

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

PayPal

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Expository Times* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expository-times_01.php

pdfs are named: [Volume]_[Issue]_[1st page of article].pdf

personality is clearly to the writer the most satisfying evidence that Christianity is "the power and the wisdom of God," and he will commend his view to many of his readers. The treatment is that of a biblical rather than of a constructive theologian. "The physical resurrection remains, but a mystery"—"Jesus has for the Christian consciousness the religious value of God." These may be the last words that can now be said on the Resurrection

and the Divinity of our Lord, and it may be that it is the apologist's duty and wisdom to emphasise the historical and neglect the metaphysical aspects of Christianity, to urge its practical rather than its speculative claims; yet we may hope that the day will dawn when Christian Apologetics will be constructive as well as defensive; yet till then this work, which we most heartily commend to all, will hold a unique place, and render an inestimable service.

The Revised Version in Australia.

BY THE RIGHT REV. SAMUEL THORNTON, D.D., BISHOP OF BALLARAT.

You have published an abundance of opinions on the alleged failure of the Revised Version, and I am only induced to trouble you with mine by my Archdeacon,—your correspondent, Ven. H. E. Cooper of Hamilton,—who assures me you would like to have it.

As he mentioned in a letter printed in your August number, I took the step, last March, of publicly "advising" (as carefully distinguished from "ordering") the use of the Revised Version in reading Lessons, in this diocese; and the Diocesan Assembly unanimously passed a responsive resolution, expressing satisfaction at learning "that the Lessons may be read in Church from the Revised Version."

Since then fourteen or more of our sixty parishes have adopted it, and others will soon do so.

In advising as I did, I acted alone. Indeed, my next neighbour, the Bishop of Melbourne, has since given publicly the opposite advice, arguing that the Original Text was still uncertain, and that the Bible Society, which fairly represented English Christianity, had not accepted, nor the Church of England formally endorsed, the Revision.

Having previously weighed these considerations without being convinced by them, and perceiving that things were ripe for some diocese to essay the change, I felt impelled (being now the oldest in the See of the Australian Bishops) to do so myself. Nearly ten years of study of my "parallel Bible" having forced on me the conviction that the Unrevised Authorised Version is so full of small mistakes, and so discreditably wrong in some important details, that it is contrary to duty to

encourage its use, where a corrected (albeit not perfect) form of it is available.

As a matter of conscience, I now never buy,—read in public (except as prescribed in the Prayer-Book),—or help in circulating, the Unrevised English Scriptures.

That the Revised Version is the less rhythmical of the two versions, in not a few passages, all agree; but rhythm is valueless where purchased—as often in the Authorised Version—at the expense of fidelity. And the complaint as regards many passages is fanciful, or born of the indolent Toryism of habit. "Use and wont," as one of your correspondents suggests, will soon reveal to the ear a rhythm of its own in the new version. Another of your correspondents points to the *improved* rhythm, in its corrected form, of Rev. vii. 9 *sqq.* in the New Testament; I venture to instance the same in Job xxii. 15 *sqq.* in the Old Testament.

That the Revised Version is the less idiomatic in some passages is also true; in a few, it seems forgotten that, after all, aorists are made for man, and not *vice versa*. But I have been struck with the failure of most fault-finders to suggest real amendments where they point out deficiencies; and I gravely doubt whether most of them could improve, on the whole, the Revision they disparage.

Criticisms of the Revised Version on either ground are often met by the marginal reading, which, it is believed, commonly represents the mind of the best Revisers, though it may not have commanded a numerical sufficiency of votes to be admitted into the Text.

After all,—is *English style* a vitally important

element in estimating the comparative value of a translation of ancient compositions for devotional use?

The more I study both, the less do such defects as cling to the Revised Version disturb me—the more unbearable do the blunders of the Authorised Version become; and the cumulative effect on my estimate of the former produced by its multitudinous emendations of the latter is overwhelming.

Not a few passages in the Authorised Version are, to speak plainly, nonsense; if they be dear by association, so much the worse for association. Indeed, far too much stress has been laid on the “familiar associations” of the Authorised Version. Familiarity with the forms and expressions of religious thought is no unmixed good; their variation is often an advantage in itself, as conducing to alertness and reality in our religious apprehensions. By all means, therefore, variation should be welcomed where fidelity of translation calls for it.

At any rate, no one now pretends that the Authorised Version can be commended to general study without caution and qualification; yet it seems most undesirable to let the idea be disseminated that the book is in some respects untrustworthy, instead of substituting a corrected version of it, and thus defining the limits of that untrustworthiness.

I believe, with the Bishop of Durham, that the Revised Version will displace the Authorised Version by degrees, as the Authorised Version did the “great” and Genevan Bibles. But it would do so more quickly if certain details, not so much of translation as of printing and pricing, could be amended.

The excision of all the references, and of the page headings, the indistinctness of the numbers of the chapters, and the absence of a cheap nonpareil edition of the whole Bible, may seem little drawbacks, but unquestionably hinder the popularity of the Revision.

The Spirit and the Spirit-born.

BY THE REV. JOHN REID, M.A., DUNDEE.

“The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit.”—JOHN iii. 8.

THERE are very grave objections to this familiar verse, as a translation of the original. In the Greek it runs: τὸ πνεῦμα ὅπου θέλει πνέει, καὶ τὴν φωνὴν αὐτοῦ ἀκούεις, ἀλλ’ οὐκ οἶδας πόθεν ἔρχεται καὶ ποῦ ὑπάγει· οὕτως ἐστὶν πᾶς ὁ γεγεννημένος ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος. If we had not the A.V. before us, or were not familiar with it, we would, without the slightest hesitation, translate: “The Spirit breathes where He wills, and thou hearest His voice, but knowest not whence He comes and whither He goes; so is every one who has been born of the Spirit. The following objections make the familiar version an impossible translation:—

1. πνεῦμα occurs five times in the immediate context, John iii. 5–8. In four cases it is translated “Spirit”; in the other case, at the beginning of the verse (John iii. 8), it is translated “wind.” But if the New Testament translation is to proceed on rational lines, the same meaning must be given to πνεῦμα throughout the passage. It is nothing but exegetical lawlessness to make it mean “wind”

at the beginning, and “Spirit” at the end of the *same verse*. This of itself is enough to condemn the received translation.

2. πνεῦμα is one of the most common words of the New Testament. In all, it occurs about 370 times, and only in one other place is it translated “wind,” viz. in Heb. i. 7, “Who maketh His angels” (πνεύματα) “winds.” Apart from the question of the right translation of the word in this passage, which is still in dispute, it is well to notice, that the phrase in which it occurs is a quotation from the Old Testament, where רוּחַ, *ruach*, is used for wind or breath and Spirit. In New Testament Scripture πνεῦμα is reserved as the name of “Spirit” or “spirit” except in cases where it is strictly qualified as in 2 Thess. ii. 8 (πν. τοῦ στόματος), *breath of the mouth*, or Rev. xi. 11 (πν. ζωῆς), *breath of life*. The proper word for wind is ἀνεμος, which occurs thirty-one times in the New Testament, and with it our evangelist was familiar (John vi. 18). One would as soon expect