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and needs of the poor both in crowded city and scattered hamlet. The *Official Year Book of the Church of England* indicates the nature and variety of Church organizations which are actively engaged in raising the social, educational, and religious condition of the people.

The intention and work of the Church of England may at times be misrepresented by opponents and misjudged by friends. This seems to be an inevitable condition of all righteous effort. Nevertheless, the Church, conscious of her integrity, faithful to duty, and speaking the truth in love, shall go on increasing in power; and, amid labour and warfare, evil report and good report, shall not be ashamed to meet her enemies in the gate with the words of the patriarch—"When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me; because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him: the blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me; and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy" (Job xxix. 11-13).

WILLIAM ODOM.

St. Simon's, Sheffield.
May, 1886.



ART. III.—REMARKS ON SOME OF THE MESSIANIC PROPHECIES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT AS AFFECTED BY THE REVISION.

I PROPOSE in this paper to consider some of the changes which have been introduced by the recent Revision in a few of the more prominent of the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament. In doing this I shall refer where it seems necessary to objections which have been urged against those changes, or against the marginal notes on such prophecies. But I shall not deal only with objections. I shall also direct attention to one passage against which, so far as I am aware, no objection has been urged. I shall do this, because I think that the positive excellences of the Revision have been too much overlooked. The critics have been busy with what they deem to be its errors and its defects; they have too often been grudging in their acknowledgement of its merits.¹

I have already replied elsewhere,² at some length, to the charges brought by the *Quarterly Reviewer* against the

¹ An exception, however, must be made as regards Canon Girdlestone's excellent articles which have appeared in the *CHURCHMAN*.

² In the *Contemporary Review* for April and May of the present year.

Revision. I trust I have shown conclusively that the Revisers were amply justified in introducing the changes to which he objects into the text, and not less justified in the marginal notes, by which they have honestly indicated the uncertainty which attaches either to the textual reading or to the rendering of many passages. But another Reviewer has appeared on the scene. The *Edinburgh*, strange to say, has made common cause with the *Quarterly*. In some instances the objections of the two Reviewers are of the same kind. In particular both have selected the same Messianic passages for animadversion, and both are very severe on the Revised margin. So far as they cover the same ground, I can add but little to what I have already said in reply to the *Quarterly*; but there are some objections peculiar to the *Edinburgh* Reviewer,¹ and I shall say a word or two on these.

I. The first passage on which I shall make some observations is the celebrated passage, Job xix. 25, 26, of which the *Edinburgh* Reviewer says that, "without entering on the question whether or not the Massoretic reading is correct, the new rendering robs it not only of beauty, but almost of sense."

I do not know how the Reviewer would propose to amend the existing text. The LXX. either had a different reading, or more probably introduced an arbitrary alteration, as they combine the latter clause of verse 25 with the first part of verse 26, and render ἀναστήσει δέ μου τὸ σῶμα τὸ ἀναντλοῦν μοι ταῦτα. The old Latin had "Super terram resurget cutis mea," and the Vulgate pushed alteration and interpretation yet further by rendering the two verses: "Scio enim quod redemptor meus vivit, et in novissimo die de terra resurrecturus sum: et rursum circumdabor pelle mea, et in carne mea video Deum meum." But I am not aware that any modern critic of note has supported changes in the text based on these renderings, and indeed, many have protested against them. The rendering of the Revisers is as follows:

But I know that my Redeemer liveth,
And that He shall stand up at the last upon the earth :
And after my skin hath been thus destroyed,
Yet from my flesh shall I see God :
Whom I shall see for myself,
And mine eyes shall behold and not another.

Whether such a rendering robs the passage "of beauty" is a question on which opinions may differ; but at all events it is of far less importance than another question—viz., whether the Revisers have given the true sense of the original. On this point it is satisfactory to find that the Reviewer has no

¹ See *Edinburgh Review* for October, 1885.

dispute with the Revisers. He does not deny that their translation is "strictly literal." But "conceive," he says, "in the opening verses of our Burial Service such words substituted as these: 'And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet from my flesh shall I see God.'" As if the question at issue were not what is the true sense of a passage of Scripture, but whether an alteration will offend prejudice or shock sensitive feeling. No doubt the rendering of the A.V. has been consecrated to us by the holiest of all memories and the most blessed of all hopes, by the religion and the sorrow of the grave. Not only to English Churchmen, but to great numbers, too, of our Nonconformist brethren, this most solemn and beautiful of all services still speaks with consoling power in the moment of supreme anguish and desolation. Doubtless they would feel the loss if these words were touched. Natural it is to cling to them. But the like might be said almost, if not quite to the same extent, of many other misinterpretations of Scripture. The false rendering has taken possession of men: it is in their heart and on their tongues, and it is difficult to persuade them that it is false. But is that any reason why those who have been set to correct what is false should falter in their work? They will not, indeed, be rash or hasty. They will deal tenderly, so far as they may, with all that custom and religious feeling have made dear; but they will remember that their primary office and paramount duty is to ascertain what is true, and to give that rendering, and no other, which approaches most exactly to the sense of the original.

But the Reviewer's most serious charge is that the new rendering robs the passage "almost of sense." "What," he asks, "is here the exact bearing of 'thus,' and what the meaning of seeing God 'from' one's flesh? Or is it to be inferred that after the 'skin' has been 'thus' destroyed, we are from our 'flesh' to see the Almighty? The rendering is indeed strictly literal, and the meaning of the Revisers may be learned from reading a Commentary. There it will be found that 'thus' means either 'this,' pointing to the body, or else 'in this manner'; and that 'from my flesh' means either 'without my flesh,' out of it, or else 'from my body' in the same sense as the Authorized Version has translated 'in my flesh.' But surely the new version ought to be at least intelligible without a Commentary."

Nearly every line here contains a misrepresentation. In the first place, Job is not saying what *we* are to do: he is expressing *his own* hope and conviction. But the Reviewer tacitly reads a certain meaning into the words, and then finds fault with the Revisers for not expressing that meaning. In the next place, after confessing that the rendering they have

given is "strictly literal," he proceeds to observe that its "meaning may be learned from reading a Commentary," adding that "the new version ought at least to be intelligible without a Commentary." Concerning which it is sufficient to remark that there are and must be passages in the Bible, as in other books, and especially those in which poetry is the instrument of deep thought or strong emotion, which no translation can adequately render, which will only yield their sense to patient intelligent study, which may be fairly susceptible of different explanations, and which for ordinary readers do require a commentary. In fact, this is true not only of translations. There are many passages in all poets, and not seldom in the greatest, which need elucidation even for readers who read them in their own tongue. Their meaning does not lie on the surface, and is not seen at a glance: the poet must have his interpreter.

But the Reviewer is pleased to tell us what will be found in a Commentary by way of interpretation. "There," he says, "it will be found that 'thus' means either 'this,' pointing to the body, or else 'in this manner.'" Now I venture to say it will not be found in any Commentary that "thus" means "this," pointing to the body; for such a statement would be sheer nonsense. What may be found is precisely what is given in the Revisers' margin, viz., that the Hebrew word which in the text is rendered "thus" may also mean "this." Nor, again, will it be found in any Commentary that "from my flesh" means either "without my flesh," out of it, or else "from my body," in the same sense as the A.V. had translated "in my flesh;" for it is certain that "from my flesh" cannot mean "out of my flesh." But what might be found in a Commentary is again precisely what the Revisers have expressed in their margin, viz., that the Hebrew preposition *min* is capable of two meanings, like the English "out of," and may either mean "from" or "without," and accordingly that *mib-bes̄dri* may be rendered either "from my flesh" or "without my flesh."

The Reviewer should have told us plainly whether he would have us sacrifice truth in favour of a certain interpretation because it is popular and familiar. I use deliberately the word "interpretation," for the rendering given in our A.V., and of course adopted in the Burial Service, is not a rendering of the Hebrew, but an interpretation in the nature of a paraphrase. This was an instance where it behoved the Revisers to be especially on their guard against any bias of prejudice or preconceived opinion. The insertion of the two words "worms" and "body" in italics in the A.V. has given a colour and a meaning to the passage which are not to be found in the Hebrew. They

make it clear, though the Hebrew does not, that the reference is to a resurrection. This, I believe, to be a quite untenable interpretation. It does violence not only to the text and context, but to the whole scope of the Book. If Job had grasped this truth, the perplexity of his wounded conscience would have been at an end. There have been, indeed, expositors of great name and ability who, preferring the rendering "without my flesh" suppose Job to be looking here for a vindication of his innocence after his death; in the words of one of the most recent and ablest commentators,¹ "The whole expression 'after this my skin has been destroyed and without my flesh' means 'when I have died under the ravages of my disease.' The words do not express in what condition precisely, but *after* what events Job shall see God." But neither does this interpretation commend itself to me. Surely the whole scope of the Book, and especially its closing chapters, show that the vindication of his cause for which Job looked was a vindication *in this life*. Job's quarrel with his friends was this, that he asserted, while they denied, his innocence. He longed for God as the righteous Judge and *Goël* (or Vindicator) to interpose in the quarrel and establish his righteousness. It was no answer to his friends that his righteousness would be manifested in another world: he desired its vindication here. They as well as he were to be witnesses of it. Job says in effect this: "Although my skin has been *thus* destroyed by the ravages of my disease (*thus* because he points to himself meanwhile), yet from this very flesh of mine thus destroyed shall I see God (who will appear to vindicate my innocence against my accusers). My reins are consumed within me (in longing for that vindication)." And God does appear to vindicate his innocence, and from that flesh of his which had been so disfigured he did see God. Or, perhaps we may say with Godet, that Job himself had formed no very clear conception as to the time and manner of God's interference, whether in this life or in the next. Only he felt how intolerable it was to have his just dealing called in question, and he trusted with a boundless trust in the righteousness of God, that God would in some way appear on his behalf. The righteousness of God is the primary article of his creed. To this he clings; for the manifestation of this righteousness he longs; and hence the passionate cry of his wounded heart:

Oh that my words were now written!
Oh that they were inscribed in a book!
That with an iron pen and lead
They were graven in the rock for ever!

¹ Dr. A. B. Davidson in his *Commentary on the Book in the "Cambridge Bible for Schools."*

The rendering of the Revisers (for which I contended long ago in a note to my Hulsean Lectures on "Immortality") does no doubt admit of more than one interpretation. The Reviewer can of course paraphrase it, and put any sense he pleases upon it; he can even understand Job to be speaking of a resurrection; but would he justify the retention in italics of the words "*worms*" and "*body*" as in the A.V., merely because the passage as so rendered is one with which we are familiar in the Burial Service of our Church?¹ I feel that no protest can be too strong against this attempt to retain a rendering because it is familiar, when we know it to be incorrect. A principle like this, if once admitted, would reduce all Revision to an absurdity.

II. I come now to another well-known passage (Ps. ii. 12): "Kiss the son, lest he be angry." Here no change has been made in the text. But even this does not satisfy the Reviewer. He observes that "the Revisers retain in the text the Messianic rendering, 'Kiss the Son,' although they make it needlessly offensive by printing 'son' (both here and in verse 7) with a small 's.'" There is surely something of the infinitely little in such criticism as this. But the Reviewer ought to have known that the Revisers had excellent authority for this way of printing, for both in Coverdale's and also in the Bishops' Bible "son" is printed with a small "s" in verse 7 as well as in verse 12; and in the Bible of 1611 it is printed with a small letter in verse 7 (though that verse is quoted as Messianic in the New Testament) and with a capital in verse 12.

The Reviewer returns again to this charge (p. 487), and complains that while the Revisers print Azazel with a capital, they print "son" (Ps. ii.) and "spirit of God" with small initials. But if Azazel is a proper name, how is it to be spelt except with a capital?² On the other hand, if the Reviewer

¹ It reminds one of an objection raised by another Reviewer to the change of "charity" into "love" in the Revised Version of 1 Cor. xiii. (the latter being the word employed as the equivalent of *ἀγάπη* in every earlier English Version except the Rhemish), because in the Collect for Quinquagesima Sunday the word used is "charity." Perhaps there is no change which was more imperatively required on every ground than this. And yet it was condemned solely because "charity" stood in the Prayer Book, and had arbitrarily been introduced in a few places in the New Testament by the translators of 1611. It would be as reasonable to object to the change made in the rendering of *ὁρφανοῖς* in John xiv. 18, because the collect for the Sunday after Ascension Day has, "we beseech thee leave us not comfortless, but send to us thine Holy Ghost to comfort us."

² This is like the reproach of the *Quarterly Reviewer*, who is astonished that the Revisers should have printed Gabriel with a large "G" and son of God with a small "s." Would he have had them print Gabriel with a small "g"?

had taken the trouble to look at our common Bibles, he would have found that whereas in Gen. i. "Spirit of God" is printed with a capital, in Isa. xi. "spirit of the Lord" is printed with a small "s."¹ But all this is the veriest trifling.

The Reviewer, however, objects further to the marginal note on this verse. He says: "In the text we read as before, 'Kiss the son.' In the margin we have, 'Lay hold of (or receive) instruction'; and yet another variant, 'Worship in purity.' Thus we have here four entirely different translations of one of the most important passages." How the Reviewer extracts *four entirely different* translations from the text and the two variants in the margin I am at a loss to understand; for surely there is no substantial difference between "*Lay hold of instruction*" and "*receive instruction*." By no stretch of imagination can these be described as *entirely different* meanings. But to let this pass, does the Reviewer think that it would have been wise or honest on the part of the Revisers to have left a passage of such admitted difficulty and uncertainty without any marginal note at all? Apparently he does. For he says (p. 475):

There are passages on the understanding of which the distinctive teaching of the Old Testament in its bearing on the New has hitherto been supposed to rest. We should make no complaint if the Revisers had felt it necessary so to alter their rendering as to make their previously supposed application impossible. Whatever the seeming loss, it would have been a gain to the cause of truth. [We are thankful for this admission.] But what we have a right to complain of is, that our scholars speak with "a double," "treble," or "fourfold" voice. They say one thing in the text, and presently the opposite in the margin, only to correct themselves once more and yet a third time. A sentence cannot have three different meanings all incompatible with each other.

But what if these different meanings have been put on a passage, as in this case, from the earliest times? and what if no one can pronounce dogmatically, which is the true meaning? What if, as here, taking the Ancient Versions for our guides, the evidence preponderates against the meaning which we have kept in the text? Are the facts to be concealed? I will venture to commend earnestly to the Reviewer's notice the remarks of Jerome on this passage in his *Apologia adv. Rufin.*, lib. i. §19. After observing that he rendered the verb *nash'ku* (the literal rendering of which in Greek and Latin would be *καταπιλήσομε* and *deosculamini*) by *adorate* as conveying the true sense of the word, because they who worship are wont to

¹ This is not the only instance in which the Reviewer betrays ignorance of the A.V. "What," he exclaims, "does 'sound wisdom' mean? Can wisdom be unsound?" As if this were an expression which had been introduced by the Revisers, whereas it occurs at least three times in the A.V.—Prov. ii. 7, iii. 21, viii. 14—and has simply been retained by the Revisers.

kiss the hand and bow the head (quoting Job xxxi. 27 in proof); and after insisting on the ambiguity of the noun which he says means not only "son," as in Barjona, Bartimæus, etc., but also "wheat" and "a bundle of ears of wheat," and "elect" and "pure," he thus defends himself from the charge of inconsistency: "In my little commentary, where there was an opportunity of discussing the matter, I had said, *Adorate filium*, but in the body of the work (the translation), not to appear a violent interpreter, and not to give occasion to Jewish calumny, I said, *Adorate pure sive electe*, as Aquila and Symmachus had translated. What injury, then, is done to the faith of the Church, if the reader is instructed in how many different ways a verse is explained by the Jewish interpreters (*apud Hebræos*)?" It is not very encouraging to reflect that this question put by Jerome in the fourth century has lost nothing of its point or cogency in the nineteenth.

The *Edinburgh* and the *Quarterly* Reviewers agree in thinking that injury is done to the faith of the Church when a reader is instructed in how many different ways a verse may be explained. It may naturally excite some surprise and some regret that the *Edinburgh Review*, which was once the organ of a reasonable faith, should now range itself on the side of a blind and irrational orthodoxy.¹ But happily there are many indications that these appeals to ignorance and prejudice are losing their force. Men who care about their Bibles wish to know what the Bible really is. They resent these attempts to strangle inquiry, and stamp upon it. They find in the Revised Version, and not least in its margin, the information they desire, and they learn to value it accordingly.

III. But leaving these objections, frivolous and captious as they are, and deriving their weight, if they have any, from the uninstructed prejudices to which they appeal, I will enter upon the more agreeable task of drawing attention to some of the positive merits of the Revision. There is at least one passage in which the most prejudiced reader will hardly fail to acknowledge the striking improvement which has been introduced by the Revisers. I refer to the great Messianic prophecy at the beginning of the ninth chapter of Isaiah. As this passage stands in the A.V. it is scarcely intelligible. Who can have heard it read in the Lesson for Christmas Day without a feeling of distressing perplexity? No doubt there rises upon us,

¹ There is a true and rational orthodoxy, but it is neither timorous nor suspicious; it can rest calmly and fearlessly on the promise, "He shall lead you into the truth in all its variety and compass (*εἰς τὴν ἀληθείαν παῦσαν*)."'

even through the obscurity of that version, a grand vision of light and peace. No mistranslation can wholly destroy the effect of the prophecy. But when we come to disentangle the separate words and phrases, and try to give them a consistent sense, we find ourselves engaged in a hopeless task. What, we ask ourselves, is the meaning of the phrase, "The dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation"? Or what are we to understand by first lightly afflicting the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterwards more grievously afflicting it? How does this fall in with the general scope of the prophecy? How can it be reconciled with what follows in the very next verse, when, speaking of the inhabitants of that same district of Palestine, the prophet says, "The people that sat in darkness have seen a great light"? This is surely the very reverse of the picture which has been presented to us. This is no "more grievous affliction." They were in darkness, and now they see a great light; and light, we know, is a universal image of prosperity. Or again, how can it be said, "Thou hast multiplied the nation, and *not* increased the joy," when the very next words are, "They joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil"? Or yet again, what is meant by the antithesis in verse 5, "Every battle of the warrior is with confused noise and garments rolled in blood, *but this* shall be with burning and fuel of fire"? I think we must all have felt the almost hopeless obscurity of the passage as it stands in our English Bibles.

But now let us take it as it stands in the R.V., and the striking beauty and force and consistency of the whole will at once become evident. The prophet was speaking in the previous chapter of a time of terrible distress and perplexity which was close at hand. King and people had forsaken their God. Ahaz had refused the sign of deliverance offered him, and was hoping by an alliance with Assyria to beat off his enemies. The people in their terror were seeking to wizards and to necromancers for guidance, instead of seeking to God. And the prophet warns them that the national unbelief and apostasy shall bring its sure chastisement in national despair. Men will look around them in vain for succour. The heavens above and the earth beneath shall be wrapt in the same awful gloom. "They shall turn their faces upward," he says, "and they shall look unto the earth and behold distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish." Nothing can exceed the dramatic force of the picture: it is a night at noonday, the very sun blotted from the heavens; it is a darkness which may be felt. But even whilst the prophet's gaze is fixed upon it, he sees the light trembling on the skirts of the darkness; the sunrise is

behind the cloud. "But there shall be no gloom to her (*i.e.*, to the land) that was in anguish. In the former time He brought into contempt"—"made light of," not "lightly afflicted," as the A.V. has it—"the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time hath He made it glorious by the way of the sea beyond Jordan, Galilee of the nations."

Take this rendering, and you have a perfectly exact and very striking prediction. It was not true that the land had first been "lightly afflicted" and afterwards was "more grievously afflicted;" but it was true that in the former time the land had been despised. Zebulun, and Naphtali, and Galilee of the nations, had been a byword among the Jews. Their territory had been trampled under foot by every invader who had ever entered Palestine. In the former time the Lord had brought it into contempt; He had abased it; but in the latter time had He made it glorious with a glory far transcending that of any earthly kingdom. For there, amid that despised half-heathen population, the True Light shined; there the Lord of Glory lived, and spake His wonderful words and wrought His wonderful works; there He called fishermen and tax-gatherers to be His first disciples and missionaries to the world. The land was "made glorious" by the feet of Jesus of Nazareth.

Well may the prophet continue: "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 the light shined. Thou hast multiplied the nation, Thou hast increased their joy [not, as in A.V., "and *not* increased the joy"—a reading which, though found apparently in the present Hebrew text, has been corrected by the Hebrew scribes themselves]; they joy before Thee according to the joy in harvest, as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. For the yoke of His burden, and the staff of His shoulder, the rod of His oppressor, Thou hast broken as in the day of Midian. For all the armour of the armed man in the tumult (of battle), and the garments rolled in blood shall even be for burning, for fuel of fire." The A.V., by the insertion of the words "*but this*," introduces an antithesis which destroys the whole beauty and force of the picture. Strike out those words, and all becomes clear and consistent. The meaning is that at the advent of the Prince of Peace all wars shall cease. The soldier's sandals and the soldier's cloak, and all the blood-stained gear of battle, shall be gathered together and cast into the fire to be burned. This is the majestic picture of light and peace which dawns upon the prophet's soul in the midst of the national apostasy and gloom, as he looks forward to the birth of the true Immanuel; and this is now for the first time made clear and intelligible to the English reader.

J. J. STEWART PEROWNE.