

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

THE REVISION OF THE ENGLISH SCRIPTURES.

BY REV. CHARLES TUPPER, D. D.

AN ESSAY READ AT THE BAPTIST MINISTERIAL INSTITUTE AT YARMOUTH, 1871.

(Conclusion.)

Where new versions are indispensable to the welfare of heathen nations and converts from heathenism, it frequently happens that there are only persons of one denomination—sometimes only one individual—that can perform the work of translating; because no others understand some particular language. In such cases it is evidently incumbent on the translators conscientiously to give the true sense of the original as exactly as they can. It is not to be expected that in all these versions entire uniformity can be attained.

With reference, however, to the English Version, which has been long in general use, the case is widely different. There are men in all the principal denominations capable of aiding in the revision of it; and it is a matter in which all Protestant Christendom, so far as the English language is spoken, is concerned. This work ought, therefore, in my opinion, to be effected by the united labours of all that are concerned in it.*

Here the question will naturally arise, how is this to be accomplished? Owing to existing prejudices, and the want of sufficient friendly intercourse among different bodies of Christians, some difficulty may attend it; but there seems to me to be a way by which it may be done that ought to be satisfactory to all parties.

It is well known, as already stated, that individuals of several different denominations have attempted to furnish English Versions for private use, either of the whole Bible, or of some parts of it, preferable to the authorized Version. I must say, however, that I have never yet examined any English Version of an integral part of the Bible which I would be willing to see substituted in the place of the common Translation. Each Translator makes some evident improvements; but each also makes changes which are, according to my judgment, much for the worse. It is manifest therefore, that much caution is requisite in order to secure, as far as possible, the advantages of improvement without the alloy of deterioration. The plan which I propose—subject of course to amendments—for the attainment of this desirable object, is, that a Board of suitable men be selected by all the principal denominations of Protestants—I would have none excluded that would unite on such terms—and that they meet at an appointed time and place, and, availing themselves of all the helps that can be attained, carefully revise the Common Version; but that no change be made in any text or word without the unanimous agreement of the whole Board.

It may be alleged, that some desirable changes might be prevented by objections raised by individuals. This is readily admitted; but undoubtedly many useful alterations would be effected, with very few, if any, for the worse. The progression, if not so great as might be desired, would be all, or very nearly all, in the right direction. This is a consideration of no small moment.

The proposed restriction would tend to prevent contention respecting the comparative numbers of delegates to be sent by the different bodies. The having of one delegate present would afford a guarantee to all the members of any denomination, that no change would be made—which might seem detrimental to their views, unless it was actually authorized by the original. Hence all the denominations represented would possess confidence in the Revision so effected.

I may be reminded that the Translators employed by King James were Pedobaptists and Episcopalians; and that a Revision made in the manner proposed might retain some denominational tinge. This is not denied; but, as the Translators appear to have been men of sound erudition, of correct doctrinal views, and of sincere

*Note.—[It is pleasing to see in an Editorial of the London Freeman, a Baptist Periodical, the following concurrent remarks, published about twenty years after. "A revised Translation of the Bible for general use ought to be above all suspicion of sectarian bias; and therefore it was in the highest degree expedient, not only to welcome the light of the greatest learning from all quarters, but also to let each section of Christendom have its representative amongst the Revisors." The Editor adds, that it should be "the work of no one sect alone; but the joint production of the ablest men of all parties." (See C. M. March 22nd, 1871.)

intentions, and as their Version has been received by all Protestants, and held in general esteem for two hundred and forty years, [now 260] there seems no prospect of obtaining any other [excepting substantially such a Revision as that proposed above] that will be equally unexceptionable, and in the reception of which all parties will unite.

Were an arrangement thus amicably made to revise the authorized Version in the manner now suggested, there is no reason to apprehend that any obstacle would be interposed by legislative authority. Numerous changes, which are principally improvements, have been introduced since this Version came from the hands of the Translators; as will be rendered certain by a comparison of any modern Edition with the "Exact Reprint of 1611," published at Oxford in 1833. Bible Societies, also, whose rules bind them to circulate in English the authorized Version only, while none of them could consistently attempt a revision separately, would of course be at liberty to adopt one thus made by general agreement.

[It will be observed that this first draft of a plan is recognized as 'subject to amendments.' In the movement recently made in England for Revision, the Episcopalians take the lead, but they invite the co-operation of men of eminent erudition, who possess the confidence of the denominations to which they respectively belong. Here it may be reasonably anticipated, that the denominations so represented at the Board will cordially receive the Revision. The work is evidently to be executed with great caution. Among "the general principles to be followed," one is, "To introduce as few alterations as possible into the text of the authorized Version, consistently with faithfulness." Another is, "To make or retain no change in the text on the second final revision by each company, except two-thirds of those present approve of the same."

The measure now adopted, which coincides essentially with the view formerly expressed by me, meets my hearty concurrence. May success attend it!]

For the Christian Messenger.

HOME MISSIONS AND HOME MISSIONARY OPERATIONS.

III.

Mr. Editor,—

Permit me now to recapitulate. Because before a present system is condemned, and doomed, it may not perhaps be thought amiss carefully to scan its merits, to ascertain with certainty what it is doing, and what it has done within some given period of the past. In this way those who are to pass upon the subject, upon whose fiat its future existence depends, may be better able to pronounce upon its fate. Has the present Home Missionary organization reasonably well fulfilled the expectations of its friends and supporters hitherto. If so, no rash hands ought, I think, to be permitted to commence the work of spoliation, of razing an edifice dear to a good many, and of which it may truthfully be said, "this and that man was born there."

If on a brief revision of its past history however it must, in all fairness be pronounced a failure—why then let no superstitious regard to the framework, or the framers, the project or its promoters be allowed to interfere. Tuppel it over and substitute a more effective structure instead.

I now proceed with the data furnished in my last letter, and I invite attention to them summarized, thus: the Nova Scotia Baptist Home Missionary Society, within the last five years—say from 1868 to 1872 both inclusive, exerting its influence in the more destitute, the less inviting fields of labor comprehended within the boundaries of the Eastern and Central Association, have had an average of fourteen missionaries employed for portions of each year during that time. The number of weeks of labor are upwards of one thousand—say 1040—equal to twenty years labor of one missionary, or five years of four missionaries, constantly in the field. Three thousand three hundred and fifty sermons have been preached by these devoted laborers and as the result—the vintage gathered—the number of baptisms reported on the field, is three hundred and thirteen! Has this been an unsuccessful campaign? Has the region that long sat in darkness beheld no light? With this compend of five years operations of the Home Missionary Society, ought not the denomination to pause a little and be sure, at least be morally certain, before they demolish it, that they can substitute something instead, which will in the same space of time accomplish

much more, and do a far greater and better work. I think so, and I much doubt if on mature reflection, and in the light of these facts and figures a good many others, will not be found of the same opinion.

Within the five years referred to, no less a sum than \$3,468.09 has been contributed by the congregations addressed by the Missionaries in the way of collections on the field!

What is it, in the history and management, or results of the operations of the Society—what is it I ask—that has shaken the confidence of any former friend or supporter of the institution. True—all has not been done that could be desired. It were to be wished that the tens were hundreds, and that the hundreds were thousands, but if we lay vandal hands upon the edifice—do for it what Titus Vespasian did for Jerusalem—what guarantee can be given that any future organization will accomplish more favorable—nay—as favorable or as satisfactory results? That is the point. Who, as yet, has demonstrated this fact? Who so far, has even attempted it? But of that anon.

I have some knowledge of the field occupied by the Board. The long coast line from Lawrencetown, East Halifax, to the Strait of Canso. This fishing and manufacturing district of the country is already leavened with Baptist sentiment. But for the most part so destitute! The pioneers, most of them gone to their rest, were greatly blessed in their arduous efforts to evangelize this region, at a time when the settlements were more sparse, and the means of locomotion wearisome, and far other than at present.

Then beyond the straits our missionaries have had wonderful success in almost every portion of the Island of Cape Breton. The Gaelic speaking population, we have access to them—they have gladly received our missionaries, and we have had, and have several missionaries able to address them in their own language—and this entire Island with but little exception, is missionary ground for us.

I have long felt, I still feel, that what we most need, is not such a change of base as was attempted at Berwick last Summer, what the denomination requires is a vigorous stout-hearted youthful ministry, able and willing to go forth and feed the starving souls.

The Eastern Association alone, has fifty-organized churches within its boundaries, and—well, sad to say, but a dozen, yes twelve ordained ministers to cultivate this heritage!

The Central, with its forty-four churches, can perhaps count twenty efficient pastors in all. So it will be seen, that the fields of labor all around us, are sadly disproportioned to the number of laborers.

This is the view of denominational affairs with us, that demands, it seems to me, the most serious and prompt consideration.—We shall soon have a wilderness of churches, if some scheme be not devised, whereby we can, by the grace of God, sufficiently educate and qualify men here at home to preach the gospel, who need not then go elsewhere to finish their education seldom or ever returning—so thoroughly finished are they by the operation.

It does seem strange, that, if we can train men sufficiently well, and qualify them for all the other professions exercised in this Dominion, if the successors of the ancient fishermen ought to be required to go abroad to learn the art of "baiting their hooks" so as to become successful "fishers of men." But I am digressing somewhat. In my next I shall endeavour still further and "logically to pursue the argument."

J. McCULLY.

Brunswick Place, 3rd March 1873.

For the Christian Messenger.

MEMORIALS OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

The name of Carisbrooke Castle is principally associated, in the minds of readers of English History, with the misfortunes of Charles I, "the martyr king." It was one of the prisons of the unhappy monarch in the memorable contest between him and his subjects—one of the stepping stones to the block, on which he terminated his misfortunes and his life.

But there are other associations belonging to the Castle which are generally interesting. It was the prison likewise of the princess Elizabeth, the youthful daughter of Charles, where she pined away and died—another victim to the Revolution which cost the kingdom so much of its noblest blood. She was buried privately and obscurely in the neighbouring church—so obscurely that all traces of her were lost

in the troublous times which succeeded, and till within the last few years—when, upon the occasion of the reconstruction of the ancient and dilapidated edifice, her remains were casually discovered in a leaden coffin beneath the altar. The inscription identified the peaceful slumberer: "Elizabeth, second daughter of King Charles I. Obiit Sep. 8th, 1650. Æt. 14."

Here our beloved Queen, with her sympathetic and generous heart, appears upon the scene, as she is so continually doing when pity is to be expressed, or the tear of sorrow to be staunch. Carisbrooke Castle is in the near neighborhood of Osborne House, one of the royal residences of Britain's Monarch. The good Queen claims kindred with the hallowed dust, and has caused a beautiful and costly cenotaph to be erected to the memory of her youthful relative. It is appropriately of snow-white marble, a life-like resemblance of the princess. The figure is recumbent, with the head reclining on a Bible, the traditional gift of her royal father. I copy from the inscription: "This monument is erected as a token of respect for the virtues, and of sympathy for the misfortunes of Elizabeth daughter of King Charles I, by Victoria R. 1856."

Such is one of the characteristic acts by which Britain's Queen endears herself to her subjects, and adds stability to her throne.

But there are still other associations connected with the Castle, though more remotely, which will be to some of no less interest. The Isle of Wight "the garden of England," as it has been styled, was the scene of the labors of that devoted and excellent servant of God, Leigh Richmond, His "Annals of the Poor" are at once his own imperishable monument and that of those whose humble and pious lives it so beautifully records. Near the Castle is the village of Arreton, the residence of Elizabeth Wallbridge, who is the subject of one of the inimitable memoirs which composed the volume; and hard by is the church yard in which reposes her treasured dust. Pious hands have erected at the head of the grave a beautiful stone, on which a pious pen has inscribed the appropriate lines so well known to all readers of the "Annals."

Stranger, if e'er by chance or feeling led, &c.

Nor is the record yet exhausted. At the distance of about four miles from Arreton is Brading, in whose church yard "Jane, the Young Cottager" received her first saving religious impressions, and where her ashes are deposited. One is tempted to transcribe from the neat marble tablet erected to her memory the beautiful epitaph which perpetuates her name, and transient earthly life.

"Ye who the power of God delight to trace, And mark with joy each monument of grace, Tread lightly o'er this grave, as ye explain, 'The short and simple Annals of the poor.'"

The immediate means of the conversion of "the Young Cottager" was an inscription in the same church yard, interesting in itself, and doubly so on account of its associations.

"Hail glorious gospel, heavenly light whereby We live with comfort, and with comfort die, And view, beyond this gloomy scene, the tomb, A life of endless happiness to come."

In the case of these humble disciples of the Redeemer we have a verification of the promise "The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance." With reference to them alike it is remarkable how much interest the simple record of their lives has inspired, "While the monumental inscriptions over many of earth's titled nobility scarcely attract the notice of the passer-by," the graves of the "Dairy man's Daughter" and the "Young Cottager" are sought out by thousands who turn aside from the world's beaten highway to pay their tribute of regard to the honoured remains, and to that saving grace of which they were such conspicuous examples.

Nor has the promise been less signally fulfilled in the case of him who so lovingly traced the "simple annals" of members of his flock. His own record is not that of the number he baptized in infancy, or "prepared for confirmation," at a somewhat later period of their lives. He apparently knew but little of the modern style of "intoning" the services of the church, or of the equally edifying method of officiating at the "altar." Nor do we read, in connexion with his ministry, of candles lighted at mid-day as aids to devotion. But he was the honoured instrument of "turning many from darkness to light," and shall therefore live in the joyful remembrance of all who acknowledge and obey the Master he so faithfully served.

R.

Wolville, March 1, 1873.

For the Christian Messenger.

IN MEMORIAM.

MRS. EVELINE PHINNEY,

wife of Mr. George S. Phinney, of Melvern Square, Wilmot, died on the 21st day of February, 1873, after a very brief illness, at the age of 54 years, leaving a sorrowing husband and 5 children. Among a number of eminently pious sisters of the Baptist Church of Upper Wilmot who have been recently called, as may be confidently believed, to enter their rest above, sister Phinney holds a distinguished place. Possessing naturally an amiable disposition, sweetened by grace early received, she was a most estimable wife, mother, relative, neighbor, friend, and church member. "She looked well to the ways of her household," and was specially endowed with "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." When a beloved daughter was removed by death, leaving two infant children, she, though in a feeble state of health, most readily took the charge of them, and kept them with motherly care while she lived. Only three days before her departure, the writer, who regarded her as one of his choice friends, visited the family, and enjoyed an agreeable interview with her. A short time previous to this, her medical adviser had frankly stated to her, that a tumor in her breast was an incurable cancer. This announcement, presenting the prospect of lingering and distressing illness, to be terminated only by the dissolution of the body, did not appear to have deprived her of her usual serenity and cheerfulness. At our departure, however,—Mrs. T. being with me—though none anticipated her speedy removal, she affectionately and earnestly requested us to pray for her.—While the sudden decease of our dearly beloved sister in Christ has filled many hearts with grief, it is a consoling reflection, that she has been spared the long continued suffering expected, and has undoubtedly been admitted into that happy state where "the inhabitants shall not say, I am sick"—"neither shall there be any more pain."

At the burial of sister Phinney, Rev. Obed Parker kindly aided, and the writer delivered a consolatory discourse founded on Heb. iv. 9. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God."—Communicated by Rev. C. Tupper.

MRS. LOUISA SMITH,

died of consumption at St. Mary's Bay, Feb. 3rd, 1873. Sister Louisa Smith in the 36th year of her age wife of Bro. John Smith, and daughter of the late Jeremiah Spinney, of Argyle. Sister S. obtained a hope in Christ under the combined labours of the late Richard Cunningham, Elder Knowles and others. She subsequently united with the Free Christian Church at Argyle, of which she continued a consistent and zealous member until about three years ago, when she united with the Baptist Church of St. Mary's Bay. Here she gained the esteem of the people of God by her consistent walk and truly christian deportment. Throughout her protracted illness she manifested resignation to the divine will. Towards the close of life she longed for the time to come when she should depart and be with Christ which she felt would be far better. She has left a husband and three small children with numerous friends to mourn her departure. —Com. by Rev. A. Cogswell.

Provincial Parliament.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

MONDAY, March 3rd.

The House met at 12 o'clock, and sat with closed doors until one o'clock, and assembled again at three o'clock.

Hon. Prov. Secretary, by command of his Excellency, presented the report of the Commissioners appointed to revise and consolidate the Statutes of Nova Scotia.

Mr. Blanchard said he would suggest that there was no need of the House taking much notice where there were no alterations in the law. There would be no need of discussion where there were no alterations, and where there were, the revisors should point them out.

Mr. Penco asked the Government to lay on the table of the House a statement containing the names of applicants for Crown Lands in the counties of Cumberland and Colchester.

Mr. Flinn introduced a bill entitled an Act to amend the Act relating to Dartmouth Common.

Hon. Prov. Secretary promised that all important bills should be printed and distributed among the members.

Mr. Woodworth said he had given notice that he would move a resolution to expunge a report from the Journals. The Journals were in print and were public property, and he maintained that there was no reason why this discussion should be conducted in secrecy.