes depend upon it.

Questions of inferior importance are yet under advisement, connected with the retention of Old English phrase when contrary to modern grammatical rule. Such are the use of the

relative *which*, when the reference is to persons; of the indefinite article *an* before words beginning with aspirated *h*, as *an hand, an hundred*; of the possessive forms *mine* and *thine* before the same class of words; of the possessive *his* before the names of inanimate objects, so that we read in Ex. xxv. 31, "Of beaten work shall the candlestick be made; his shaft and his branches, his bowls, his knops, and his flowers shall be of the same;" and similarly in several thousand instances.

We refer to these less important changes principally for the sake of illustration. If they shall all be made they will not materially affect the character of the Authorized Version, nor seriously disturb even those who would decidedly have preferred the more archaic forms. It will readily be seen that an immense number of slight changes in phraseology could be introduced with as little unfavorable effect upon the general style and impression of the whole, scarcely perceived except by those whose acquaintance with the English Bible is most minute, and if judiciously made, would be seen by them only with approval.

It will be impossible to give an adequate idea of the work the Revisers found upon their hands by merely citing instances where faithfulness to the original requires considerable change, with corresponding effect in removing obscurity, or in substituting a thought quite different from that before conveyed. Since revision had been undertaken, they could hardly avoid removing minor blemishes, which could have been tolerated had no greater existed; but which, nevertheless, are blemishes. They may only be like minute floating particles in water, otherwise clear and sparkling; but the water will be purer and more palatable for their removal.

Now such imperfections, which invite and almost compel the touch of the corrector, are very frequent. They occur on every page of history, psalm, and prophecy. Some of them are very slight, only noticeable on the closest inspection, and do not affect the sense. Others, though requiring little change, are very important. Such are the use or omission of the definite article in certain instances, and the misapprehension of a dependent or circumstantial clause, whether the connection is expressed by a particle or only by the order of the sentence.

It may be that some who have partially yielded to the necessity of revision will at first be disappointed in finding the changes more numerous and greater than they had hoped. Yet most of them, if assured that the renderings are in general approved by those upon whose scholarship they must needs rely, will doubtless acquiesce. Though perhaps slowly and reluctantly, in the feeling that some familiar and favorite passages seem spoiled rather than improved to their individual taste, they will at last become reconciled, especially if they find compensation for what they lose at one point in the new and delightful meaning that is developed at another.

But what may be the chagrin of some of the official leaders of public sentiment in such matters, who have sermons prepared with great pains, erudition, and profusion of graceful rhetoric, on such delicious texts as these, "Unstable as water thou shalt not excel," "I will guide thee with mine eye," "Thy gentleness hath made me great," if they find them in the new version translated respectively, "Boiling over like water thou shalt not excel," "I will counsel thee with my eye upon thee," "Thy lowliness hath made me great"? These precious discourses that have been delivered before delighted audiences, and, but for this unfortunate revision, might yet serve them many a good turn, now utterly useless! The feelings of those on whose careful labor such blight has fallen, can only be compared to those of a miser on finding that his gold has become dross. Nor will it comfort them much if some cynical person shall be heard to say that it is an appropriate punishment, and only too mild, for those who can so far forget the privilege and duty of authorized expounders of the Oracles of God, as to fail in going directly to the fountain-head of wisdom and truth, and to depend for their knowledge of the Scriptures on the uncertain medium of a translation.

Whether the changes just mentioned will be made, or whether they will be declined for reasons hereafter to be given, we are not at liberty to state, and if we were, could not without notes that are not at hand. But that the translations given literally represent the Hebrew, any scholarly commentary will show.

It would be easy to multiply similar or even more striking instances of differences between our English Scriptures and the

original. But we must close this branch of the subject with one remarkable example of the possibility of illumining the darkness of the Authorized Version. It may be found in the verses that introduce the familiar and delightful Messianic prophecy of Isaiah ix. 6, 7, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given. And his name shall be called Wonderful," etc. These verses are admirably translated, and cannot be improved. But the preceding sentences beginning at viii. 22 are singularly obscure and unintelligible, notwithstanding the very correct translation of ix. 2, 4. We simply place the Authorized text side by side with a rendering that cannot be far from accurate:

viii. 22. And they shall look unto the earth; and behold trouble and darkness, dimness of anguish; and *they shall be* driven to darkness.

ix. 1. Nevertheless the dimness *shall* not be such as *was* in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zabulon and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict *her by* the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the Gentiles.

2. The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath light shined.

3. Thou hast multiplied the nation, *and* not increased the joy; they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, *and* as men rejoice when they divide the spoil.

4. For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian.

5. For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire.

6. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, etc.

22. And to the earth they look, and behold distress and darkness, gloom of anguish and thick darkness, driven away.

1. For there is no gloom to her that was in anguish. In the former time he dishonoured the land of Zabulon and the land of Naphtali; but in the latter time he hath glorified the way of the sea beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles.

2. The people that were walking in darkness have seen a great light, they that were dwelling in a land of deathshade, upon them a light hath shined.

3. Thou hast multiplied the nation, thou hast made great its joy; they joy before thee like the joy in harvest; as they exult when they divide the spoil.

4. For the yoke of his burden and the staff upon his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, thou hast broken as in the day of Midian.

5. For all the armor of those that go armed in the tumult of battle, and the garments rolled in blood, shall be for burning—the food of fire.

6. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, etc.

Thus, unless we greatly misapprehend the Hebrew text, we may have in place of the obscurity that has been transmitted from the earliest versions, a clear and beautiful prediction of the breaking forth of hope and joy upon a midnight of sorrow and despair, of deliverance from oppression, to be followed by the destruction of all implements of war, introducing an era of profound and universal peace, as the sure and glorious effect of the birth of the Messiah.

Part II. The revision of the Psalms.

When the desire to see the Revised New Testament has been gratified, the next earnest inquiry will be for the Psalms.

On account of their devotional character and consequent fitness to excite or to express devotional feeling, the Psalms are probably read more than any part of Scripture. Their language is to many not less familiar and precious than the words of our Saviour. In fact, as if they belonged to the New Testament rather than to the Old, we all use them, as the readiest and most apt expression of our fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.

What liberties will the Revisers take with these beautiful English Psalms? How far dare they suggest by their substitutions that these words graven upon our hearts are less than Divine? We can easily imagine reverent and passionate attachment declaring itself by such questions.

This attachment is an embarrassment that stands out more prominently in connection with the revision of the Psalms than with that of any other portion of the Scriptures. The fact of its existence and strength constitutes the most delicate and difficult feature in the reviser's work. It often holds him equally poised between the "faithfulness" in rendering the Divine thought accurately, required by his rule, and an apprehension that all he has labored for will be rejected. The amended Version cannot be imposed by authority. It can only be adopted if generally approved.

The Revisers have at all times been conscious of implied restrictions in their organic rules, not less imperative than those that are expressed. These rules merely interpret the prevailing sentiment of readers of the English Bible, and they are designed to secure a revision that neither their minds nor their hearts will refuse. They have come by long use to associate Divine ideas with certain familiar forms of speech. As a matter of feeling, and this often most gracious, they are loath to part with words that they learned in early childhood as words of the Spirit, and that are interwoven with their most sacred and cherished recollections. This consideration cannot be disregarded.

It may be imagined that, under such restrictions, revisers must constantly be reminded that they are not independent

translators, and that changes that would otherwise be immediately adopted must often be ruled out in favor of the less accurate rendering that has the ground rather than to disturb hallowed association with familiar phrase, unless the latter were decidedly misleading. A body of revisers would likely, in most instances, be guided to the best conclusion by their own feelings, since, in this matter, they are quite in sympathy with their constituents. How few would consent without great reluctance to any considerable change in Psalms xxiii., xc., or ciii. unless convinced that the translators were seriously in error?

Let it not be inferred that, in our opinion, the Psalms should be, or that they will be, left as they are. Nor let it be thought that the Revisers will shrink from the responsibility they have accepted, where the sense given is obscure or misleading, and the true sense difficult to ascertain, on the convenient plea of reverence for the Authorized Version. Nor would we encourage any one, when the work is submitted, to yield to the first impulse of repugnance to change. It would be better if we could rid ourselves of this slavery to certain forms of speech, merely because they are familiar, so far, at least, as it prevents us from craving and accepting the exact Divine thought of Psalmist, Prophet, or Apostle. Those who believe in an inspiration extending to the words of Scripture, cannot consistently decline a more faithful, though less familiar rendering, and should be the last to oppose the most thorough revision. The Revisers yield to none in admiration of the pure, rich, and melodious Saxon of the English Psalter. But they know well how often, by a delicate touch here and there, a Psalm may be illuminated, and its beauty, as well as its clearness and its power, be immeasurably enhanced. The effect may be produced by bringing out an emphatic pronoun, the slight change of a connective particle, the closer observation of a misconceived tense, and possibly the transposition of a word or of a clause into the Hebrew order for the recovery of lost emphasis, or some other like changes. Either of them separately may seem not worth making, and perhaps would accomplish nothing, but unitedly they will often work wonders, with the alteration of scarcely one principal word.

The 10th and 11th verses of Psalm cxvi. are very per-

plexing, whilst otherwise its translation is almost perfect. All translators acknowledge great difficulty, but a possible solution is ventured. It will, at least, serve for the illustration of the important principle just stated. We give together the Hebrew and the Authorized English :

10.	הֶאֱמַנְתִּי כִּי אֲנִי אֲנִי עָנִיתִי מְאֹד :	10. I believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted :
11.	אֲנִי אָמַרְתִּי בְּהִסְדִּי כָּל-הָאָדָם כֹּזֵב :	11. I said in my haste, All men are liars.
12.	מָה-אֲשִׁיב לַיהוָה כָּל-תַּגְּמוֹלוֹתָי עָלַי :	12. What shall I render unto the LORD For all his benefits toward me.

The Authorized Version is faulty :

1. In throwing the leading verb into the past. Like the Greek perfect, it describes the present, and must often be so rendered in the Hebrew, *I believe*.

2. In translating the particle *כִּי*, *therefore*, a sense which it seldom bears, never in a connection like this. We are limited to *because*, *when*, or *that*.

3. In treating the future (or imperfect) form as a praeter. It should be translated, *I speak*, or *I will speak*, but surely not, *I have spoken*.

4. In rendering *הִסְדִּי*, *my haste*; which gives the idea that the Psalmist is virtually retracting a rash utterance. It means, as in Deut. xx. 3 and elsewhere, *alarm*, and brings up vividly a great peril in the past when his trusted friends failed him.

5. In failing to bring out the emphatic pronoun *אֲנִי* in both verses.

Hupfeld translates, *I believe when I speak*, and cites Ps. xxxix. 4 for *הִסְדִּי* in the sense, *to break forth in complaint*. The complaint, according to his view, immediately follows, "*I was greatly afflicted*." This, while giving tenses and particle correctly, leaves everything dark. Why should thanksgiving be interrupted by such complaint, and why introduce the simple statement of the fact of past distress by the emphatic *I believe*? Dr. Perowne prefers another rendering as "giving due promi-

nence to the repeated pronouns." This is important, but the sense he obtains is hardly more appropriate than Hupfeld's.

The difficulty disappears if we connect ver. 10 with ver. 12. An intervening parenthesis founds his present testimony on personal experience of God's faithfulness in a time of great trouble, and contrasts it with a like experience of human faithlessness in the same trial. This brings out the emphatic pronouns. We accordingly translate :

- 10. I believe when I say,
(I, that was in sore trouble,
- 11. I, that said in my peril,
"All men are liars"),
- 12. "What shall I render unto Jehovah
For all his benefits towards me."

There is an ellipsis of *לֵאמֹר* *saying*, as in Ps. xxxix. 4, *et al.*, which we have virtually supplied by translating *אֶנְשֵׁי* *I say*.

Psalm lvi. presents another instance in which it is possible by merely placing certain words in parenthesis to remove obscurity, with great addition of force. The phrase, "In God I will praise his word," in ver. 4, which is twice repeated in ver. 10, seems quite unmeaning. But the emphasis that may be given to the former verse, and even more to the latter in the mode suggested, is wondrously effective. As thus :

- 3. What time I am afraid,
I put my trust in thee.
- 4. In God, (I will praise his word)
In God I have put my trust.
- 10. In God, (I will praise his word)
In Jehovah, (I will praise his word)
- 11. In God I have put my trust ; I will not be afraid ;
What can man do unto me ?

Each parenthesis contains an ejaculation of praise to God for His faithful promise as a ground for the most absolute confidence in the midst of all conceivable danger.

We have referred to these two Psalms for the purpose of showing that where the sense is doubtful or difficult, relief may sometimes be given by very slight change. The main question returns, What will be the character of the revised Psalter as compared with the Authorized? We have indicated a general answer, that changes must be made most sparingly if the new

version is to be accepted in place of the old. This renders the work of the Revisers very difficult. It obliges them to decide on other ground than that of inherent fitness, and often to put aside manifest improvements in favor of the more ancient and familiar phrasing, if the sense is not materially affected. It should be said, however, for the relief of those who may imagine that the result will be of little value, that even upon this principle the changes will not be few, and the improvement will be very great.

But those, and there is reason to believe that they are many, who wish and hope to see the exact thought of the original in the clearest, strongest, and best English expression will not be gratified. The time may come for such a revision, but it is not now.

Yet the criterion by which the revisers must be guided is so uncertain that it is not sure how far they might venture in the direction of thorough revision, and be sustained by the intelligence of their constituents. It would be better that the two years assigned for the completion of their work should be prolonged to ten, than not to reach the best attainable result. Or, if it be wiser to submit in the nearer time, as a substitute for the Authorized Version, one that shall disturb in the least degree those who cling tenaciously to the old words, another question forces itself upon us. Why should not Christian scholarship be laid under contribution, whether by combined or single effort, to produce for general circulation the best possible rendering of the Psalms as an aid to Bible study, quite aside from the purpose of the present Revision? It is very easy to separate between their use in public worship and in other devotion, and the less sacred yet not unsacred use that we now suggest. What we have in mind is revision and not translation, but revision less trammelled than would be acceptable in worship, that shall always seek the most exact expression of the cadences of the Hebrew bard into pure, rich, racy Saxon English of the earliest times.

We can only, in the remainder of this paper, indicate in a general and imperfect way some of the principal points that must be wisely regarded in a successful revision of the Psalms. It may interest those who would like to understand more per-

fectly the nature of the work in which the company are engaged. But in our illustrations, as in those already given, confidential obligations are carefully observed.

The first point relates to the rendering of the principal words, the verbs, nouns, and adjectives. The stock of such words in the English Scriptures needs very little enlargement. It is much fuller and richer than if the early translators had adhered more closely to a single rendering for every Hebrew word. It may be said emphatically that any reviser, however free to choose according to his own discretion, who should ever substitute another word for the one before him, except for good reason, whether of signification, uniformity, or euphony, would misjudge; and such error frequently repeated would be fatal. But where sufficient reason exists he should be free, even to go outside the sacred books, and to use other like words. Seldom, if ever, would he need to go beyond Shakespeare.

With reference to single words we would ask first for the restoration of the word expressive above all others of Divine majesty and grace which Jewish superstition has dethroned, the name Jehovah. It has been spoken of by some who are unacquainted with its origin, meaning, and glorious connections, as a purely national designation, and they refer to the Jehovah of the Jews as the rival of the Phœnician Baal. It has no such narrowness, but is broader than humanity in its utmost sweep of number, duration, and possible conditions.

It is the most personal of all Divine names. By its etymology and form—*I am that I am*—it exhibits the Most High God in His self-existent, independent, and eternal personality, coming into personal relations with those whose being as immortal persons must have originated with Himself, and must depend on Him alone. It is especially fit that this transcendent name should be brought out from its hiding in our own day, with its tendency to substitute the dumb, deaf, blind, soulless Baal of natural law for a personal God, with corresponding degradation of man made “in the image of God.” In its form and meaning as a verb it exhibits the eternal God ever coming to be something to man that He was not before, ever unfolding the glorious properties of His infinite nature in varying adaptation to

the condition and wants of those that love and trust Him. It is the covenant name of God. Its earliest historic connection is with His earliest exhibition of loving-kindness to men, and it stands for all time by His own edict as the name of gracious manifestation. "This is my name forever, and this is my memorial to all generations."

How it should ring out in such Psalms as cxvi., cxviii., and cxxxv. ! Few can read them, uttering the name Jehovah with all the emphasis that some of these wonderful sentences require, without wishing that hereafter it may stand there in the boldest type.

The reviser is often at a loss over the various renderings of the same word in the Authorized Version. If he attempts to produce rigid conformity, he will soon discover his error. It requires innumerable changes which would very often be for the worse. For while the early translators needlessly multiplied definitions, and sometimes with injury to the sense, perfect uniformity is neither attainable nor desirable. In any language signification is often modified by position. An English word that very well represents the Hebrew in one place, may not in another. Besides, no one who appreciates the melodious flow of many exquisite sentences in the Psalms can doubt that rhythm and euphony often determined the choice of words.

Yet it seems unnecessary, in a language that retained so much of its primitive simplicity, and in which the development of new meanings and the coinage of new words were comparatively limited, that the same Hebrew word should so often receive more than a score of different renderings, or that the same English word should so often translate more than a score of Hebrew words.

The question thus raised, however, is one of adequate expression rather than of uniformity. Upon its proposal instances multiply indefinitely, on the one hand of changes that seem unnecessary, and on the other of those that are desirable. In Hebrew, as in English, there are many words that are quite interchangeable. We care very little for the difference between *pity* and *compassion*, *power* and *strength*, *despise* and *contemn*. Since mountain and hill are relative terms, we may not care much that הַר *a mountain*, is translated *hill* in sixty out of five

hundred times of its occurrence in the Old Testament, or that Zion should be called about as often a hill as a mount in the English Psalter, a difference that is not found in the Hebrew.

But why should not a distinction always be made between צָעַק, *to cry out in distress*, שָׁרַע *to implore help*, and קָרָא *to call*, instead of rendering them indiscriminately, as well as several other verbs, *to cry*? Why should בִּזְזָה, *to totter*, approach its proper and sharply descriptive sense only in Ps. lx. 2, "*the earth shaketh*," and in other twenty-five times in the Psalms, be translated vaguely *to be moved*, or, erroneously, *to remove*, *to be carried away*, *to slip*, the first and most frequent of which renderings is used for more than twenty other Hebrew verbs? Why should זָמַר, *to make melody*, from the primary conception of *striking harp strings*, occurring nearly fifty times, be always translated *to sing*, or *to sing praises*? One more instance, out of many, is that of the verb הִתְקַה, which is rightly translated only in Ps. lvii. 1, "Under the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge." In other thirty-six places it is translated *to trust*. One of them is a preceding line of the verse just cited, and a beautiful emphasis produced by the repetition of the word is thus lost :

"Be gracious unto me, O God, be gracious unto me,
For in thee have I taken refuge ;
Yea, in the shadow of thy wings I take refuge
Until these calamities be overpast."

As we began these illustrations of the work of the reviser upon the principal words of discourse with the name Jehovah, we close with two words closely related to the covenant name of God, as well as to each other, חֶסֶד and חַסְדִּים. The former is one of the richest and sweetest words in the Old Testament. It is also one of the important words that have a very definite and fixed meaning, and for which, in the difficulty of finding even a single equivalent, the best English expression should be chosen, rarely to be changed. חֶסֶד (*chésed*) occurs in the Psalms 127 times. It is translated *mercy* 93 times, *loving-kindness* 23 times, and in the few remaining cases, *goodness*, *kindness*, and *merciful kindness*. It is the holy love of God to His covenant people, "both as the source and the result of his covenant with them : " so Hupfeld on Ps. iv. 4. There is no

other word in the Psalms expressive of the *love* of God to men. *Mercy*, which implies in its object misery, and sometimes ill-desert, but not tender complacency such as we find here, is inadequate. Besides, it is a lower word, for one may have mercy upon a beast. Grace, like its Greek equivalent *χάρις*, in its original and broader signification, would be more suitable. But both are used in the New Testament somewhat technically of God's free pardoning mercy, with special reference to the absence of merit, while this beautiful word points solely to the intimate and eternal relation between Him and His people. The combination *loving-kindness*, which appears first in Coverdale, expresses it admirably, and should be carried through wherever it occurs.

We remark briefly upon *חֲסִיד* (*chasid*), a derivative of *חָסַד*. Its passive form indicates that it is one who is the object of God's loving-kindness, though in two or three instances used actively of one who manifests such love to others who are in the same covenant. It occurs twenty-five times in the Psalms, and with a single exception is translated in the LXX. by ὁσιος. This has been usually followed in the Authorized Version in the translation, *holy one*, or *saint*. It obscures the delightful signification of the word which should be brought out in some form—*one that God loves*. See Pss. iv. 3; xvi. 10; xxx. 4, etc.

We pass on to particles, the least words, yet, as every experienced translator well knows, often the most important and difficult. In all composition precision in the use of connectives is indispensable to perspicuity. In transferring Hebrew thought into English phrase they require the most careful and wisest treatment. The omission in poetry of particles that would be used in prose, occasions special embarrassment and liability to error; but even more frequently the poverty of the Hebrew language in conjunctions, and the sparing use of those which it has. It is also deficient in grammatical forms that in other languages indicate the mutual relations of the parts of a sentence, or of one sentence with another. Not unfrequently the connection of a qualifying or circumstantial clause depends solely upon structure, where our own idioms require more definite expression. Still oftener the connective *ו* *and* is used to suggest the fact of an existing re-

lation, while its nature must be inferred mainly from the relative position of the words. This requires the most delicate apprehension of the arrangement of the sentence, as well as of its leading thought, in order to determine what English adverb or conjunction will adequately express the logical bearing of sentence upon sentence, or of clause upon clause.

Illustrations are abundant. In Psalm xxxii. 9 it depends upon our view of the final circumstantial clause not commencing with a connective particle, which is translated, "lest he come nigh unto thee," whether the bit and bridle are said to be used on account of the ferocity or of the shyness of the horse or mule, to keep it away, or to keep it near. We prefer the latter, and would translate, "He will not come nigh unto thee."

But even where a connective is used in the original, the early translators were often loose and arbitrary in their rendering—an error which it is for the more exact discrimination of later scholarship to correct. More obvious examples of misapprehension in this respect can scarcely be found than occur in two passages that have already been cited—the translation of כִּי by *nevertheless* in Is. ix. 1, and of the same particle by *therefore* in Ps. cxvi. 10.

The determination of a very interesting question of exegesis and translation in Psalm xix. 3 depends mainly, we think, upon a negative particle:

אֵין אָמַר וְאֵין דְּבָרִים בְּלִי נִשְׁמָע קוֹלָם

"*There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard.*" The English reader who is told that the words in italics are not in the original, might prefer to omit *where*, and to read what follows as an independent clause: "There is no speech nor language; their voice is not heard."

It is between these two renderings that opinions divide. The former, or relative construction, yields the thought that wherever words are spoken or language is used, the testimony of the heavens to the glory of God is heard; the latter, that no actual words are spoken, and their voice is inaudible. Vitringa, De Wette, Delitzsch, and Hitzig would read the clause as relative; Hengstenberg, Hupfeld, and Perowne as independent.

But the function and use of בְּלִי seem decisive against the independent construction and to sustain the Authorized reading.

In three instances in the O. T. it is used poetically as equivalent to שׁוֹ in independent clauses, but in every case with the imperfect tense. With a participle or noun it always stands relatively, and here, as elsewhere with participles, it is like the Greek *α privative*, and gives the sense *inaudible*. For an instance of the relative rendering of this particle see Ps. lxi. 2, where the translators have used no italics; "a dry and thirsty land where no water is"—simply בְּלֵי מַיִם, *without water*, translated relatively. Since in our passage the reference is to speech, and not to place, the translation *in which* is preferable to *where*. If we do not say with Delitzsch that the proposed independent rendering is flat, we may at least say that it is a poor substitute for the grand thought that the heavens give their testimony for God everywhere among men, as intelligibly as if expressed in their own language and by their own familiar words. The objection is made, and it is about the only one, that the relative rendering in our English Bible requires us to understand דְבַר, which is properly rendered *speech* (spoken words), in verse 2, as meaning *language* in verse 3, a sense which it bears nowhere else. The objection will scarcely lie against the above explanation, in which *words* and *language* are quite distinct, nor should it weigh decisively against the uniformly dependent usage of the negative particle in similar construction elsewhere.

We have yet to deal with the Hebrew tenses, in connection with the Psalms and other sacred writings of like character. No one source of perplexity to the translator or reviser is so frequent or so serious.

There are two points involved—the right conception of the time in the mind of the writer, and its expression. In many cases the difference is that between the ideal and the actual, the poetical and the prosaic. The ideality of the reader of the translation may often be trusted, and a literal transfer be ventured, perhaps with great advantage to the vividness of the picture. This is especially true of poetry, where we look for a boldness that would not be tolerated in prose. In other cases it could only embarrass. Here is room for the exercise of most intelligent and careful judgment, besides a thorough acquaintance with the phenomena of Hebrew tense.

The earlier printed Hebrew grammars were not luminous upon the subject of tense. Those who prepared them, whether Jew or Gentile, had not themselves mastered the difference between Oriental and Western modes of thought and expression. In consequence of this, the early English translators must have been very much in the dark. It is evident that they generally followed somewhat blindly the tense renderings of the older versions.

The later Hebrew grammars for English learners usually follow their predecessors in not attempting to give an inside view of Hebrew tense. An exception to this is the very excellent "Introductory Hebrew Grammar" by Prof. A. B. Davidson (Edin., 1874). For the most part their treatment of the subject is a superficial adaptation to English thought and usage, leaving to a more advanced stage intricacies that might confuse a beginner, but thus preparing for greater confusion in the end. This method succeeds measurably at first, but has the disadvantage of fixing imperfect conceptions permanently in many minds, and detracting greatly from the intelligence and satisfaction with which the grandest portions of the Old Testament might have been read. When those who have learned that in Hebrew there are two tenses, the *past* and the *future*, reach Job and the Psalms, it is only by striking out boldly from their earlier teachings that their perplexity is relieved.

The right doctrine of Hebrew tense is that of Ewald, who is justly called the prince of Hebrew grammarians. It is presented in his "Ausführliches Lehrbuch" (8th Ed., Leip., 1870), with a German luminosity which is quite different from the English. It receives the latter as admirably developed and illustrated by S. R. Driver, of Oxford, a member of the British Revision Company ("Treatise on the Use of the Tenses in the Hebrew," Oxford, 1874). This doctrine, stated with a boldness for which neither of the treatises referred to is responsible, is that there are no tenses in the Hebrew. There is nothing in any verb-form to indicate whether it is past, present, or future. The so-called tenses are rather moods, not as identical with our own grammatical moods, for which also the Hebrew has no distinctive forms, but as exhibiting aspects in which an action may be viewed, other than in relations of time. The one describes action as *completed*, the other as *commencing* and *in progress*.

They have been called respectively the *perfect* and the *imperfect*, which are appropriate, but should not be confounded with the same terms in the grammar of our own language.

If this be so, the time or date of an action must be determined by the context. It might be said that what occurred in the past is more likely to be viewed as complete, and the future as in progress. But this is true to a very limited extent, as every one who has read two chapters in Genesis and Isaiah must have observed.

On the one hand, history is mostly carried on by the so-called future forms, a semi-poetical usage, but thoroughly established and constant in prose. The historian entering into the spirit of his narrative pictures the events as springing up successively as if under his own eye. On the other hand, the prophet transports himself into the future, and describes what shall inevitably occur as already accomplished.

Having this key to the manner in which the two forms are used, we are not surprised to see in Gen. i. that after the time of the principal verbs of the first two verses which are perfects has been defined as past by the adverbial בְּרֵאשִׁית (B'rêshith), "*in the beginning*," the principal verbs to the end of the chapter, nearly fifty in number, carrying on the narrative from step to step, are all imperfect (future) forms, only one perfect occurring throughout. In the opposite direction, if we open at Is. ii. 2, where the prophecy begins, the first verb is perfect, marked, however, as descriptive of the future not only by its position, but by the attached phrase "*in the last days*." This beginning holds all the succeeding forms to the same time, so that the prophet uses either with the utmost flexibility, but the principal verb that marks each successive step in advance is in the perfect.

Singular as this is, and apparently contradictory to the usual designation of the two forms, the student who has been told that they are past and future easily accommodates himself to it upon being further informed that the position of the verb at the beginning of its clause, accompanied by an emphatic *and*, binds it to the preceding verb, and has a transforming power, converting the past into future, and the future into past. This relieves him, and he passes on comfortably, though the teacher is obliged to admit when he reads in Gen. ii. of the mist ascending and of rivers flowing that his futures are sometimes

past, even when not so converted. A corresponding admission must be made with reference to the use of an independent *praeter* as a predictive future. Under any view of tense the connection by emphatic *and*, and the position of the verb are very important in determining time, but they do not alter the paradoxical fact that the prevailing tense in history is what our grammars call future, and in prophecy the so-called *praeter*.

It is in the intermediate portion, however, poetical, contemplative, devotional, that we have the greatest occasion to remember that the Hebrew tenses are not tenses.

Begin with the poetry of Job. In his first wail (iii. 2), "Let the day perish in which I was born," there occur two futures. After a series of imprecations in jussive futures, which do not bear on the present discussion, he resumes in ver. 11, "Why died I not from the womb," etc., using three verbs, a "future," a "*praeter*," and a "future." In ver. 12 there are two verbs, a "*praeter*" and a "future." In neither case is the tense "converted" by emphatic *and* (ᾱ conversive or consecutive), yet the translators felt obliged to render them all as past, because the actual time is so clearly intimated in the context.

We are now ready for the Psalms. They are full of instances similar to those given from Job. The treatment of Psalm ii. by the early translators shows how helpless they were in the presence of such tense combinations. The tenses in ver. 1 are a perfect followed by an imperfect (or, past and future); in ver. 2 an imperfect followed by a perfect (or, future and past). In the LXX. they are all rendered by Aorists, sharply past, which is followed by Wycliffe. In the Vulgate they are all rendered by futures, which is followed in the Prayer-Book version as taken from Cranmer. In the A. V. they come out grandly as all presents :

1. Why do the heathen rage,
And the people imagine a vain thing?
2. The kings of the earth set themselves,
And the rulers take counsel together,
Against the LORD and against his anointed.

This rendering is from Coverdale (1536), and he, according to his title-page, "translated out of the Douche (German) and the Latyn." It was Luther whose sagacity, independent of the grammatical helps of his day, as well as of the Ancient

Versions, fixed upon the present as the time in the poet's mind, which might be expressed in the Hebrew by either tense form, or alternately by both. In fact, this is the only point of contact between the two Hebrew tenses, the perfect, like the Greek perfect, of completed action, and the imperfect, of action in progress, and this alone can account for their frequent use together, and under the same conception of time.

In vv. 3, 4, the tenses are all imperfects. Now a change of time with the same tense, and without adverbial or other notice of futurity, is improbable. Yet the A. V. following Coverdale adopts the future rendering at ver. 4, and Luther at ver. 5. The continued use of the present in the translation is not only more graphic and spirited, but is required by the unity of the description.

4. He that sitteth in the heavens derideth,
The Lord mocketh at them.
5. Then he speaketh to them in his anger
And in his wrath he terrifieth them.

It is God looking down from the high heavens, while the raging mites below are conspiring to dethrone Him. To separate them in time greatly mars the effect. Comp. Is. xl.

22. הַיּוֹשֵׁב עַל הַיָּבֵשׁ הָאָרֶץ וְיֹשְׁבֵיהָ כַּהַגְבִּים, "He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are like grasshoppers."

This irregularity is constant. In Ps. xxiii. the tenses are all imperfects. Here again the translators, while they treat the Psalm in the main as a recognition of present grace, in intelligent disregard of grammars and Ancient Versions, are not consistent throughout. "*I shall not want*" may be justified as a closely dependent expression of sequence, equivalent to "*I cannot want*" in the Liturgy. But in ver. 4, since the tenses are unchanged, why should we not have had all the verbs translated by the present?

Yea, when I walk in the valley of the shadow of death
I fear no evil, for thou art with me,
Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

The particle כִּי is not a hypothetical *though*, and the valley of deathshade is sometimes found far on the hither side of death itself.

Psalm xli. 1-7 is illustrative of several points previously made, as well as of that now under consideration. The translation which we add to the text is not one that would be proposed for adoption into the Revised Psalms, but is rigidly literal.

1. אֱלֹהִים לָנוּ מִחֹסֶה וְעֹז
 עֲזָרָה בְּצָרוֹת נִמְצָא מֵאֵד :
2. עַל־כֵּן לֹא־נִירָא בְּהַמִּיר אֲרֶץ
 וּבַמּוֹט הַרִים בְּלֵב גַּמִּים :
3. יַהֲמוּ וַיִּחְמְרוּ מִיַּמּוֹ
 וַיִּרְעְשׂוּ הַרִים בְּנִצְנֹתָו סֵלָה :
4. נָהַד פִּלְגָיו וְשִׁמְחוּ עִיר־אֱלֹהִים
 קָדַשׁ מִשְׁכַּנִּי עֲלִיּוֹךְ :
5. אֱלֹהִים בְּקִרְבָּהּ בַּל־תִּמּוֹט
 וַעֲזָרְתָהּ אֱלֹהִים לְפָנוֹת בְּקָר :
6. הָמוּ גוֹיִם מָטוּ מִמְּלָכוֹת
 נָתַן בְּקוֹלוֹ תִּמְנוֹג אֲרֶץ :
7. יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת עִמָּנוּ
 מִשְׁצָב לָנוּ אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב סֵלָה :

1. God for us is refuge and strength,
 Found a helper in distresses exceedingly.
2. Therefore we fear not when the earth is changed,
 When mountains totter in the heart of the seas.
3. Let their waters roar and foam,
 Let the mountains tremble with their swelling. Selah.
4. There is a river—
 Its streams gladden the City of God—
 The Holy place where dwelleth the Most High.
5. God is in her midst—she tottereth not,
 God helpeth her at the morning dawn.
6. The nations roar, the kingdoms totter,
 He uttereth his voice, the earth melteth.
7. Jehovah of Hosts is with us,
 A tower for us is the God of Jacob. Selah.

Very few would be willing to spare the familiar rendering of ver. 1 in the Authorized Version, "*a very present help in trouble*," though it is not warranted by the original. The substitution of *truly* for "exceedingly" will probably give

the exact thought of the Psalmist, the adverb qualifying the whole clause.

In ver. 2 we have the most frequent Hebrew construction for "time when" of actual occurrence; lit., *in the changing—in the shaking*, like the Latin gerundive *in mutando*. It is never elsewhere rendered hypothetically, and should not be here. The early translators failed to see that the Psalmist is not drawing upon his imagination for possible convulsions in the frame of nature, in which he would maintain his trust in God, but is describing figuratively a terrible condition around him. A comparison of vv. 2, 3, with ver. 6 identifies the change of the earth with the desolation of war, the roar of the waves with the roar of nations, and tottering mountains with tottering kingdoms—all present. In fine contrast, the intermediate verses give a picture of the City of God abiding in gladness and tranquillity, unshaken because God is in the midst of her. This is obscured in the A. V. by the varying translations of *בָּרַחַץ*, *carried* in ver. 3, *moved* in vv. 4 and 5.

We must then translate the tenses, which are all imperfects till we reach ver. 6, as present, or we lose the unity and the poetic splendor of the description. In ver. 6 three tenses are perfects, the fourth an imperfect. Even without the last, it would be harsh to translate these verbs alone in the whole Psalm as referring to former time. If, however, there were a doubt, that last decides that all are presents. The three perfects set forth the turbulence of the nations and the rebuke of God as complete conceptions. The single verb that describes the sequel is in the more graphic form. It is impossible to express the difference in English without losing the expression of present fact that belongs equally to both.

From the above illustrations it is easy to discriminate between the two forms treated as presents. The perfect includes with the act its completed issue in the present. The imperfect refers exclusively to the act itself, either in its inception, or in its progress till another act supervenes. If in rendering both as presents we obliterate the distinction, it is from sheer necessity. The perfect, however, may be happily rendered by our perfect with its auxiliary *have*, whenever the immediate context suggests unambiguously the present. In Ps. xvi. 1, "I have taken refuge in thee," is better than "I trust

in thee" of the A. V. So of the same verb in Pss. vii. 1; xi. 1; xxv. 20; xxxi. 1; xxxvii. 40; lvii. 1; lxi. 1, etc., and so very often of other verbs. But more frequently we have no resource but the present. The phrases, *I have trusted, I have loved*, might convey only a reminiscence. On this account xxvi. 8 should read, "I love the habitation of thy house."

With regard to the imperfects, it is a fair corollary from what we have observed concerning their use, that in writings like the Psalms, which are so largely expressions of present devout emotion, the presumption is always in favor of treating them as presents unless accompanied by clear indications of future time. Let it stand in *alto relieve*, that in the Hebrew language the imperfect is the natural and predominant, if not the only expression of gracious affections in their flow and succession—of love, trust, gratitude, joy in God and praise viewed as springing up responsively to the Divine touch upon the heart-strings. The participle is too heavy, too concrete and fixed for this purpose. Consequently, the participles of verbs that represent such emotion, if used at all, describe habit, character, or established condition. So the participle of אָמַן *to trust*, in Pss. xxvii. 3 and lxxxvi. 2, the only instances of its use by the Psalmist of his own confidence in God. Strong feeling chooses the imperfect, or to give it a less fleeting character combines with it in parallelism the perfect. If we must attach to these forms the prevailing sense of past and future, we confine the Psalms almost exclusively to recollection and anticipation. Then present gracious utterance has no channel, and we must still read in xviii. 1: "I will love thee, O God, my strength."

Our limits forbid reference to the frequent recognition of the above principle in the Authorized Version, or to the numerous instances in which it has not been observed.

It was in mind when the subject was taken up to give further tense-studies from the Psalms. But space fills fast, and we would not exceed reasonable bounds. Yet we cannot forbear calling attention to the remarkable use of tenses in Psalm xviii., the grandest of all hymns of praise in its transitions from the depths to the heights, from the far off to the near, from the boldest epic, descriptive of the terrors of the Almighty, to the smoothly flowing lyric of his thanksgiving for

great deliverance. The tenses seem all in disorder. We have sometimes the perfect, both the absolute and the relative. But a large proportion of the verbs are imperfects. If the perfects were in the sacred poet's mind as praetere, there is here a boldness in the exhibition of time which would ordinarily be unpardonable. But it may be justified by the glow, as well as by the rush and sweep of his thought, flitting from the real past to the ideal present, as he calls up vividly before him the scenes of his former life, and describes, as if now transpiring, the rapid succession of the panorama. Thus he excites in his heart the liveliest emotions of present gratitude. It is possible to enter into such sympathy with his fervor that we shall not find it intolerable to pass with him from one conception of time to the other. Yet we should prefer to render all the tenses by the more graphic present, as in other cases in the Psalms where the two tenses are combined. As an experiment we subjoin a literal translation of vv. 4-19, according to the former alternative. It will be remembered that in the A. V., the time is all in the past, with historic correctness, but with great loss of poetic effect.

- xviii. 4. The cords of death compassed me
And the floods of destruction terrify me ;
5. The cords of Sheol surrounded me,
The snares of death came before me.
6. In my distress I call upon Jehovah,
And unto my God I cry for help.
He heareth out of his palace my voice
And my cry for help, to his presence it cometh, even to his ears.
7. Then the earth shook and trembled,
And the foundations of the mountains quake ;
And they swung to and fro because he was wroth.
8. There went up a smoke in his anger,
And fire out of his mouth devoureth,
Coals are kindled by it.
9. Then he bowed the heavens and came down
And thick darkness was under his feet,
10. And he rode upon a cherub and flew,
Yea, he sped upon wings of wind.
11. He maketh darkness his covering,
His pavilion round about him ;
Darkness of waters, dense clouds of the skies.
12. Out of the brightness before him there passed through his dense clouds,
Hailstones and coals of fire.
13. Then Jehovah thundered in the heavens,
And the Most High giveth his voice ;
(Hailstones and coals of fire).

14. And he sent forth his arrows and scattered them.
Lightnings he shot forth, and routed them,
15. And the channels of waters were seen
And the foundations of the world were laid bare,
At thy rebuke, O Jehovah,
At the breath of the wind of thine anger.
16. He reacheth from on high, he taketh me ;
He draweth me out of great waters ;
17. He rescueth me from mine enemy, who is strong,
And from my hater, because he is mightier than I.
18. They came before me in the day of my calamity,
But Jehovah hath become a stay for me,
19. And he brought me forth into a broad place,
Yea, he delivereth me, because he hath delighted in me.

We trust that it is fully apprehended that we have passed entirely away from the work of the Bible Revision Company, whose limitations we cordially approve, to the possibilities of Psalm revision in a wider scope. Let our thoughts be received as a mite contribution to the revision of 1980.

JOHN DEWITT.