

The Christian Visitor.

A FAMILY NEWSPAPER: DEVOTED TO RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE.

REV. I. E. BILL, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth Peace, good will toward Men."

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Correspondence.

Reminiscences of the Past.

No. XLVII.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—The next winter after the year's campaign, an account of which I gave in my last, I was staying at home, thinking to recruit my health, attend to my little affairs, and especially to turn my attention to study more fully than I had done in the past. I considered this last as more important, now, that I had to preach most of the time to the same people. One day, just as winter was setting in, I left my books, and went to repair the hearth, belonging to my kitchen fireplace. It was broken very badly, and I took it all up, and was at work, trowel in hand, with some new bricks, and a board of mortar, when someone knocked at the door, and in came Dr. Hamlin, of Paris. When he saw what I was about, he said, "Brother Nutter, I have got something better for you to do, than to be working there with untempered mortar. You must go with me to Paris." He informed me that a late visit I had made there, had been greatly blessed. That a number had been converted, and a few more were anxious, that I was very much needed, and the brethren had sent for me to come and help them.

I informed him, that I did not know how to go, as I had been from home so much through the whole year. But he insisted on my going, and said he would get a preacher to come to Livermore the next Sunday. I finally told him I would go the next morning. But that would not do. I must leave all, just as it was, and go then, for they had a meeting appointed for me that evening, and I must set out now. So I laid down my trowel, and left all just in the condition it was in when he entered. We had twenty four miles to go, but got there before meeting time. The house was crowded in every part. It was a most solemn season, and several that evening were pricked in their hearts, and all felt that God was there. Meetings were held every evening, and sometimes in the day, and in every place, souls were led to the Savior. Such weeping and sobbing, and confessing, on the part of some, and rejoicing on the part of others. The meetings frequently held till eleven or twelve o'clock at night.

The work of conversion went on and extended to every neighborhood. Great numbers were baptized and joined the church. I had to go up to a place called Washburn's Mills, seven or eight miles off, as the revival extended there. We had great gatherings; especially at our baptisms, in various parts of the town. Also to the south, the work extended, and we had several baptizing seasons at what is called the Cape. But, it is not my intention to enter into particulars, rather to state general facts, excepting any very remarkable incident which may be instructive to the reader. One thing, however, I will name which transpired in Paris at this time, and which may show the influence of grace on the human heart. There were living near the Meeting house two persons who were and had been at great enmity. When this work commenced they had a case in law, it was a suit for trespass. A good deal of cost had been incurred, and the defendant was rather poor and the prosecutor rich. In God's infinite mercy, as we believe, they were both converted. In a short time they wished to be baptized and join the church. I stated to them, in private, that they must settle this law business, and become entirely reconciled, to each other, before they could possibly be received into the church. It was rather a difficult case to meddle with, for there were two stubborn men concerned in the affair. I finally persuaded them to leave it out to men and abide by their judgment. They agreed to leave it out to myself and Dr. Hamlin. We attended to the subject, and after hearing what they had to say, we consulted as to the report. The Dr. put it upon me to report, for he was a near neighbour, and the parties were passionate men, and he was afraid of them. So we went into the room, and I stated, that we had awarded, that the defendant having committed the trespass though there was no great harm done, yet, as he had been forbidden, we awarded that he should confess it, and ask pardon; and on the other hand, as the prosecution was got up, more from a feeling of revenge than for any ends of justice, or damage that had been received, he should take the case out of court, and pay all the costs of the prosecution. Both of them were dissatisfied with the decision, and both refused to comply with it. I showed them that as they were about right in our judgment, and

as they had been both wrong from the beginning, so they were now. That as we had required each to do that which neither was willing to do, how would it have been, if we had required one to have done the whole? With that, the prosecutor rose, and said, "I comply with the decision, I see that it is right, and handing a dollar to me he said, take that for your justice and faithfulness." The other rose and confessed his wrong, and with tears, asked to be forgiven. So ended that strife, and they were both baptized and received into the church the next Lords day.

As this church had a minister, and I had only come to help, I went, the last part of the winter, to Norway, the adjoining town, for the revival had spread there also. Here I preached a short time, and baptized several persons. The church had declined, and was become very weak, in this place. In the midst of my work I was stopped by sickness, and had to retire. One night, after I had gone to rest, at a late hour, I was taken with strong ague fits. I shook to that degree that all the windows shook in the room. I continued so most of the night, and in the morning got up with a high fever. I directed my horse and sleigh to be brought to the door, and against the entreaties and remonstrances of my friends, started for home. I rode thirty miles without stopping, for I felt that if I got out of my sleigh, I should not be able to proceed, I reached home, and with assistance, got into the house, and into the bed, when I fainted away. The doctor was sent for, the first time I ever had a doctor in my life. I was confined two weeks to my bed; the only two Sabbaths in forty years I was not able to visit the house of God, and preach the Gospel of salvation.

I had preached every day, for months, and my other labours were incessant and exhausting, and I felt quite worn down. But I had no cause to complain. The prosperity of Zion, the salvation of souls, and their reconciliation to God, was recompense enough. How glorious the thought, that the joy at the repentance of a sinner, is the joy of the Angels in heaven. To be in sympathy with heaven, and employed as they are, is enough for mortals.

I stayed at home generally that summer, and attended my own flock. A large multitude were in their first love. They were strongly attached to me, and wanted me to stay at home. They were so strongly prejudiced, that they hardly wanted any one else to preach to them. We were in union, and brotherly love continued.

As to my leaving them so much. It was an understanding from the beginning that I should be at liberty eight weeks in the year, and in cases of importance I might be gone more, by getting them supplies, so that there was no complaint, or dissatisfaction, on that subject.

This was the general custom with our ministers in those days. If they could do good,—if there was a revival of religion in any place, it was felt, that a preacher was, and ought to be at liberty to go there. The cause everywhere was the same—it was the cause of Christ, and the souls of men were equally precious in every place.

I still continued to carry on my farm, and made it so far profitable, as that it helped me to support my family. While I could do this and keep out of debt, I was satisfied. I had no wish to be rich, and should not have thought of getting any property, if the church could have paid for the farm I lived on. I paid the notes as they became due, and more, so that in three years I had cleared all off.

D. NUTTER.

P. S.—As I am giving, in this number, an account of my acquaintance with Dr. Hamlin, of Paris, Maine, I take the liberty of informing our friends in these Provinces, that Hannibal Hamlin, just elected Governor of Maine, was a worthy son of my old friend the Doctor. His mother was the daughter of Deacon Livermore, the original proprietor of the township of Livermore, Maine, and was a most excellent christian woman.

I trust that the election of Mr. Hamlin will be the redemption of Maine from rum, slavery, and wild-cat-rule. He has been a noble advocate for freedom in Congress, and has well earned the honor Maine has conferred upon him, in electing him her Governor. As hundreds of people in these provinces, friends of Temperance and the "rights of man," have offered their good wishes and prayers for his election, I doubt not but every reader of the "Christian Visitor" will thank God and bless the people of Maine for

wiping out the foul stain they incurred just year, in choosing Wells the inveterate advocate of Rum and Rain! D. N.

Bible Union's Revision of the Book of Job.

The passage I shall now bring under consideration is contained in the 19th chap., 25th—27th verses. The reader will bear in mind that italics are used in the authorised version to mark words which are not in the Hebrew but are supplied by the translators. Authorised version—"For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me."

Revised Version—"But I, I know my Redeemer liveth, and in after time will stand upon the earth; and after this my skin is destroyed, and without my flesh shall I see God. Whom I, for myself, shall see, and my eyes behold, and not another, when my reins are consumed with me."

This revision lies open to several objections. Why not—"I, for myself, I shall see," as well as—"I, I know"? The Hebrew construction is the same in each instance. No doubt it would be a solecism in English, but not more so in the one case than in the other; and if it is thought to be an improvement on our common version to introduce one solecism, it must be a double improvement to introduce two. There is also an antiquity in the revision about the nominative to the verb will stand, whether it is meant, "I will stand," or "my Redeemer will stand." Fortunately we have the good old English version to fall back upon, which is here as unambiguous as the original.

I cannot agree with those who would change the position of "this" and refer it back to the to the noun skin. It appears to me far more poetical to suppose that Job, in uttering the language—"after my skin they destroy this," pointed with his hand to the object he intended; whether our translators have supplied the right word is for the decision of every intelligent reader and expositor.

But these are minor points,—they do not affect the sense of the passage; there is an alteration however which completely changes the sense, and to that I shall direct my observations. I refer to the expression "in my flesh," for which the revision proposes to read "without my flesh," and inserts the literal translation "from my flesh" in the margin. Had the revisor substituted *from* for *in*, he would have made the translation more literal, but it still would have been a needless change, for the sense of *from* and *in* is nearly identical in this connection. If a person were describing an object which he saw while riding in his carriage, he might say either *in my carriage*, or *from my carriage* I saw it. Even good English scholars would probably not all agree respecting these expressions; some would contend for one, others for the other.

But when in the body is changed into *without the body*, and this translation is inserted in the text, the sense is altered so materially, that the reasons assigned for it demand investigation.

In order to do the revisor justice, I am bound to give his notes entire, and as the notes in justification of this change, are for the most part in pure Latin and German, and I am writing for those who only know English, I am further bound to translate them.

The following therefore are the notes on this clause in an English dress:—"The negative sense of *min* (the Hebrew word) is the proper one here, (see Job xi. 15, and xxi. 9,) in connection with the first member, Ewald: and *without my flesh*, without so that I no longer possess it. So Heiligstedt: *without my flesh*: Schlottman: also *without my flesh shall I see God*.

On the contrary (the Hebrew from my flesh) is by some understood to mean *from my flesh*. Thus Rosenmuller: *yet from my flesh* (i.e.: when my body is renewed) shall I see God. But this, though grammatically admissible, does not connect well with the preceding member. "Once allow that we have in the first member of the verse a representation of the body entirely destroyed, so also we become equally compelled by the most immediate simple impression of the second member to understand (the Hebrew from my flesh) in a similar sense (Schlottman)."

There are but two reasons in these notes, 1. The Hebrew *min* from is used in the sense *without*.—Job xi. 15 and xxi. 9.

2. The intimate connection between the members of the verse compels us to adopt a translation which shall make them harmonize.

1. The passages quoted in support of the change read as follows:—

Job xxi. 15.—"For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot,"—literally from spot. xxi. 9.—"Their houses are safe from fear." According to the revised version—"Their house are in peace, without fear."

The reader will observe in each of these verses that *from* may be put for *without*, and the sense remains the same; so that they are not cases in point: what is required to support the proposed change is an example of the substitution of *without* for *from*, when it would totally alter the sense, because *without* may be used to express the sense, when *from* means away, it by no means follows that *without* may be used, when *from* means near, at, or on in.

When an object is said to be seen from a position, the meaning always is that the person who sees the object is near, on or in that from which he sees it, either a window or a hill, or a carriage, as the case may be; and not that he is away from the window, hill or carriage. For example;—Baalam says; concerning Israel, "from the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills, I behold him." The obvious meaning of which is "standing on the rock, from that position I see, &c." So when Job says "from my flesh shall I see God;" the meaning as obviously is "In my flesh and from that position shall I see him." The examples quoted therefore fail to justify the change.

2. The connection is appealed to in support of the revision. It is contended that the destruction of the body mentioned in the first member of the verse compels us to understand the second member in accordance with it.

But the next verse is as closely connected with this verse as the two members of it are, and there we read of the eyes of Job beholding God. Now if Job could say, "whom mine eyes shall behold" even though his body was destroyed, what should hinder his also saying, "In my flesh shall I see God"? Why is not the critical torture applied and the eyes extracted, as well as the flesh removed? No doubt because the case is hopeless, the words are too stubborn; even German criticism does not possess an apparatus that could pluck out the eyes from beholding. Nothing is gained therefore by a translation which removes the flesh but leaves the eyes; but difficulty is indeed only increased by such a process; for Job is made to say that he shall see God without his flesh and yet with his eyes; surely if there is any sense in which he may be said to see him with his eyes, even though his mortal body was destroyed, in the same sense he may also see him in his flesh. The connection therefore does not require that any violence should be done to the Hebrew; and the reason assigned for the alteration when examined serve rather to establish the correctness of the common version.

Not a few have held the opinion, that in this language of Job there is a declaration of his hope touching the advent of the Redeemer of mankind, and the resurrection of the body; and that a glimpse of these great truths was granted him in mercy to sustain his mind in the depths of his sorrow, and under the heavy reproaches which his friends were unjustly heaping upon him. It forms no part of my present plan to enter into an exposition of the passage; but I protest against an unwarrantable alteration which would preclude such an interpretation.

C. SPURDEN.

The Bible Union—Dr. Conant's Revision of the Book of Job, and the Rev. C. Spurden's Review.

Mr. Editor,—In the *Christian Visitor* of the 20th August, your correspondent, the Rev. C. Spurden, among other things, announced that "he proposed, with your permission, to give the result of an investigation (of the revision) which he had endeavoured to make both clear and full."

Such an investigation, conducted in a spirit of impartiality and ingenuousness candid, and scholarlike, would, I apprehend, be received by all lovers of learning, and especially by the friends and promoters of the principles of the Bible Union, as most acceptable.

The Bible Union reporter in a preface to its first No. containing several chapters of Job, revised by Dr. Conant, has this paragraph—

"CRITICISM INVITED."

One object of this publication, is to call forth criticism. Whoever will furnish, carefully digested objections against any of the renderings of the original, or propose improvements in respect to style, or thought, will be entitled to the thanks of the Union."

This first number was published so long ago as October, 1855, and from that time to

the present criticism has been thus publicly invited.

But does your learned correspondent review this Revision of Job, in the spirit of this most Catholic invitation? I fear not—and in saying so much, I trust I shall not be charged with impugning his motives, far less of controverting his statements, or misunderstanding his reasoning. As to his object, I say nothing. It seems to me, however, that he leaves but little room for doubt upon that point. Those who have read his various critiques, will form their own conclusions.

That there are many, very many readers of the *Christian Visitor*, who are fast friends of the Bible Union, who are anxious to have the best and most faithful possible translation of the Bible, who are growing weary of private pulpit interpretation of scripture, and long to see a sound defensible revision of the English version; persons who have given, and will yet contribute of their substance for so desirable an object, will not probably be controverted. Of this class I am an humble individual. That your correspondent is not of the number is most evident. I frankly concede to him however, all ask for myself in the matter—liberty of conscience, and freedom of discussion.

But I do complain, and I think the friends of the Bible Union in the Provinces have good right to complain, of what I consider an entirely unwarranted assertion contained in Mr. Spurden's first letter.

Anxious as I am to prevent misconception, and unwilling to afford any just cause of complaint on his part, I will quote his own language.

After a few preliminary observations respecting the right which the contributors to the funds of the Union have, to know what is published respecting its operations—in which I quite agree—having referred to Dr. Muelay's letter, and the Board's reply, and disavowed all intention of stirring strife, Mr. Spurden remarks:—

"But there is one admission made in this controversy, of which I am glad to avail myself—and that is, that the Book of Job is the final revision of the Union, which there is no intention of submitting to a College of Revisors, but which is accepted as the Union's substitute for the common version."

A bold statement truly! and announced with an undisguised feeling of gratulation, as if but for this unhappy dispute, such a discovery could not likely have been made. But are these things so? If your correspondent's authorities for amending the Revised version, are no better than that for making this startling announcement, I rather think his criticisms are not likely to have very great weight with plain English scholars.

This a matter of some moment—so thought Mr. Spurden himself—for a little further on, he adds—"No one could undertake to investigate the merits of a work in a state of acknowledged incompleteness." But here he is clearly at fault. As Dr. Conant's work, it was and is in a state of completeness, ripe and ready for criticism, and that criticism abundantly invited. Why does your correspondent affirm that "A minute and thorough examination of the society's work has hitherto been stopped at the threshold, by the announcement that the published revisions are only specimens which are to be revised and re-revised by all the learned men whose labors the Union can command, and finally to pass the ordeal of a College of revisors who are to give the finishing touch to the whole?"

When or where has such an examination "been stopped," and by whom? Nay rather, has not such an examination been sought, courted, solicited? It was only when critics, misunderstanding the Union's plan of operations, assailed a published specimen, the work of some individual revisor, as the finally revised version of the Union, that they were "stopped," if that be the proper word, or I should rather say were reminded that the specimen criticised was not a final revision.

Mr. Spurden proceeds to say a little further on, "But now it appears from the statement of Dr. Muelay in his letter, as given by the *New York Chronicle*, that the revision of Job by Dr. Conant has been stereotyped in six different forms, for which the officers in their reply say, they have the authority of the Board." Then *arguendo*, he adds, "All this is equivalent to an admission that Dr. Conant's work is final, and not to be revised except by himself, in such a way as could be done without injury to the plates."

Now I ask is this right or fair towards the Bible Union, or its friends and supporters?

The final Committee of Revisors is not yet appointed. This every person at all familiar with the operations of the Union knows.

On the 16th August last, speaking of the coming anniversary, an official announcement appeared in the *New York Chronicle*, as follows—"We expect to be prepared to report considerable progress in the work of revision, and such a state of advancement as will justify the adoption of plans for the final Committee of Revisors." Dr. Muelay refers to this Committee as yet to be appointed, and calls it the final College of Revisors. For the Bible Union to advertise and invite criticism of unfinished specimens, professedly with a view of collecting the opinions of eminent scholars to be collected and submitted to a final Committee or College possessing their confidence, with powers of modification, when at the very same time by a *foregone conclusion*, it had been determined that these very specimens should be, nay, when they actually had been, "accepted as the Union's substitute for the common version," would on their part be, to mock all Christendom, and to stamp with dishonesty and double dealing their whole operations.

No, no, were the Book of Job stereotyped in six thousand different forms instead of six, and the Board had sanctioned them all—yet there would remain six thousand different modes of accounting for it, without assuming a conclusion, by which every previous act of the Union, its authorized declarations, and avowed policy must necessarily be falsified.

Mr. Spurden under some mistaken idea of the matter, has deferred the "investigation which he has endeavoured to make clear and full," until he supposed that the Bible Union was fairly committed to the specimens—grammatical errors and all—if such there be—and then he calls to question the scholastic attainments, not of Dr. Conant alone—but of all the eminent biblical scholars, comprising the literary staff of the Union. Now methinks, in the quaint language of a celebrated man, "he has leaped before he came to the stile."

My sole object in this paper then, is to disabuse the public mind as to the Union's having accepted Dr. Conant's revision—as a substitute for the common version." In making this assertion, the Rev. and learned Gentleman has evidently fallen into error, and which being thus pointed out I can hardly doubt but that he will cheerfully rectify himself.

Supposing then that Dr. Conant's translations are just as faulty as represented, it is comfortable after all to reflect that not being adopted by the Union, there is abundance of time for correction. More, the *Christian Visitor* being to be found at the Union's rooms, Broome Street, New York, Dr. Conant, as well as other revisors and scholars, will now have access to your learned correspondent's lucubrations.

The friends of the Union therefore scattered up and down these Provinces will not, it is to be hoped, relax their efforts to sustain this most praiseworthy Institution. Those opposed to Revision may seem to have the Union at a disadvantage just now, but as the Lord loveth those whom he chasteneth, there is no reason to infer that the Union is in disfavour because its officers are in trouble. A little wholesome and searching investigation into the financial department may be needed—and a good measure of sharp criticism, may possibly furnish up the black-letter gentlemen, apt to become assimilated to the antiquated terms and modes, upon which their minds are engaged.

And now in conclusion permit me to say, I love the Bible Union, I love it dearly. Its labours are yet destined to cast a flood of light upon the English Bible. Here and there, the alterations suggested, may perhaps be no improvement, but in almost innumerable instances they will give a more faithful reflex of the originals. In the News of the World of Aug. 17 we have an elaborate article from the London Despatch, advocating revision of the English Bible. Among other things charging that "1st John, 5th and 7th There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost and these three are one" is an interpolation—and for this opinion the authorities cited are numerous and most respectable. It is not to be found in any Greek manuscript written before the sixteenth century. It occurs not in any ancient version except the Latin. It is not to be found, it seems, in the Syriac, Arabic, Coptic, Armenian, Ethiopic, and Russian versions. It was interpolated in one of them in the fourteenth, and another in the seventeenth century, and in the rest it is totally omitted. So says Michaelis