

*The
Translators
To The
Readers*

1611 *XJQ*

Preface

The Translators

To The

Reader

1611 King James Preface

by

Miles Smith

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Acknowledgements

I would like to give a special thanks to my dear Christian Brother and eBook conversion mentor Illya Antonenko of osnova.com. When I mentioned to him that I was going to do this eBook of the *The Translators To The Readers* and was looking for a digital source of one of the non-modernized versions (I wanted to avoid the labor of scanning it in from one of my printed editions if possible) he graciously sent me the already prepared source code from his 1611 KJV which includes all of the footnotes from the original already created and coded in.

Thanks Illya, you saved me a lot of time.

Preface

When the forty-seven or so Translators, all members of the Church of England, who actually worked on what was to become the 1611 King James Version of the English Bible had completed their assigned tasks one of those Translators, Miles Smith, wrote *The Translators To The Reader*. In this insightful document he records for those who would read the culmination of their seven years of labor some thoughts on the purposes of the Translators and their justifications for the pursuit of those labors as well as their thoughts on their own translation, other translations, margin notes, and a host of other topics.

Regrettably many years ago most Bible publishers ceased including *The Translators To The Reader* in their King James Bibles (now generally the 1769 Benjamin Blayney edition / revision) and many who highly esteem this wonderful English translation of the Bible have never really read for themselves those thoughts of the ones who actually did the translation. It is my hope that by making this eBook edition available some of those who are unaware of a number of very important and pertinent thoughts that those forty-seven Translators had concerning their translation processes as well as the finished result of their efforts will be thereby enabled to view those processes and the finished translation as those Translators did.

I have also included Edgar J. Goodspeed's *Theiss on The Translators To The Reader* in hopes that readers of the King James Bible may see the importance of having this enlightening preface, *The Translators To The Reader*, available to them, even if is not included in their Bibles

There are a number of “modernized” editions of *The Translators To The Reader* that can be found on the internet, which for some may be easier to read, but as I mentioned in the Acknowledgements, it was my desire to present an eBook edition as close to the original as I could produce. The version here presented is with the actual words and

spelling of the original 1611 first edition with only the font being changed to make it far easier to read. The only other variation is that the various sub headings included in this edition are not in the “exact, page by page, digitally remastered replica of the original 1611” [1] first edition I have or in any other 1611 first edition I have ever seen. At what point they were added I do not know and as it is such an inconsequential matter I did not take time to research when they were included. If any reader can supply that factual data I would be glad to include it in any future revision.

Perhaps a short note as to how these “somewhat modernized” (exact wording and spelling but with a modern font) versions came into being is in order.

In order to see what changes were made through the years an “exact copy” of a 1611 first edition was reconstructed (using 8 point Roman type). This is where the modernized (same words and spelling but with a different font) editions currently marketed came from. They are copies of that text. These editions are commonly referred to as *The 1833 Oxford Edition* and are available from Hendrickson Publishers, Inc. – ISBN 978-1-56563-808-2

The following quote is from the book, *A Textual History of the King James Bible* by David Norton.

The quote has to do with the selecting of Blayney’s text as the “final” revision, edition, or whatever appropriate term a person may be comfortable with, which became our current 1769 KJV.

“At this time Curtis’s involvement with Cambridge came to light, leading, he supposes, both to the breakdown of the Cambridge project and, very importantly, to renewed cooperation between the Universities. Curtis meanwhile was left on the outside, still campaigning.

“There were two important consequences: greater uniformity in the editions of both Universities and an exact reprint of the first edition, published by Oxford in 1833 (H 1792), a truly remarkable piece of work that reproduces all the quirks of the first edition, even inverted letters,

with scarcely an error. This was judged by the Delegates to be ‘the most effectual method for enabling themselves and others to judge how far the complaints were well-founded.’ [2]

“Scrivener comments that this edition ‘virtually settled the whole debate, by shewing to the general reader the obvious impossibility of returning to the Bible of 1611, with all the defects which those who superintended the press had been engaged, for more than two centuries, in reducing to a more consistent and presentable shape’ (p. 35; for a contrasting view, see below, p. 120). One might add in qualification that many of Curtis’s complaints had been justified, and that the studious general reader might still want to see exactly what the translators and their printer produced.

“One quiet element rebutting Curtis is worth noting. Following the title page, there is a collation of the first edition with the 1613 folio (selected in preference to the other folios because no two exactly identical copies of them could be found). Over 400 variations of words are recorded so that ‘the Reader may learn how far it was thought necessary to correct the Authorized Text in the time of the original Translators.’ In short, Curtis’s claim that no substantive change to the original was permitted was shown not to be the view held in the time of the translators, thus affirming that there was precedent for the continuing work on the text.

“The necessity of standardisation having been brought home to the Universities, the Oxford standard, essentially Blayney’s text, now ruled.”

With this final brief informational statement I will bring this Preface to a conclusion. I have also included in this eBook *The Epistle Dedicatory* (the Translators’ dedication of their translation to King James written by Thomas Bilson) and *The Fifteen Rules of Translation* which were given to all the original Translators as their guidelines (co-authored by Richard Bancroft and King James).

[1] *King James Version 1611* digital reproduction - Zondervan Publishing.

[2] The Holy Bible, an Exact Reprint, statement bound in at the beginning.

TO THE MOST HIGH AND MIGHTIE

Prince, Iames

by the grace of God King of Great Britaine, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith,
&c.

THE TRANSLATORS OF *THE BIBLE*,
with Grace, Mercie, and Peace, through IESVS CHRIST our LORD.

Great and manifold were the bleffings (moft dread Soueraigne) which Almighty GOD, the Father of all Mercies, beftowed vpon vs the people of ENGLAND, when firft he fent your Maiefties Royall perfon to rule and raigne ouer vs. For whereas it was the expectation of many, who wifhed not well vnto our SION, that vpon the letting of that bright *Occidentall Starre* Queene ELIZABETH of moft happy memory, fome thicke and palpable cloudes of darkenefse would fo haue ouerfhadowed this land, that men fhould haue bene in doubt which way they were to walke, and that it fhould hardly be knowen, who was to direct the vnfetled State: the appearance of your MAIESTIE, as of the *Sunne* in his ftrength, instantly difpelled thofe fupposed and furnifed mifts, and gaue vnto all that were well affected, exceeding caufe of comfort; efppecially when we beheld the gouernment eftablifhed in your HIGHNESSE, and your hopefull Seed, by an vndoubted Title, and this alfo accompanied with Peace and tranquillitie, at home and abroad.

But amongft all our Ioyes, there was no one that more filled our hearts, then the bleffed continuance of the Preaching of GODS facred word amongft vs, which is that inestimable treafure, which excelleth all the riches of the earth, becaufe the fruit thereof extendeth it felfe, not onely to the time fpent in this tranfitory world, but directeth and difpofeth men vnto that Eternall happineffe which is aboue in Heauen.

Then, not to fuffer this to fall to the ground, but rather to take it vp, and to continue it in that ftate, wherein the famous predeceffour of your HIGHNESSE did leaue it; Nay, to goe forward with the confidence and refolution of a man in maintaining the trueth of CHRIST, and propagating it farre and neere, is that which hath fo bound and firmly knit the hearts

of all your MAIESTIES loyall and Religious people vnto you, that your very Name is precious among them, their eye doeth behold you with comfort, and they blesse you in their hearts, as that sanctified person, who vnder GOD, is the immediate authour of their true happinesse. And this their contentment doeth not diminish or decay, but euery day increaseth and taketh strength, when they obserue that the zeale of your Maiestie towards the house of GOD, doth not slacke or goe backward, but is more and more kindled, manifesting it selfe abroad in the furthest parts of *Christendome*, by writing in defence of the Trueth, (which hath giuen such a blow vnto that man of Sinne, as will not be healed) and euery day at home, by Religious and learned discourse, by frequenting the house of GOD, by hearing the word preached, by cherishing the teachers therof, by caring for the Church as a most tender and louing nourcing Father.

There are infinite arguments of this right Christian and Religious affection in your MAIESTIE: but none is more forcible to declare it to others, then the vehement and perpetuated desire of the accomplishing and publishing of this Worke, which now with all humilitie we present vnto your MAIESTIE. For when your Highnesse had once out of deepe iudgment apprehended, how conuenient it was, That out of the Originall sacred tongues, together with comparing of the labours, both in our owne and other forreigne Languages, of many worthy men who went before vs, there should be one more exact Translation of the holy Scriptures into the *English tongue*; your MAIESTIE did neuer desist, to vrge and to excite those to whom it was commended, that the worke might be hastened, and that the businesse might be expedited in so decent a maner, as a matter of such importance might iustly require.

And now at last, by the Mercy of GOD, and the continuance of our Labours, it being brought vnto such a conclusion, as that we haue great hope that the Church of *England* shall reape good fruit thereby; we hold it our duty to offer it to your MAIESTIE, not onely as to our King and Soueraigne, but as to the principall mouer and Author of the Worke. Humbly crauing of your most Sacred Maiestie, that since things of this quality haue euer bene subiect to the censures of ill meaning and discontented persons, it may receiue approbation and Patronage from so learned and iudicious a Prince as your Highnesse is, whose allowance and

acceptance of our Labours, shall more honour and incourage vs, then all the calumniationes and hard interpretations of other men shall difmay vs. So that, if on the one side we shall be traduced by Popish persons at home or abroad, who therefore will maligne vs, because we are poore Instruments to make GODS holy Trueth to be yet more and more knowen vnto the people, whom they desire still to keepe in ignorance and darknesse: or if on the other side, we shall be maligned by selfe-conceited brethren, who runne their owne wayes, and giue liking vnto nothing but what is framed by themselues, and hammered on their Anuile; we may rest secure, supported within by the trueth and innocencie of a good conscience, hauing walked the wayes of simplicitie and integritie, as before the Lord; And sustained without, by the powerfull Protection of your Maiesties grace and fauour, which will euer giue countenance to honest and Christian endeouours, against bitter censures, and vncharitable imputations.

The LORD of Heauen and earth blesse your Maiestie with many and happy dayes, that as his Heauenly hand hath enriched your Highnesse with many singular, and extraordinary Graces; so you may be the wonder of the world in this later age, for happinesse and true felicitie, to the honour of that Great GOD, and the good of his Church, through IESVS CHRIST our Lord and onely Sauour.

(:)



Thomas Bilson 1547-1616

THE TRANSLATORS TO THE READER.

The best things haue been calumniated.

Zeale to promote the common good, whether it be by deuifing any thing our selues, or reuifing that which hath bene laboured by others, deserueth certainly much respect and esteeme, but yet findeth but cold intertainment in the world. It is welcommed with suspicion in stead of loue, and with emulation in stead of thanks: and if there be any hole left for caull to enter, (and caull if it doe not finde a hole, will make one) it is sure to bee misconstrued, and in danger to be condemned. This will easily be granted by as many as know story, or haue any experience. For, was there euer any thing proiected, that faouored any way of newneffe or renewing, but the same endured many a storme of gaine-faying, or opposition? A man would thinke that Ciuilitie, holefome Lawes, learning and eloquence, Synods, and Church-maintenance, (that we speake of no more things of this kinde) should be as safe as a Sanctuary, and out of shot, ¹ as they say, that no man would lift vp the heele, no, nor dogge mooue his tongue against the motioners of them. For by the first, we are distinguished from bruit-beasts led with sensuality: By the second, we are bridled and restrained from outrageous behauour, and from doing of iniuries, whether by fraud or by violence: By the third, we are enabled to informe and reforme others, by the light and feeling that we haue attained vnto our selues: Briefly, by the fourth being brought together to a parle face to face, we sooner compose our differences then by writings, which are endlesse: And lastly, that the Church be sufficiently provided for, is so agreeable to good reason and conscience, that those mothers are holden to be lesse cruell, that kill their children assoone as they are borne, then those nourfing fathers and mothers (wheresoeuer they be) that withdraw from them who hang vpon their breasts (and vpon whose breasts againe themselues doe hang to receiue the Spirituall and sincere milke of the word) liuelyhood and support fit for their estates. Thus it is apparent, that these things which we speake of, are of most necessary vse, and therefore, that none, either without absurditie can speake against them, or without note of wickednesse can spurne against them.

Yet for all that, the learned know that certaine worthy men² haue bene brought to vntimely death for none other fault, but for seeking to reduce their Countrey-men to good order and discipline: and that in some Common-weales³ it was made a capitall crime, once to motion the making of a new Law for the abrogating of an old, though the same were most pernicious: And that certaine, ⁴ which would be counted pillars of the State, and paternes of Vertue and Prudence, could not be brought for a long time to giue way to good Letters and refined speech, but bare themselues as auerse from them, as from rocks or boxes of poison: And fourthly, that hee was no babe, but a great clearke, ⁵ that gaue foorth (and in writing to remaine to posteritie) in passion peradventure, but yet he gaue foorth, that hee had not seene any profit to come by any Synode, or meeting of the Clergie, but rather the contrary: And lastly, against Church-maintenance and allowance, in such sort, as the Embassadors and messengers of the great King of Kings should be furnished, it is not vnknown what a fiction or fable (so it is esteemed, and for no better by the reporter⁶ himselfe, though superstitious) was deuised; Namely, that at such time as the professours and teachers of Christianitie in the Church of Rome, then a true Church, were liberally endowed, a voyce forsooth was heard from heauen, saying; Now is poison powred down into the Church, &c. Thus not only as oft as we speake, as one saith, but also as oft as we do anything of note or consequence, we subiect our selues to euery ones censure, and happy is he that is least tossed vpon tongues; for vtterly to escape the snatch of them it is impossible. If any man conceit, that this is the lot and portion of the meaner sort onely, and that Princes are priuiledged by their high estate, he is deceiued. *As the sword deuoureth aswell one as the other*, as it is in *Samuel* (2 Sam. 11: 25); nay as the great Commander charged his souldiers in a certaine battell, to strike at no part of the enemy, but at the face; And as the King of Syria commanded his chiefe Captaines *to fight neither with small nor great, saue onely against the King of Israel* (1 Kings 22: 31): so it is too true, that Enuie striketh most spitefully at the fairest, and at the chiefe. *Dauid* was a worthy Prince, and no man to be compared to him for his first deedes, and yet for as worthy an acte as euer he did (euen for bringing backe the Arke of God in solemnitie) he was scorned and scoffed at by his owne wife (2 Sam. 6: 16). *Solomon* was greater then *Dauid*,

though not in vertue, yet in power: and by his power and wifdome he built a Temple to the LORD, fuch a one as was the glory of the land of Ifrael, and the wonder of the whole world. But was that his magnificence liked of by all? We doubt of it. Otherwife, why doe they lay it in his finnes difh, and call vnto him for eafing of the burden, ⁷ *Make, fay they, the grieuous feruitude of thy father, and his fore yoke, lighter.* (1 Kings 12: 4) Belike he had charged them with fome leuies, and troubled them with fome cariages; Hereupon they raife vp a tragedie, and wifh in their heart the Temple had neuer bene built. So hard a thing it is to please all, euen when we please God beft, and doe feeke to approue our felues to euery ones confcience.

The higheft perfonages haue been calumniated.

If wee will defcend to later times, wee fhall finde many the like examples of fuch kind, or rather vnkind acceptance. The firft Romane Emperour⁸ did neuer doe a more pleasing deed to the learned, nor more profitable to pofteritie, for conferuing the record of times in true fuppuration; then when he corrected the Calender, and ordered the yeere according to the courfe of the Sunne: and yet this was imputed to him for noueltie, and arrogancie, and procured to him great obloquie. So the firft Chriftened Emperour⁹ (at the leaftwife that openly professed the faith himfelfe, and allowed others to doe the like) for ftrengthening the Empire at his great charges, and providing for the Church, as he did, got for his labour the name *Pupillus*, ¹⁰ as who would fay, a wastefull Prince, that had neede of a Guardian, or ouerfeer. So the beft Chriftened Emperour, ¹¹ for the loue that he bare vnto peace, thereby to enrich both himfelfe and his fubiects, and becaufe he did not feeke warre but find it, was iudged to be no man at armes, ¹² (though in deed he excelled in feates of chiuallrie, and fhewed fo much when he was prouoked) and condemned for giuing himfelfe to his eafe, and to his pleasure. To be fhort, the moft learned Emperour¹³ of former times, (at the leaft, the greateft politician) what thanks had he for cutting off the superfluties of the lawes, and digefting them into fome order and method? This, that he hath been blotted by fome to bee an Epitomift, that is, one that extinguifhed worthy whole volumes, to bring his abridgements into request. This is the meafure that hath been rendred to excellent Princes

in former times, euen, *Cum benè facerent, malè audire*, For their good deedes to be euill spoken of. Neither is there any likelihood, that enuie and malignitie died, and were buried with the ancient. No, no, the reproofe of *Mofes* taketh hold of moft ages; *You are rifen vp in your fathers stead, an increase of finfull men.* (Num. 32: 14) *What is that that hath been done? that which fhall be done: and there is no new thing vnder the Sunne*, faith the wifeman (Steuens, As your fathers did, fo doe you. (Acts 7: 51)

His Maiesties conftancie, notwithstanding calumniation, for the furvey of the Englifh translations.

This, and more to this purpose, His Maieftie that now reigneth (and long, and long may he reigne, and his offspring for euer, *Himfelfe and children, and childrens children alwayes*)¹⁴ knew full well, according to the fingular wifedome giuen vnto him by God, and the rare learning and experience that he hath attained vnto; namely that whofoeuer attempteth any thing for the publike (fpecially if it pertaine to Religion, and to the opening and clearing of the word of God) the fame fetteth himfelfe vpon a ftage to be glouted vpon by euery euil eye, yea, he cafteth himfelfe headlong vpon pikes, to be gored by euery fharppe tongue. For he that medleth with mens Religion in any part, medleth with their cuftome, nay, with their freehold; and though they finde no content in that which they haue, yet they cannot abide to heare of altering. Notwithstanding his Royall heart was not daunted or discouraged for this or that colour, but ftood refolute, *as a ftatue immoueable, and an anuile not eafie to be beaten into plates*,¹⁵ as one fayth; he knew who had chofen him to be a Souldier, or rather a Captaine, and being affured that the courfe which he intended made much for the glory of God, & the building vp of his Church, he would not fuffer it to be broken off for whatfoeuer fpeeches or practifes. It doth certainly belong vnto Kings, yea, it doth fpecially belong vnto them, to haue care of Religion, yea, to know it aright, yea, to profefse it zealoufly, yea to promote it to the vttermoft of their power. This is their glory before all nations which meane well, and this will bring vnto them a farre moft excellent weight of glory in the day of the Lord Iefus. For the Scripture faith not in vaine, *Them that honor me, I will honor*, (1 Sam. 2: 30) neither was it a vaine

word that *Eusebius* deliuered long agoe, that pietie towards God¹⁶ was the weapon, and the onely weapon that both preferued *Constantines* perfon, and auenged him of his enemies.¹⁷

The praife of the holy Scriptures.

But now what pietie without trueth? what trueth (what fauing trueth) without the word of God? what word of God (whereof we may be fure) without the Scripture? The Scriptures we are commanded to fearch. Ioh. 5.39. Efa. 8.20. They are commended that fearched & ftudied them. Act. 17.11. and 8.28, 29>. They are reprod that were vnkilful in them, or flow to beleue them. Mat. 22.29. Luk. 24.25. They can make vs wife vnto faluation. 2. Tim. 3.15. If we be ignorant, they will instruct vs; if out of the way, they will bring vs home; if out of order, they will reforme vs, if in heauines, comfort vs; if dull, quicken vs; if colde, inflame vs. *Tolle, lege; Tolle, lege*, Take vp and read, take vp and read the Scriptures, (for vnto them was the direction) it was faid vnto S. *Auguftine*¹⁸ by a supernaturall voyce. *Whatfoeuar is in the Scriptures, beleue me*, faith the fame S. *Auguftine*,¹⁹ *is high and diuine; there is verily trueth, and a doctrine moft fit for the refreshing and renewing of mens mindes, and truely fo tempered, that euery one may draw from thence that which is fufficient for him, if hee come to draw with a deuout and pious minde, as true Religion requireth*. Thus S. *Auguftine*. And S. *Hierome*:²⁰ *Ama scripturas, & amabit te fapientia &c*. Loue the Scriptures, and wifedome will loue thee. And S. *Cyrril* againft *Iulian*;²¹ *Euen boyes that are bred vp in the Scriptures, become moft religious, &c*. But what mention wee three or foure vfes of the Scripture, whereas whatfoeuer is to be beleued or practifed, or hoped for, is contained in them? or three or foure fentences of the Fathers, fince whofoeuer is worthy of the name of a Father, from Chrifts time downeward, hath likewise written not onely of the riches, but alfo of the perfection of the Scripture? *I adore the fulneffe of the Scripture*, faith *Tertullian* againft *Hermogenes*.²² And againe, to *Apelles*²³ an Heretike of the like ftampe, he faith; *I doe not admit that which thou bringeft in* (or concludeft) *of thine owne* (head or ftore, *de tuo*) without Scripture. So Saint *Iuftin Martyr*²⁴ before him; *Wee muft know by all meanes*, faith hee, *that it is*

not lawfull (or possible) to learne (any thing) of God or of right pietie, saue onely out of the Prophets, who teach vs by diuine inspiration. So Saint Basill after Tertullian, ²⁵ *It is a manifest falling away from the Faith, and a fault of presumption, either to reiect any of those things that are written, or to bring in (vpon the head of them, ἐπεισάγειν) any of those things that are not written. Wee omit to cite to the same effect, S. Cyrill B. of Hierusalem in his 4. Cataches. Saint Hierome against Heludius, Saint Augustine in his 3. booke against the letters of Petilian, and in very many other places of his workes. Also we forebeare to descend to latter Fathers, because wee will not wearie the reader. The Scriptures then being acknowledged to bee so full and so perfect, how can wee excuse our selues of negligence, if we doe not studie them, of curiositie, if we be not content with them? Men talke much of εἰρεσίῳνη,* ²⁶ *how many sweete and goodly things it had hanging on it; of the Philosophers stone, that it turneth copper into gold; of Cornu-copia, that it had all things necessary for foode in it; of Panaces the herbe, that it was good for all diseases; of Catholicon the drugge, that it is in stead of all purges; of Vulcans armour, that it was an armour of prooffe against all thrufts, and all blowes, &c. Well, that which they fallly or vainely attributed to these things for bodily good, wee may iustly and with full measure ascribe vnto the Scripture, for spirituall. It is not onely an armour, but also a whole armorie of weapons, both offensiue, and defensiue; whereby we may saue our selues and put the enemie to flight. It is not an herbe, but a tree, or rather a whole paradise of trees of life, which bring forth fruit euery moneth, and the fruit thereof is for meate, and the leaues for medicine. It is not a pot of Manna, or a crufe of oyle, which were for memorie only, or for a meales meate or two, but as it were a showre of heauenly bread sufficient for a whole host, be it neuer so great; and as it were a whole cellar full of oyle vessels; whereby all our necessities may be provided for, and our debts discharged. In a word, it is a Panary of holesome foode, against fenowed²⁷ traditions; a Physions-shop (Saint Basill²⁸ calleth it) of preseruatiues against poisoned heresies; a Pandect of profitable lawes, against rebellious spirits; a treasurie of most costly iewels, against beggarly rudiments; Finally a fountaine of most pure water springing vp vnto euerlasting life. And what maruaile? The originall thereof being from heauen, not from earth; the*

author being God, not man; the enditer, the holy spirit, not the wit of the Apostles or Prophets; the Pen-men such as were sanctified from the wombe, and endewed with a principall portion of Gods spirit; the matter, veritie, pietie, puritie, vprightnesse; the forme, Gods word, Gods testimonie, Gods oracles, the word of trueth, the word of saluation, &c. the effects, light of vnderstanding, stableness of perswasion, repentance from dead workes, newnesse of life, holinesse, peace, ioy in the holy Ghost; lastly, the end and reward of the studie thereof, fellowship with the Saints, participation of the heauenly nature, fruition of an inheritance immortall, vndefiled, and that neuer shall fade away: Happie is the man that delighteth in the Scripture, and thrife happie that meditateth in it day and night.

Tranflation necessarie.

But how shall men meditate in that, which they cannot vnderstand? How shall they vnderstand that which is kept close in an vnknown tongue? as it is written, *Except I know the power of the voyce, I shall be to him that speaketh, a Barbarian, and he that speaketh, shall be a Barbarian to me* (1 Cor. 14). The Apostle excepteth no tongue, not Hebrewe the ancientest, not Greeke the most copious, not Latine the finest. Nature taught a naturall man to confesse, that all of vs in those tongues which wee doe not vnderstand, are plainely deafe; wee may turne the deafe eare vnto them. The *Scythian* counted the *Athenian*, whom he did not vnderstand, barbarous: ²⁹ so the *Romane* did the *Syrian*, and the *Iew*, (euen S. *Hierome*³⁰ himselfe calleth the Hebrew tongue barbarous, belike because it was strange to so many) so the Emperour of *Constantinople* calleth the *Latine* tongue, barbarous, though Pope *Nicolas* do storme at it: ³¹ so the *Iewes* long before *Christ*, called all other nations, *Lognazim*, which is little better then barbarous. Therefore as one complaineth, that alwayes in the Senate of *Rome*, there was one or other that called for an interpreter: ³² so lest the Church be driuen to the like exigent, it is necessarie to haue tranlations in a readinesse. Tranflation it is that openeth the window, to let in the light; that breaketh the shell, that we may eat the kernel; that putteth aside the curtaine, that we may looke into the most Holy place; that remooueth the couer of the well, that wee may come by the water, euen as *Iacob*

rolled away the stone from the mouth of the well, by which meanes the flockes of *Laban* were watered (Gen. 29: 10). Indeede without tranflation into the vulgar tongue, the vnlearned are but like children at *Iacobs* well (which was deepe) (John 4: 11) without a bucket or some thing to draw with: or as that person mentioned by *Esfay*, to whom when a sealed booke was deliuered, with this motion, *Reade this, I pray thee*, hee was faine to make this answere, *I cannot, for it is sealed.* (Isa. 29: 11)

The tranflation of the olde Testament out of the Hebrew into Greeke.

While God would be knowen onely in *Iacob*, and haue his Name great in *Israel*, and in none other place, while the dew lay on *Gideons* fleece onely, and all the earth besides was drie;³³ then for one and the same people, which spake all of them the language of *Canaan*, that is, *Hebrewes*, one and the same originall in *Hebrew* was sufficient. But when the fulnesse of time drew neere, that the Sunne of righteoufnesse, the Sonne of God should come into the world, whom God ordeined to be a reconciliation through faith in his blood, not of the *Iew* onely, but also of the *Greeke*, yea, of all them that were scattered abroad; then loe, it pleased the Lord to stirre vp the spirit of a *Greeke* Prince (*Greeke* for descent and language) euen of *Ptolome Philadelph* King of *Egypt*, to procure the tranflating of the Booke of God out of *Hebrew* into *Greeke*. This is the tranflation of the *Seuentie* Interpreters, commonly so called, which prepared the way for our Sauour among the Gentiles by written preaching, as Saint *Iohn* Baptift did among the *Iewes* by vocall. For the *Grecians* being desirous of learning, were not wont to suffer bookes of worth to lye moulding in Kings Libraries, but had many of their seruants, ready scribes, to copie them out, and so they were disperfed and made common. Againe, the *Greeke* tongue was well knowen and made familiar to most inhabitants in *Asia*, by reason of the conquest that there the *Grecians* had made, as also by the Colonies, which thither they had sent. For the same causes also it was well vnderstood in many places of *Europe*, yea, and of *Affrike* too. Therefore the word of God being set forth in *Greeke*, becommeth hereby like a candle set vpon a candlesticke, which giueth light to all that are in the house, or like a proclamation sounded forth in the market place, which most men presently take knowledge of;

and therefore that language was fittest to containe the Scriptures, both for the first Preachers of the Gospel to appeale vnto for witnesse, and for the learners also of those times to make search and triall by. It is certaine, that the Tranflation was not so found and so perfect, but that it needed in many places correction; and who had bene so sufficient for this worke as the Apostles or Apostolike men? Yet it seemed good to the holy Ghost and to them, to take that which they found, (the same being for the greatest part true and sufficient) rather then by making a new, in that new world and greene age of the Church, to expose themselues to many exceptions and caillations, as though they made a Tranflation to serue their owne turne, and therefore bearing witnesse to themselues, their witnesse not to be regarded. This may be supposed to bee some cause, why the Tranflation of the *Seuentie* was allowed to passe for currant. Notwithstanding, though it was commended generally, yet it did not fully content the learned, no not of the *Iewes*. For not long after *Christ, Aquila* fell in hand with a new Tranflation, and after him *Theodotion*, and after him *Symmachus*: yea, there was a fift and a sixt edition, the Authours wherof were not knowen. These with the *Seuentie* made vp the *Hexapla*, and were worthily and to great purpose compiled together by *Origen*. Howbeit the Edition of the *Seuentie* went away with the credit, and therefore not onely was placed in the midst by *Origen* (for the worth and excellencie thereof aboue the rest, as *Epiphanius*³⁴ gathereth) but also was vsed by the *Greeke* fathers for the ground and foundation of their Commentaries.³⁵ Yea, *Epiphanius* aboue named doeth attribute so much vnto it, that he holdeth the Authours thereof not onely for Interpreters, but also for Prophets in some respect: and *Iustinian* the Emperour³⁶ enioyning the *Iewes* his subiects to vse specially the Tranflation of the *Seuentie*, rendreth this reason thereof, because they were as it were enlightened with propheticall grace.³⁷ Yet for all that, as the *Egyptians* are said of the Prophet to bee men and not God, and their horses flesh and not spirit (Isa. 31: 3): so it is eident, (and Saint *Hierome*³⁸ affirmeth as much) that the *Seuentie* were Interpreters, they were not Prophets; they did many things well, as learned men; but yet as men they stumpled and fell, one while through ouerfight, another while through ignorance, yea, sometimes they may be noted to adde to the Originall, and sometimes to take from it; which made the Apostles to

leauē them many times, when they left the *Hebrew*, and to deliuer the fence thereof according to the trueth of the word, as the spirit gaue them vtterance. This may suffice touching the Greeke Tranflations of the old Testament.

Tranflation out of Hebrew and Greeke into Latine.

There were also within a few hundreth yeeres after CHRIST, tranflations many into the Latine tongue: for this tongue also was very fit to conuey the Law and the Gospel by, because in those times very many Countreys of the West, yea of the South, East and North, spake or vnderstood Latine, being made Prouinces to the *Romanes*. But now the Latine Tranflations were too many to be all good, for they were infinite (*Latini Interpretes nullo modo numerari possunt*, faith S. *Augustine*.³⁹) Againe they were not out of the *Hebrew* fountaine (wee speake of the *Latine* Tranflations of the Old Testament) but out of the *Greeke* streame, therefore the *Greeke* being not altogether cleare, the *Latine* deriued from it muſt needs be muddie. This moued S. *Hierome* a moſt learned father, and the beſt linguist without controuerſie, of his age, or of any that went before him, to vndertake the tranſlating of the Old Testament, out of the very fountains themſelues; which hee performed with that euidence of great learning, iudgement, induſtrie and faithfulnes, that he hath for euer bound the Church vnto him, in a debt of ſpeciall remembrance and thankefulneſſe.

The tranſlating of the Scripture into the vulgar tongues.

Now though the Church were thus furniſhed with *Greeke* and *Latine* Tranflations, euen before the faith of CHRIST was generally embraced in the Empire: (for the learned know⁴⁰ that euen in S. *Ierom*ſtime, the Conſul of *Rome* and his wife were both Ethnicks, and about the ſame time the greateſt part of the Senate alſo) yet for all that the godly-learned were not content to haue the Scriptures in the Language which themſelues vnderſtood, *Greeke* and *Latine*, (as the good Lepers were not content to fare well themſelues, but acquainted their neighbours with the ſtore that God had ſent, that they alſo might prouide for themſelues (2 Kings 7: 9) but alſo for the behoofe and edifying of the vnlearned which

hungred and thirfted after Righteoufneffe, and had foules to be faued as well as they, they prouided Tranflations into the vulgar for their Countreyemen, infomuch that moft nations vnder heauen did fhortly after their conuerfion, heare CHRIST fpeaking vnto them in their mother tongue, not by the voyce of their Minifter onely, but alfo by the written word tranflated. If any doubt hereof, he may be fatiffied by examples enough, if enough will ferue the turne. Firft *S. Hierome*⁴¹ faith, *Multarum gentiu linguis Scriptura antè translata, docet falsa esse quæ addita funt, &c.i.* *The Scripture being tranflated before in the languages of many Nations, doth fhew that thofe things that were added (by Lucian or Hefychius) are false.* So *S. Hierome* in that place. The fame *Hierome*⁴² elfewhere affirmeth that he, the time was, had fet forth the tranflation of the *Seenty, fuæ linguæ hominibus.i.* for his countreyemen of *Dalmatia*. Which words not only *Erasmus* doth vnderftand to purport, that *S. Hierome* tranflated the Scripture into the *Dalmatiantongue*, but alfo *Sixtus Senenfis*,⁴³ and *Alphonfus à Castro*⁴⁴ (that we fpeake of no more) men not to be excepted againft by them of *Rome*, doe ingenuoufly confefle as much. So, *S. Chryfoftome*⁴⁵ that liued in *S. Hieromes* time, giueth euidence with him: *The doctrine of S. Iohn (faith he) did not in fuch fort (as the Philofophers did) vanifh away: but the Syrians, Egyptians, Indians, Perfians. Ethiopians, and infinite other nations being barbarous people, tranflated it into their (mother) tongue, and haue learned to be (true) Philofophers,* he meaneth Christians. To this may be added *Theodorit*,⁴⁶ as next vnto him, both for antiquitie, and for learning. His words be thefe, *Euery Countrey that is vnder the Sunne, is full of thefe wordes (of the Apoftles and Prophets) and the Hebrew tongue (he meaneth the Scriptures in the Hebrew tongue) is turned not onely into the Language of the Grecians, but alfo of the Romanes, and Egyptians, and Perfians, and Indians, and Armenians, and Scythians, and Sauromatians, and briefly into all the Languages that any Nation vfeth.* So he. In like maner, *Vlpilas* is reported by *Paulus Diaconus*⁴⁷ and *Ifidor*⁴⁸ (and before them by *Sozomen*⁴⁹) to haue tranflated the Scriptures into the *Gothicketongue*: *Iohn* Bifhop of *Siuil* by *Vaffeus*,⁵⁰ to haue turned them into *Arabicke*, about the yeere of our Lord 717: *Beda* by *Ciftertiensfis*, to haue turned a great part of them into *Saxon*:

Efnard by *Trithemius*, to haue abridged the French Pfalter, as *Beda* had done the *Hebrew*, about the yeere 800: King *Alured* by the said *Ciftertiensis*, to haue turned the Pfalter into *Saxon*: ⁵¹ *Methodius* by *Auentinus*⁵² (printed at *Ingolstad*) to haue turned the Scriptures into *Sclauonian*: ⁵³ *Valdo*, Bilhop of *Frising* by *Beatus Rhenanus*, ⁵⁴ to haue caused about that time, the Gospels to be tranflated into *Dutch-rithme*, yet extant in the Library of *Corbinian: Valdus*, by diuers to haue turned them himselfe, or to haue gotten them turned into *French*, about the yeere 1160: *Charles* the 5. of that name, furnamed *The wise*, to haue caused them to be turned into *French*, about 200. yeeres after *Valdus* his time, of which tranflation there be many copies yet extant, as witneffeth *Beroaldus*.⁵⁵ Much about that time, euen in our King *Richard* the seconds dayes, *Iohn Treuisa* tranflated them into *English*, and many *English* Bibles in written hand are yet to be seene with diuers, tranflated as it is very probable, in that age. So the *Syrian* tranflation of the New Testament is in most learned mens Libraries, of *Widminstadius* his setting forth, and the Pfalter in *Arabicke* is with many, of *Augustinus Nebiensis* setting foorth. So *Postel* affirmeth, that in his trauaile he saw the Gospels in the *Ethiopian* tongue; And *Ambrose Thesius* alleageth the Pfalter of the *Indians*, which he testifieth to haue bene set forth by *Potken* in *Syrian* characters. So that, to haue the Scriptures in the mother-tongue is not a quaint conceit lately taken vp, either by the Lord *Cromwell* in *England*, ⁵⁶ or by the Lord *Radeuil* in *Polonie*, or by the Lord *Vngnadius* in the Emperours dominion, but hath bene thought vpon, and put in practife of old, euen from the first times of the conuerfion of any Nation; no doubt, becaufe it was esteemed most profitable, to cause faith to grown in mens hearts the sooner, and to make them to be able to say with the words of the Pfalme, *As we haue heard, so we haue seene.* (Ps. 48: 8)

The vnwillingnes of our chiefe Aduerfaries, that the Scriptures should be diuulged in the mother tongue, &c.

Now the Church of Rome would seeme at the length to beare a motherly affection towards her children, and to allow them the Scriptures in their mother tongue: but indeed it is a gift, ⁵⁷ not deseruing to be called a gift, an vnprofitable gift: they must first get a Licence in

writing before they may vse them, and to get that, they must approue themselves to their Confessor, that is, to be such as are, if not frozen in the dregs, yet soured with the leauen of their superstition. Howbeit, it seemed too much to *Clement the 8.*⁵⁸ that there should be any Licence granted to haue them in the vulgar tongue, and therefore he ouerruleth and frustrateth the grant of *Pius the fourth*. So much are they afraid of the light of the Scripture, (*Lucifugæ Scripturarum*, as *Tertullian*⁵⁹ speaketh) that they will not trust the people with it, no not as it is set forth by their owne sworne men, no not with the Licence of their owne Bishops and Inquifitors. Yea, so vnwilling they are to communicate the Scriptures to the peoples vnderstanding in any sort, that they are not ashamed to confesse, that wee forced them to translate it into English against their wills. This seemeth to argue a bad cause, or a bad conscience, or both. Sure we are, that it is not he that hath good gold, that is afraid to bring it to the touch-stone, but he that hath the counterfeit; neither is it the true man that shunneth the light, but the malefactor, lest his deedes should be reprobud (John 3: 20): neither is it the plaine dealing Merchant that is vnwilling to haue the waights, or the meteyard brought in place, but he that vseth deceit. But we will let them alone for this fault, and returne to translation.

The speeches and reasons, both of our brethren, and of our Aduersaries against this worke.

Many mens mouths haue bene open a good while (and yet are not stopped) with speeches about the Translation so long in hand, or rather perusals of Translations made before: and aske what may be the reason, what the necessitie of the employment: Hath the Church bene deceiued, say they, all this while? Hath her sweet bread bene mingled with leauen, her siluer with drosse, her wine with water, her milke with lime? (*Lacte gypsum malè miscetur*, saith *S. Ireney*.⁶⁰) We hoped that we had bene in the right way, that we had had the Oracles of God deliuered vnto vs, and that though all the world had cause to be offended and to complaine, yet that we had none. Hath the nurse holden out the breast, and nothing but winde in it? Hath the bread bene deliuered by the fathers of the Church, and the same proued to be *lapidosus*, as *Seneca* speaketh? What is it to handle the word of God deceitfully, if this be not? Thus certaine

brethren. Also the aduerfaries of *Iudah* and *Hierufalem*, like *Sanballat* in *Nehemiah*, mocke, as we heare, both at the worke and workemen, faying; *What doe these weake Iewes, &c. will they make the stones whole againe out of the heapes of dust which are burnt? although they build, yet if a foxe goe vp, he shall euen breake downe their stony wall* (Neh. 4: 3). Was their Tranflation good before? Why doe they now mend it? Was it not good? Why then was it obruded to the people? Yea, why did the Catholicks (meaning Popifh *Romanifts*) alwayes goe in ieopardie, for refufing to goe to heare it? Nay, if it muft be tranflated into Englifh, Catholicks are fitteft to doe it. They haue learning, and they know when a thing is well, they can *manum de tabulá*. Wee will anfwere them both briefly: and the former, being brethren, thus, *with S. Hierome*, [61](#) *Damnamus veteres? Minimè, fed post priorum studia in domo Domini quod poffumus laboramus.* That is, *Doe we condemne the ancient? In no cafe: but after the endeuours of them that were before vs, wee take the beft paines we can in the houle of God.* As if hee faid, Being prouoked by the example of the learned that liued before my time, I haue thought it my duetie, to affay whether my talent in the knowledge of the tongues, may be profitable in any meafure to Gods Church, left I fhould feeme to haue laboured in them in vaine, and left I fhould be thought to glory in men, (although ancient,) aboue that which was in them. Thus *S. Hierome* may be thought to fpeake.

A fatisfaction to our brethren.

And to the fame effect fay wee, that we are fo farre off from condemning any of their labours that traueiled before vs in this kinde, either in this land or beyond fea, either in King *Henries* time, or King *Edwards* (if there were any tranflation, or correction of a tranflation in his time) or Queene *Elizabeths* of euer-renoumed memorie, that we acknowledge them to haue beene raifed vp of God, for the building and furnifhing of his Church, and that they deferue to be had of vs and of pofteritie in euerlafting remembrance. The Iudgement of *Aristotle*[62](#) is worthy and well known: *If Timotheus had not bene, we had not had much sweet muficke; but if Phrynif (Timotheus his mafter) had not bene, wee had not had Timotheus.* Therefore bleffed be they, and moft honoured be their name, that breake the ice, and glueth onfet vpon that

which helpeth forward to the fauing of foules. Now what can bee more auaileable thereto, then to delieuer Gods booke vnto Gods people in a tongue which they vnderstand? Since of an hidden treasure, and of a fountaine that is sealed, there is no profit, as *Ptolomee Philadelph* wrote to the Rabbins or masters of the Iewes, as witneffeth *Epiphanius*: ⁶³ and as *S. Auguftine*⁶⁴ faith; *A man had rather be with his dog then with a stranger* (whose tongue is strange vnto him.) Yet for all that, as nothing is begun and perfited at the same time, and the later thoughts are thought to be the wiser: so, if we building vpon their foundation that went before vs, and being holpen by their labours, doe endeouour to make that better which they left so good; no man, we are fure, hath cause to millike vs; they, we perfuade our selues, if they were alieue, would thanke vs. The vintage of *Abiezer*, that strake the stroake: yet the gleaning of grapes of Ephraim was not to be despised. See *Iudges* 8. *verse* 2. *Ioash* the king of *Israel* did not satiffie himselfe, till he had smitten the ground three times; and yet hee offended the Prophet, for giuing ouer then (*2 Kings* 13: 18, 19). *Aquila*, of whom wee spake before, tranflated the Bible as carefully, and as skilfully as he could; and yet he thought good to goe ouer it againe, and then it got the credit with the Iewes, to be called *κατὰ ἀκρίβειαν*, that is accuratly done, as *Saint Hierome*⁶⁵ witneffeth. How many bookes of profane learning haue bene gone ouer againe and againe, by the same tranflators, by others? Of one and the same booke of *Aristotles Ethikes*, there are extant not so few as fixe or seuen feuerall tranflations. Now if this cost may bee bestowed vpon the goord, which affordeth vs a little shade, and which to day flourisheth, but to morrow is cut downe; what may we bestow, nay what ought we not to bestow vpon the Vine, the fruite whereof maketh glad the conscience of man, and the stemme whereof abideth for euer? And this is the word of God, which we tranflate. *What is the chaffe to the wheat, saith the Lord?* (*Jer.* 23: 28) *Tanti vitreum, quanti verum margaritum* (saith *Tertullian*, ⁶⁶) if a toy of glasse be of that rekonig with vs, how ought wee to value the true pearle?⁶⁷ Therefore let no mans eye be euill, because his Maiesties is good; neither let any be grieued, that wee haue a Prince that seeketh the increafe of the spirituall wealth of *Israel* (let *Sanballats* and *Tobiahs* doe so, which therefore doe beare their iust reproofe) but let vs rather blesse God from the ground of our heart, for working this religious care in him,

to haue the tranflations of the Bible maturely confidered of and examined. For by this meanes it commeth to paffe, that whatfoeuer is found alreadie (and all is found for fubftance, in one or other of our editions, and the worft of ours farre better then their autentike vulgar) the fame will fhine as gold more brightly, being rubbed and polifhed; alfo if any thing be halting, or fuperfluous, or not fo agreeable to the originall, the fame may bee corrected, and the trueth fet in place. And what can the King command to bee done, that will bring him more true honour then this? and wherein could they that haue bene fet a worke, approue their duetie to the King, yea their obedience to God, and loue to his Saints more, then by yeelding their feruice, and all that is within them, for the furnifhing of the worke? But befides all this, they were the principall motiues of it, and therefore ought leaft to quarrell it: for the very Hiftoricall trueth is, that vpon the importunate petitions of the Puritanes, at this Maiefties comming to this Crowne, the Conference at Hampton Court hauing bene appointed for hearing their complaints: when by force of reafon they were put from all other grounds, they had recourse at the laft, to this fhift, that they could not with good confcience fubfcribe to the Communion booke, fince it maintained the Bible as it was there tranflated, which was as they faid, a moft corrupted tranflation. And although this was iudged to be but a very poore and emptie fhift; yet euen hereupon did his Maieftie beginne to bethinke himfelfe of the good that might enfue by a new tranflation, and prefently after gaue order for this Tranflation which is now prefented vnto thee. Thus much to fatiffie our fcrupulous Brethren.

An anfwere to the imputations of our aduerfaries.

Now to the later we anfwere; that wee doe not deny, nay wee affirme and auow, that the very meaneft tranflation of the Bible in Englifh, fet foorth by men of our profeflion (for wee haue feene none of theirs of the whole Bible as yet) containeth the word of God, nay, is the word of God. As the Kings Speech which hee vttered in Parliament, being tranflated into *French, Dutch, Italian* and *Latine*, is ftill the Kings Speech, though it be not interpreted by euery Tranflator with the like grace, nor peraduenture fo fitly for phrafe, nor fo exprefly for fence, euery where. For it is confefled, that things are to take their denomination of the greater part; and a naturall man could fay, *Verùm*

*vbi multa nitent in carmine, non ego paucis offendor maculis, &c.*⁶⁸ A man may be counted a vertuous man, though hee haue made many slips in his life, (els, there were none vertuous, for *in many things we offend all*, (James 3: 2) also a comely man and louely, though hee haue some warts vpon his hand, yea, not onely freckles vpon his face, but all skarres. No caufe therefore why the word tranflated fhould bee denied to be the word, or forbidden to be currant, notwithstanding that some imperfections and blemifhes may be noted in the fetting fourth of it. For what euer was perfect vnder the Sunne, where Apoftles or Apoftolike men, that is, men indued with an extraordinary measure of Gods fpirit, and priuiledged with the priuiledge of infallibilitie, had not their hand? The Romaniftes therefore in refufing to heare, and daring to burne the Word tranflated, did no leffe then despite the fpirit of grace, from whom originally it proceeded, and whose fenfe and meaning, as well as mans weakneffe would enable, it did exprefse. Iudge by an example or two. *Plutarch*⁶⁹ writeth, that after that *Rome* had beene burnt by the *Galles*, they fell foone to builde it againe: but doing it in hafte, they did not caft the ftreets, nor proportion the houfes in fuch comely fafhion, as had bene moft fightly and conuenient; was *Catiline* therefore an honeft man, or a good Patriot, that fought to bring it to a combuftion? or *Nero* a good Prince, that did indeed fet it on fire? So, by the ftory of *Ezrah* (Ezra 3: 12), and the prophefie of *Haggai* it may be gathered, that the Temple build by *Zerubbabel* after the returne from *Babylon*, was by no meanes to bee compared to the former built by *Solomon* (for they that remembred the former, wept when they confidered the latter) notwithstanding, might this later either haue bene abhorred and forfaken by the *Iewes*, or prophaned by the *Greekes*? The like wee are to thinke of Tranflations. The tranflation of the *Seuentie* diffenteth from the Originall in many places, neither doeth it come neere it, for perfpicuitie, gratuitie, maieftie; yet which of the Apoftles did condemne it? Condemne it? Nay, they vfed it, (as it is apparent, and as Saint *Hierome* and moft learned men doe confefse) which they would not haue done, nor by their example of vRING it, fo grace and commend it to the Church, if it had bene vnworthy the appellation and name of the word of God. And whereas they vrge for their fecond defence of their vilifying and abufing of the *Englifh* Bibles, or fome pieces thereof, which they meete with, for

that heretikes (forfooth) were the Authours of the tranflations, (heretikes they call vs by the fame right that they call themfelues Catholikes, both being wrong) wee marueile what diuinitie taught them fo. Wee are fure *Tertullian*⁷⁰ was of another minde: *Ex personis probamus fidem, an ex fide personas?* Doe we trie mens faith by their perfons? we fhould trie their perfons by their faith. Alfo S. *Auguftine* was of an other minde: for he lighting vpon certaine rules made by *Tychonius* a *Donatift*, for the better vnderftanding of the word, was not afhamed to make vfe of them, yea, to infert them into his owne booke, with giuing commendation to them fo farre foorth as they were worthy to be commended, as is to be feene in S. *Auguftines* third booke *De doctrinâ Christianâ*.⁷¹ To be fhort, *Origen*, and the whole Church of God for certain hundred yeeres, were of an other minde: for they were fo farre from treading vnder foote, (much more from burning) the Tranflation of *Aquila* a Profelite, that is, one that had turned *Iew*; of *Symmachus*, and *Theodotion*, both *Ebionites*, that is, moft vile heretikes, that they ioyned them together with the *Hebrew* Originall, and the Tranflation of the *Seuentie* (as hath bene before fignified out of *Epiphanius*) and fet them forth openly to be confidered of and perufed by all. But we weary the vnlearned, who need not know fo much, and trouble the learned, who know it already.

Yet before we end, we muft anfwere a third cauill and obiection of theirs againft vs, for altering and amending our Taanflations fo oft; wherein truely they deale hardly, and ftrangely with vs. For to whom euer was it imputed for a fault (by fuch as were wife) to goe ouer that which hee had done, and to amend it where he faw caufe? Saint *Auguftine*⁷² was not afraide to exhort S. *Hierometo* a *Palinodia* or recantation; the fame S. *Auguftine*⁷³ was not afhamed to retractate, we might fay reuoke, many things that had paffed him, and doth euen glory that he feeth his infirmities.⁷⁴ If we will be fonnes of the Trueth, we muft confider what it fpeaketh, and trample vpon our owne credit, yea, and vpon other mens too, if either be any way an hinderance to it. This to the caufe: then to the perfons we fay, that of all men they ought to bee moft filent in this cafe. For what varieties haue they, and what alterations haue they made, not onely of their Seruice bookes, Porteffes and

Breuiaries, but also of their *Latine* Translation? The Service booke supposed to be made by *S. Ambrose (Officium Ambrosianum)* was a great while in speciall vse and request: but Pope *Hadrian* calling a Councill with the ayde of *Charles* the Emperour, abolished it, yea, burnt it, and commanded the Service-booke of Saint *Gregorie* uniuersally to be vsed.⁷⁵ Well, *Officium Gregorianum* gets by this meanes to be in credit, but doeth it continue without change or altering? No, the very *Romane* Service was of two fashions, the New fashion, and the Old, (the one vsed in one Church, the other in another) as is to bee seene in *Pamelius* a Romanist, his Preface, before *Micrologus*. The same *Pamelius* reporteth out of *Radulphus de Riio*, that about the yeere of our Lord, 1277. Pope *Nicolas* the third remoued out of the Churches of *Rome*, the more ancient bookes (of Service) and brought into vse the Missals of the Friers Minorites, and commaunded them to bee obserued there; infomuch that about an hundred yeeres after, when the aboue named *Radulphus* happened to be at *Rome*, he found all the bookes to be new, (of the new stampe.) Neither was there this chopping and changing in the more ancient times onely, but also of late: *Pius Quintus* himselfe confesseth, that euery Bishopricke almost had a peculiar kind of seruice, most vnlike to that which others had: which moued him to abolish all other Breuiaries, though neuer so ancient, and priuiledged and published by Bishops in their Dioces, and to establish and ratifie that onely which was of his owne setting foorth, in the yeere 1568. Now, when the father of their Church, who gladly would heale the soare of the daughter of his people softly and sleightly, and make the best of it, findeth so great fault with them for their oddes and iarring; we hope the children haue no great cause to vaunt of their vniformitie. But the difference that appeareth betweene our Translations, and our often correcting of them, is the thing that wee are specially charged with; let vs see therefore whether they themselues bee without fault this way, (if it be to be counted a fault, to correct) and whether they bee fit men to throw stones at vs: *O tandem maior parcas infane minori:*⁷⁶ they that are lesse found themselues, ought not to object infirmities to others. If we should tell them that *Valla, Stapulensis, Erasmus, and Viues* found fault with their vulgar Translation, and consequently wished the same to be mended, or a new one to be made, they would answere peradventure, that we

produced their enemies for witnesses against them; albeit, they were in no other sort enemies, then as *S. Paul* was to the *Galatians* (Gal. 4: 16), for telling them the truth: and it were to be wished, that they had dared to tell it them plainlier and oftner. But what will they say to this, that Pope *Leo* the tenth allowed *Erasmus* Translation of the New Testament, so much different from the vulgar, by his Apostolike Letter & Bull; that the same *Leo*⁷⁷ exhorted *Pagnin* to translate the whole Bible, and bare whatsoever charges was necessary for the worke? Surely, as the Apostle reasoneth to the *Hebrewes*, that *if the former Law and Testament had bene sufficient, there had bene no need of the latter* (Heb. 7: 11 and 8: 7): so we may say, that if the olde vulgar had bene at all points allowable, to small purpose had labour and charges bene vndergone, about framing of a new. If they say, it was one Popes priuate opinion, and that he consulted onely himselfe; then wee are able to goe further with them, and to auerre, that more of their chiefe men of all sorts, euen their owne *Trent-champions Paiua & Vega*, and their owne Inquifitors, *Hieronimus ab Oleastro*, and their own Bilhop *Ifidorus Clarius*, and their owne Cardinall *Thomas à Vio Caietan*, doe either make new Translations themfelues, or follow new ones of other mens making, or note the vulgar Interpretor for halting; none of them feare to dissent from him, nor yet to except against him. And call they this an vniforme tenour of text and iudgement about the text, so many of their Worthies disclaiming the now receiued conceit? Nay, we wil yet come neerer the quicke: doth not their *Paris*-edition differ from the *Louaine*, and *Hentenius* his from them both, and yet all of them allowed by authoritie? Nay, doth not *Sixtus Quintus*⁷⁸ confesse, that certaine Catholikes (he meaneth certainte of his owne side) were in such an humor of translating the Scriptures into *Latine*, that Satan taking occasion by them, though they thought of no such matter, did striue what he could, out of so vncertaine and manifold a varietie of Translations, so to mingle all things, that nothing might seeme to be left certaine and firme in them, &c? Nay, further, did not the same *Sixtus* ordaine by an inuiolable decree, and that with the counsell and consent of his Cardinals, that the *Latine* edition of the olde and new Testament, which the Councill of *Trent* would haue to be authenticke, is the same without controuersie which he then set forth, being diligently corrected and printed in the Printing-houise of *Vatican*? Thus *Sixtus* in his Preface

before his Bible. And yet *Clement* the eight his immediate successeur, publisheth another edition of the Bible, containing in it infinite differences from that of *Sixtus*, (and many of them waightie and materiall) and yet this must be authenticke by all meanes. What is to haue the faith of our glorious Lord IESVS CHRIST with Yea and Nay, if this be not? Againe, what is sweet harmonie and consent, if this be? Therefore, as *Demaratus* of *Corinth* aduised a great King, before he talked of the diffentions among the *Grecians*, to compose his domesticke broiles (for at that time his Queene and his sonne and heire were at deadly fiude with him) so all the while that our aduerfaries doe make so many and so various editions themfelues, and doe iarre so much about the worth and authoritie of them, they can with no shew of equitie challenge vs for changing and correcting.

The purpose of the Tranflators, with their number, furniture, care, &c.

But it is high time to leaue them, and to shew in briefe what wee proposed to our selues, and what course we held in this our perufall and furuay of the Bible. Truly (good Christian Reader) wee neuer thought from the beginning, that we should neede to make a new Tranflation, nor yet to make of a bad one a good one, (for then the imputation of *Sixtus* had bene true in some fort, that our people had bene fed with gall of Dragons in stead of wine, with whey in stead of milke:) but to make a good one better, or out of many good ones, one principall good one, not iustly to be excepted against; that hath bene our indeauour, that our marke. To that purpose there were many chofen, that were greater in other mens eyes then in their owne, and that fought the truth rather then their own praife. Againe, they came or were thought to come to the worke, not *exercendi causâ* (as one saith) but *exercitati*, that is, learned, not to learne: For the chiefe ouerfeer and *ἐργοδιώκτης* vnder his Maiestie, to whom not onely we, but also our whole Church was much bound, knew by his wisedome, which thing also *Nazianzen*⁷⁹ taught so long agoe, that it is a preposterous order to teach first and to learne after, yea that *τὸ ἐν πίθῳ κεραμίαν μαθάνειν* to learne and practise together, is neither commendable for the workeman, nor safe for the worke.⁸⁰ Therefore such were thought vpon, as could say modestly with Saint *Hierome*, *Et Hebræum Sermonem ex parte didicimus, & in Latino*

*penè ab ipsiſ incunabulis &c. detriti ſumus. Both we haue learned the Hebrew tongue in part, and in the Latine wee haue beene exerciſed almoſt from our verie cradle. S. Hierome maketh no mention of the Greeke tongue, wherein yet hee did excell, becauſe hee tranſlated not the old Teſtament out of Greeke, but out of Hebrew. And in what fort did theſe aſſemble? In the truſt of their owne knowledge, or of their ſharpenefſe of wit, or deepeneſſe of iudgement, as it were in an arme of fleſh? At no hand. They truſted in him that hath the key of *Dauid*, opening and no man ſhutting: they prayed to the Lord the Father of our Lord, to the effect that S. *Auguſtine*⁸¹ did; *O let thy Scriptures be my pure delight, let me not be deceiued in them, neither let me deceiue by them.* In this confidence, and with this deuotion did they aſſemble together; not too many, leſt one ſhould trouble another; and yet many, leſt many things haply might eſcape them. If you aſke what they had before them, truely it was the *Hebrew* text of the Olde Teſtament, the *Greeke* of the New. Theſe are the two golden pipes, or rather conduits, where-through the oliue branches emptie themſelues into the golde. Saint *Auguſtine*⁸² calleth them precedent, or originall tongues; Saint *Hierome*,⁸³ fountaines. The ſame Saint *Hierome*⁸⁴ affirmeth, and *Gratian* hath not ſpared to put it into his Decree, That *as the credit of the olde Bookes* (he meaneth of the Old Teſtament) *is to bee tryed by the Hebrew* Volumes, *ſo of the New by the Greeke tongue*, he meaneth by the originall *Greeke*. If trueth be to be tried by theſe tongues, then whence ſhould a Tranſlation be made, but out of them? Theſe tongues, therefore, the Scriptures wee ſay in thoſe tongues, wee ſet before vs to tranſlate, being the tongues wherein God was pleaſed to ſpeake to his Church by his Prophets and Apoſtles. Neither did we run ouer the worke with that poſting haſte that the *Septuagint* did, if that be true which is reported of them, that they finiſhed it in 72. dayes;⁸⁵ neither were we barred or hindered from going ouer it againe, hauing once done it, like S. *Hierome*, if that be true which himſelfe⁸⁶ reporteth, that he could no ſooner write any thing, but preſently it was caught from him, and publiſhed, and he could not haue leaue to mend it: neither, to be ſhort, were we the firſt that fell in hand with tranſlating the Scripture into Engliſh, and conſequently deſtitute of former helpeſ, as it is written of *Origen*, that hee was the firſt⁸⁷ in a maner, that put his hand to write*

Commentaries vpon the Scriptures, and therefore no marueile, if he ouerthot himfelfe many times. None of thefe things: the worke hath not bene hudled vp in 72. dayes, but hath coft the workemen, as light as it feemeth, the paines of twife feuen times feuentie two dayes and more: matters of fuch weight and confequence are to bee fpeeded with maturitie: ⁸⁸ for in a bufineffe of moment a man feareth not the blame of conuenient flackneffe. Neither did wee thinke much to confult the Tranflators or Commentators, *Chaldee, Hebrew, Syrian, Greeke, or Latine*, no nor the *Spanifh, French, Italian, or Dutch*; neither did we difdaine to reuife that which we had done, and to bring backe to the anuill that which we had hammered: but hauing and vſing as great helpes as were needfull, and fearing no reproch for flowneſſe, nor coueting praife for expedition, wee haue at the length, through the good hand of the Lord vpon vs, brought the worke to that paſſe that you ſee.

Reafons moving vs to fet diuerſitie of fences in the margin, where there is great probability for each.

Some peradventure would haue no varietie of fences to be fet in the margine, left the authoritie of the Scriptures for deciding of controuerſies by that ſhew of vncertaintie, ſhould ſomewhat be ſhaken. But we hold their iudgmet not to be ſo be ſo found in this point. For though, *whatfoeuer things are neceſſary are manifeſt*, as *S. Chryſoſtome*⁸⁹ faith, and as *S. Auguſtine*,⁹⁰ *In thoſe things that are plainely ſet downe in the Scriptures, all ſuch matters are found that concerne Faith, hope, and Charitie.* Yet for all that it cannot be difſembled, that partly to exerciſe and whet our wits, partly to weane the curious from loathing of them for their euery-where-plaineneſſe, partly alſo to ſtirre vp our deuotion to craue the aſſiſtance of Gods ſpirit by prayer, and laſtly, that we might be forward to ſeeke ayd of our brethren by conference, and neuer ſcorne thoſe that be not in all reſpects ſo complete as they ſhould bee, being to ſeeke in many things our ſelues, it hath pleaſed God in his diuine prouidence, heere and there to ſcatter wordes and ſentences of that difficultie and doubtfulneſſe, not in doctrinall points that concerne ſaluation, (for in ſuch it hath bene vouched that the Scriptures are plaine) but in matters of leſſe moment, that fearefulneſſe would better beſeeme vs then confidence, and if we

will resolve, to resolve vpon modestie with *S. Augustine*,⁹¹ (though not in this same case altogether, yet vpon the same ground) *Melius est dubitare de occultis, quàm litigare de incertis*, it is better to make doubt of those things which are secret, then to strive about those things that are vncertaine. There be many words in the Scriptures, which be neuer found there but once,⁹² (hauing neither brother nor neighbour, as the *Hebrewes* speake) so that we cannot be holpen by conference of places. Againe, there be many rare names of certaine birds, beastes and precious stones, &c. concerning which the *Hebrewes* themselues are so diuided among themselues for iudgement, that they may seeme to haue defined this or that, rather because they would say something, the because they were sure of that which they said, as *S. Hierome* somewhere saith of the *Septuagint*. Now in such a case, doth not a margine do well to admonish the Reader to seeke further, and not to conclude or dogmatize vpon this or that peremptorily? For as it is a fault of incredulitie, to doubt of those things that are euident: so to determine of such things as the Spirit of God hath left (euen in the iudgment of the iudicious) questionable, can bene lesse then presumption. Therefore as *S. Augustine*⁹³ saith, that varietie of Tranlations is profitable for the finding out of the sence of the Scriptures: so diuersitie of signification and sence in the margine, where the text is not so cleare, must needs doe good, yea is necessary, as we are perswaded. We know that *Sixtus Quintus*⁹⁴ expressely forbiddeth, that any varietie of readings of their vulgar edition, should be put in the margine, (which though it be not altogether the same thing to that we haue in hand, yet it looketh that way) but we thinke he hath not all of his owne side his fauourers, for this conceit. They that are wise, had rather haue their iudgements at libertie in differences of readings, then to be captiuated to one, when it may be the other. If they were sure that their hie Priest had all lawes shut vp in his brest, as *Paul* the second⁹⁵ bragged, and that he were as free from error by speciall priuiledge, as the Dictators of *Rome* were made by law inuiolable, it were an other matter; then his word were an Oracle, his opinion a decision. But the eyes of the world are now open, God be thanked, and haue bene a great while, they find that he is subiect to the same affections⁹⁶ and infirmitie that others be, that his skin is

penetrable, ⁹⁷ and therefore so much as he prooueth, not as much as he claimeth, they grant and embrace.

Reasons inducing vs not to stand curiously vpon an identitie of phrasing.

An other thing we thinke good to admonish thee of (gentle Reader) that wee haue not tyed our selues to an vniformitie of phrasing, or to an identitie of words, as some peraduenture would wish that we had done, because they obserue, that some learned men some where, haue bene as exact as they could that way. Truly, that we might not varie from the sense of that which we had translated before, if the word signified the same thing in both places (for there bee some wordes that bee not of the same sense euery where)⁹⁸ we were especially carefull, and made a conscience, according to our duetie. But, that we should expresse the same notion in the same particular word; as for example, if we translate the *Hebrew* or *Greeke* word once by *Purpose*, neuer to call it *Intent*; if one where *Journeying*, neuer *Traueiling*; if one where *Thinke*, neuer *Suppose*; if one where *Paine*, neuer *Ache*; if one where *Ioy*, neuer *Gladnesse*, &c. Thus to minse the matter, wee thought to fauour more of curiositie then wisdom, and that rather it would breed scorne in the Atheist, then bring profite to the godly Reader. For is the kingdome of God become words or syllables? why should wee be in bondage to them if we may be free, vse one precisely when wee may vse another no lesse fit, as commodiously? A godly Father in the Primitiue time shewed himselfe greatly moued, that one of the newfanglednes called *κράββατον, σκίμπος*,⁹⁹ though the difference be little or none;¹⁰⁰ and another reporteth,¹⁰¹ that he was much abused for turning *Cucurbita* (to which reading the people had bene vsed) into *Hedera*. Now if this happen in better times, and vpon so small occasions, wee might iustly feare hard censure, if generally wee should make verball and vnnecessary changings. We might also be charged (by scoffers) with some vnequall dealing towards a great number of good English wordes. For as it is written of a certaine great Philosopher, that he should say, that those logs were happie that were made images to be worshipped; for their fellowes, as good as they, lay for blockes behinde the fire: so if wee should say, as it were, vnto certaine words, Stand vp higher, haue a place in the Bible alwayes, and to others of like qualitie, Get ye hence, be banished for euer, wee

might be taxed peradventure with *S. Iames* his words, namely, *To be partiall in our selues and iudges of euill thoughts*. Adde hereunto, that niceneffe¹⁰² in wordes was alwayes counted the next step to trifling, ¹⁰³ and so was to bee curious about names¹⁰⁴ too: also that we cannot follow a better patterne for elocution then God himselfe; therefore hee vsing diuers words, in his holy writ, and indifferently for one thing in nature: ¹⁰⁵ we, if wee will not be superstitious, may vse the same libertie in our English versions out of *Hebrew & Greeke*, for that copie or store that he hath giuen vs. Lastly, wee haue on the one side auoided the scrupulositie of the Puritanes, who leaue the olde Ecclesticall words, and betake them to other, as when they put *washing* for *Baptisme*, and *Congregation* in stead of *Church*: as also on the other side we haue shunned the obscuritie of the Papists, in their *Azimes*, *Tunike*, *Rational*, *Holocausts*, *Præpuce*, *Pasche*, and a number of such like, whereof their late Translation is full, and that of purpose to darken the sence, that since they must needs translate the Bible, yet by the language thereof, it may bee kept from being vnderstood. But we desire that the Scripture may speake like it selfe, as in the language of *Canaan*, that it may bee vnderstood euen of the very vulgar.

Many other things we might giue thee warning of (gentle Reader) if wee had not exceeded the measure of a Preface already. It remaineth, that we commend thee to God, and to the Spirit of his grace, which is able to build further then we can aske or thinke. Hee remoueth the scales from our eyes, the vaile from our hearts, opening our wits that wee may vnderstand his word, enlarging our hearts, yea correcting our affections, that we may loue it aboue gold and siluer, yea that we may loue it to the end. Ye are brought vnto fountaines of liuing water which yee digged not; doe not cast earth into them with the Philistines (Gen. 26: 15), neither preferre broken pits before them with the wicked Iewes (Jer. 2: 13). Others haue laboured, and you may enter into their labours; O receiue not so great things in vaine, O despise not so great saluation! Be not like swine to treade vnder foote so precious things, neither yet like dogs to teare and abuse holy things. Say not to our Sauour with the *Gergesites*, Depart out of our coasts (Matt. 8: 34); neither yet with *Esau* sell your birthright for a messe of potage (Heb. 12: 16). If light be come

into the world, loue not darknesse more then light; if foode, if clothing be offered, goe not naked, forsake not your selues. Remember the aduise of Nazianzene, [106](#) *It is a grieuous thing (or dangerous) to neglect a great faire, and to seeke to make markets afterwards:* also the encouragement of S. Chrysofome, [107](#) *It is altogether impossible, that he that is sober (and watchfull) should at any time be neglected:* Lastly, the admonition and menacing of S. Augustine, [108](#) *They that despise Gods will inuiting them, shal feele Gods will taking vengeance of them.* It is a fearefull thing to fall into the hands of the liuing God (Heb. 10: 31); but a blessed thing it is, and will bring vs to euerlasting blessednes in the end, when God speaketh vnto vs, to hearken; when he setteth his word before vs, to reade it; when hee stretcheth out his hand and calleth, to answere, Here am I; here wee are to doe thy will, O God. The Lord worke a care and conscience in vs to know him and serue him, that we may be acknowledged of him at the appearing of our Lord Iesus Christ, to whom with the holy Ghost, be all prayse and thanksgiuing. Amen.



Miles Smith 1554-1624

Translators' Notes

- ¹ ἔξω βέλους
- ² Anacharfis with others.
- ³ Locri.
- ⁴ Cato the elder.
- ⁵ Gregory the Diuine.
- ⁶ Naclerus.
- ⁷ σειςάχθειαν
- ⁸ C. Cæfar. Plutarch.
- ⁹ Conftantine.
- ¹⁰ Aurel. Victor.
- ¹¹ Theodofius.
- ¹² Zofimus.
- ¹³ Iuftinian.
- ¹⁴ Αὐτὸς, καὶ παῖδες, καὶ παίδων πάντοτε παῖδες.
- ¹⁵ Suidas. ὥσπερ τις ἀνδριάς ἀπερίτρεπτος καὶ ἄκμων ἀνήλατος.
- ¹⁶ θεοσέβεια.
- ¹⁷ Eufebius lib. 10 cap. 8.
- ¹⁸ S. Auguft. confeff. lib. 8 cap. 12.
- ¹⁹ S. Auguft. de utilit. credendi, cap. 6.
- ²⁰ S. Hieronym. ad Demetriad.
- ²¹ S. Cyril 7 contra Iulianum.
- ²² Tertul. aduerf. Hermo.
- ²³ Tertul. de carne Chriftri.
- ²⁴ Iuftin. προτρεπτ. πρὸς ἑλληγν. οἷόν τε
- ²⁵ S. Bafil. περὶ πίςτεως. ὑπερηφανίας κατηγορία.
- ²⁶ Εἰρεσιώνη σῦκα φέρει, καὶ πίονας ἄρτους, καὶ μέλι ἐν κοτύλῃ, καὶ ἔλαιον, &c. An oliue bow wrapped about with wooll, whereupon did hang figs, & bread, and honie in a pot, & oyle.
- ²⁷ S.Hieronym. ad Demetriad.
- ²⁸ κοινὸν ἱατρεῖον. S. Bafil. in Pfal. primum.
- ²⁹ Clem. Alex. 1. Strom.

- [30](#) S. Hieronym. Damafo.**
- [31](#) Michael. Theophili fil. 2 Tom. Concil. ex edit. Petri Crab.**
- [32](#) Cicero 5. de finibus.**
- [33](#) See S. Auguft. lib. 12. contra Fauft. c. 32.**
- [34](#) Epiphan. de menfur. & ponderibus.**
- [35](#) See S. Auguft. 2 de doctrin. Chriftian. c. 15.**
- [36](#) Nouell diatax. 146.**
- [37](#) προφητικῆς ὡσπερ χάριτος περιλαμπάσης αὐτοῦς.**
- [38](#) S. Hieron. de optimo genere interpret.**
- [39](#) S. Auguftin. de doct. Chrif. lib. 2. cap. 11.**
- [40](#) S. Hieronym. Marcell. Zofim.**
- [41](#) S. Hieron. præf. in 4. Euangel.**
- [42](#) S. Hieron. Sophronio.**
- [43](#) Six. Sen. lib. 4.**
- [44](#) Alphon. a Caftro lib. 1. ca. 23.**
- [45](#) S. Chryfoft. in Iohan. cap. 1. hom. 1.**
- [46](#) Theodor. 5. Therapeut.**
- [47](#) P. Diacon. li. 12.**
- [48](#) Ifidor. in Chron. Goth.**
- [49](#) Sozom. li. 6. cap. 37.**
- [50](#) Vafeus in Chron. Hifpan.**
- [51](#) Polydor. Virg. 5. hiftor. Anglorum testatur idem de Alurdeo noftro.**
- [52](#) Auentin. lib. 4.**
- [53](#) Circa annum 900.**
- [54](#) B. Rhenan. rerum German. lib. 2.**
- [55](#) Beroald.**
- [56](#) Thuan.**
- [57](#) δῶρον ἄδωρον κοῦκ ὀνήσιμον, Sophocles.**
- [58](#) See the obferuation (fet forth by Clemen. his authority) vpon the 4. rule of Pius the 4 his making in the Index, lib. prohib. pag. 15. ver. 5.**
- [59](#) Tertul. do refur. carnis.**
- [60](#) S. Iren. 3. lib. cap. 19.**
- [61](#) S. Hieron. Apolog. aduerf. Ruffin.**

- [62](#) Arist. 2. metaph. cap. I.
- [63](#) S. Epiphan. loco ante citato.
- [64](#) S. Auguftin. lib. 19. de civit. Dei. c. 7.
- [65](#) S. Hieron. in Ezech. cap. 3.
- [66](#) Tertul. ad Martyr.
- [67](#) Si tanti viliffimum vitreum, quanti pretiofiffimum Margaritum:
Hieron, ad Saluin.
- [68](#) Horace.
- [69](#) Plutarch. in Camillo.
- [70](#) Tertul. de præfcript. contra hærefes.
- [71](#) S. Auguft. 3. de doct. Chrif. cap. 30.
- [72](#) S. Aug. Epift. 9.
- [73](#) S. Aug. lib. Retractat.
- [74](#) Video interdum vitia mea, S. Aug. Epift. 8.
- [75](#) Durand. lib. 5. cap. 2.
- [76](#) Horat.
- [77](#) Sixtus Senenf.
- [78](#) Sixtus 5. præfat. fixa Bibliis.
- [79](#) Nazianzen εις ρν. ἐπιςκ. παρους.
- [80](#) Idem in Apologet.
- [81](#) S. Aug. lib. 11. Confeff. cap. 2.
- [82](#) S. Auguft. 3. de doct. c. 3 &c.
- [83](#) S. Hieron. ad Suniam et Fretel.
- [84](#) S. Hieron. ad Lucinum, Dif. 9. ut veterum.
- [85](#) Iofeph. Antiq. lib. 12.
- [86](#) S. Hieron. ad Pammac. pro libr. adverf. Iovinian.
- [87](#) πρωτόπειροι
- [88](#) φιλεῖ γὰρ ὀκνεῖν πράγμα' ἀνὴρ πράσων μέγα, Sophoc. in Elect.
- [89](#) πάντα τὰ ἀναγκαῖα δῆλα, S. Chryfoft. in 2 Theff. cap. 2.
- [90](#) S. Aug. 2. de doct. Chrif. cap. 9.
- [91](#) S. Auguft. li. 8. de Genef. ad liter. cap. 5.
- [92](#) ἅπαξ λεγόμενα.
- [93](#) S. Aug. 2. de doct. Chrif. cap. 14.

[94](#) Sixtus 5. præf. Bibliæ.

[95](#) Plat. in Paulo secundo.

[96](#) ὁμοιοπαθῆς.

[97](#) τρωτός γ' οἱ χρώς ἐστί.

[98](#) πολύσημα.

[99](#) A bed.

[100](#) Niceph. Calift. lib. 8. cap. 42.

[101](#) S. Hieron. in 4. Joae. See S. Aug. epift. 10.

[102](#) λεπτολογία.

[103](#) ἀδολεσχία.

[104](#) τὸ πηδαξειν ἐπὶ ὀνόμασι.

[105](#) See Euseb. προπαρασκευ. li. 12. ex Platon.

[106](#) Nazianz. περὶ ἀγ. βαπτ. δεινὸν πανήγυριν παρελθεῖν καὶ τηνικαῦτα
πραγματεῖαν ἐπιζητεῖν.

[107](#) S. Chrysoft. in epift. ad Rom. Cap. 14. orat. 26. in ἠθικ. ἀμήχανον
σφόδρα ἀμήχανον.

[108](#) S. August. ad artic. fibi falso obiect. Artic. 16.

The Translation Rules

1. The ordinary Bible read in the Church, commonly called the Bishops' Bible, to be followed, and as little altered as the Truth of the original will permit.

2. The names of the Prophets, and the Holy Writers, with the other Names of the Text, to be retained, as nigh as may be, accordingly as they were vulgarly used.

3 The Old Ecclesiastical Words to be kept, viz, the Word Church not to be translated Congregation &c.

4. When a Word hath divers Significations, that to be kept which hath been most commonly used by the most of the Ancient Fathers, being agreeable to the Propriety of the Place, and the Analogy of the Faith.

5. The Division of the Chapters to be altered, either not at all, or as little as may be, if Necessity so require.

6. No Marginal Notes at all to be affixed, but only for the explanation of the Hebrew or Greek Words, which cannot without some circumlocution, so briefly and fitly be expressed in the Text.

7. Such Quotations of Places to be marginally set down as shall serve for the fit Reference of one Scripture to another.

8. Every particular Man of each Company, to take the same Chapter or Chapters, and having translated or amended them severally by himself, where he thinketh good, all to meet together, confer what they have done, and agree for their Parts what shall stand.

9. As any one Company hath dispatched any one Book in this Manner they shall send it to the rest, to be considered of seriously and judiciously, for His Majesty is very careful in this Point.

10. If any Company, upon the Review of the Book so sent, doubt or differ upon any Place, to send them Word therof; note the Place, and withal send the Reasons, to which if they consent not, the Difference to be compounded at the general Meeting, which is to be of the chief Persons of each Company, at the end of the Work.

11. When any Place of special Obscurity is doubted of; Letters to be directed by Authority, to send to any Learned Man in the Land, for his Judgement of such a Place.

12. Letters to be sent from every Bishop to the rest of his Clergy, admonishing them of this Translation in hand; and to move and charge as many skilful in the Tongues; and having taken pains in that kind, to send his particular Observations to the Company, either at Westminster, Cambridge, or Oxford.

13. The Directors in each Company, to be the Deans of Westminster and Chester for that Place; and the Kings Professors in the Hebrew or Greek in either University.

14. These translations to be used when they agree better with the Text than the Bishops' Bible: Tindoll's, Matthew's Coverdale's, Whitchurch's, Geneva.

15. Besides the said Directors before mentioned, three or four of the most Ancient and Grave Divines, in either of the Universities, not employed in Translating, to be assigned by the vice-Chancellor, upon Conference with the rest of the Heads, to be Overseers of the Translations as well Hebrew as Greek, for the better observation of the 4th Rule above specified.



Richard Bancroft 1544-1610

THE TRANSLATORS TO THE READER

Preface to the King James Version 1611

Thesis by

EDGAR J. GOODSPEED

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No book means so much to religion as the Bible. In all its forms it has greatly served religion, and in its modern forms its meaning comes out more clearly and more tellingly than ever. It has more to teach the modern world about religion than even its strongest advocates have realized. Few of them have fully explored the wealth and depth of its contribution to modern religious attitudes.

Of all the forms of the English Bible, the most distinguished and widely cherished is the King James Version. Its value for religion is very great, and it is on that account all the more important that its origin and place in the history of the Bible be understood, so that false ideas about it may not prevail, for in so far as they do prevail they are likely to impair and to distort its religious usefulness.

There can be no doubt, however, that widespread and serious misapprehensions as to its origin do very generally prevail, and that these seriously condition its religious value. The literary interest and the liturgical value of that version are of course universally recognized. It is a classic of 16th and 17th century English, and it is a treasure of Christian liturgy, deeply freighted with religious associations. These are values every man of culture will at once acknowledge and approve.

It is, moreover, deeply imbedded in the affection and devotion of great groups of people, not all of them religious. They find in it the final

embodiment of moral, social, and literary values which they greatly prize. This is in itself a fact of great importance. Even if the version were itself less eminent as an English classic or a liturgical masterpiece the extraordinary prestige it enjoys would give it a consequence all its own.

The tremendous significance thus generally attached to it by the public makes it imperative that the facts as to its origin and ancestry be well known, or the most fantastic misconceptions about these matters will arise and prevail. But these facts are not well known, and misconceptions consequently do prevail to an amazing extent.

The King James Version is predominantly the Bible of the layman, and it will undoubtedly continue to be so for a long time to come. This fact makes it doubly important that it be presented to him as intelligently and as intelligibly as possible. This well-recognized fact has led its publishers through the generations to have it tacitly revised from time to time, so that the obsolete words and spellings might not confuse the ordinary reader. This commendable activity began immediately upon the first publication of the version in 1611 and continued intermittently until 1769 when, under the hands of Dr. Blayney of Oxford, it reached its present form. It has cleared the text of the version of innumerable antique spellings, such as Hierusalem, Marie, assoone, foorth, shalbe, fet, creeple, fift, sixt, ioy, middes, charet and the like. Comparatively few verses in the version have escaped such improvements and modernizations, and most verses contain several such changes.

It has also corrected the numerous misprints of the version, so that it is now of the most accurately printed books in the world. The one original misprint to survive is the famous “strain (straine) at the gnat” in Matthew 23:24 (for “strain out a gnat”), which has so endeared itself to users of the King James that no modern publisher has the temerity to set it right.

The omission of the Apocrypha from most modern printings of King James and the insertion of Archbishop Ussher’s chronology, which first appeared in its margins in 1701, were more serious changes from the original King James; the chronology in particular has certainly outlived

its usefulness and, as at best a late accretion upon the version, out not to continue.

But it is the omission of the great Preface, “The Translators to the Reader,” that is most to be regretted. The makers of the version in their day felt that the work called for some explanation and defense, and entrusted the writing of a suitable preface to Myles Smith, of Brasenose College, Oxford, afterward Bishop of Gloucester. His Preface for many years stood at the beginning of the version. But for various reasons -- its length, its obscurity, its controversial and academic character -- it has gradually come to be omitted by modern publishers of the King James, which is thus made to present itself to the reader abruptly and without explanation or introduction of any kind.

The result of this upon the hosts of ignorant and untrained people who use the version is disastrous in the extreme. My own correspondence abounds in letters from well-meaning people who have been led into the strangest misconceptions by its absence. It is indeed long, controversial, and pedantic, but this very fact is significant. And with all its faults, it says some things about the version and its makers and their aims that still greatly need to be said, indeed, that must be said, if the readers of the version are to be given the protection and guidance that they deserve and that its makers provided for them.

For they will accept this guidance and protection from no one else. It is idle for any modern to attempt to correct these misapprehensions; his efforts will only be resented or ignored. But if the King James Bible itself can be shown to say to its adherents the very things they most need to know about their version, it will be possible for them to benefit by them without embarrassment or inconsistency. All the more necessary, it would seem, for restoring the great Preface, or at least the essential parts of it, to its rightful place in the “Authorized Bible.”

What are some of the views held by the habitual readers of the King James Bible about it? Let me answer out of my own recent correspondence and experience, being careful not to exaggerate or distort, but to set down only what self-constituted champions of King James have actually written over or under their own signatures.

First of all must come the widespread belief that the King James Bible is “the original.” This is probably the prevailing impression of those who use it, but it has been most definitely and repeatedly expressed by a distinguished journalist in his paper, the North China Daily News. In an article published in the News in 1926 the editor steadily refers to the King James Version as “the original.” We cannot doubt that this cultivated Englishman actually believes the King James Version to be the original English Bible. For him the illustrious services of Bible translators and revisers from William Tyndale to Matthew Parker simply do not exist. That these men produced 19/20ths of what now stands in the King James Version has no force for him. Indeed, he definitely denies them and all their words when he steadily and publicly, in print, in an editorial article in his own newspaper, describes the King James Version over and over again as the “original.”

It is no matter that you and I know that this is far from true. For these people will not give up so cherished a view for any say-so of ours. On the contrary, it would only serve to set them more rigidly in it. To whom then would they look with some willingness to learn? To the King James Bible itself. If its original Preface were once more offered to them, as it was offered to the first readers of that version, and as its makers intended it to be offered to all its readers, they could hardly refuse to listen.

And, indeed, the people who hold these fantastic ideas are not so much to blame for them as the publishers and printers who have so steadily deprived them of the protection from such egregious mistakes which the King James Preface so amply and ably provided. They could not have gone so absurdly wrong if they had found in the Preface of their King James these words which the makers of that version meant to have them find there:

“Truly (good Christian Reader) 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, not justly to be excepted against.”

Not only do most readers of the King James Version suppose it to be the original English Bible; they are actually unconscious that there is any more ultimate form of the Bible to translate or consult. A leading layman, in one of our most intellectual communions, has told me that he always supposed the modern translations of the Bible were made from the King James Version, and not long ago a newspaper paragraph, with the commanding endorsement of the Associated Press, explicitly made that assertion. The same idea appeared in the New Republic as recently as April of last year. What can save these untrained, well-meaning people from the idea that the King James Bible is the “original”? Nothing but the statements of its own Preface.

“If you ask what they [the Translators] had before them,” says the Preface, “truly it was the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, the Greek of the New ... If truth be to be tried by these tongues, then whence should a Translation be made but out of them? These tongues therefore, the Scriptures we say in those tongues, we set before us to translate, being the tongues wherein God was pleased to speak to his Church by his Prophets and Apostles ... Neither, to be short, were we the first that fell in hand with translating the Scripture into English, and consequently destitute of former helps, ...”

These are just the things that the modern reader of King James needs to know, and that the Translators intended him to know. Why should they be kept from him? A few months ago the New York Times and the Literary Digest united in offering the strange intelligence that “the King James Version was compiled from the only six original papyri extant in 1611.” What more can possibly be said?

Another widespread impression as to the King James is that it is the “Authorized” Bible. The dean of a well-known New England divinity school recently insisted upon that designation for it, and strongly resented the application of it of any other name. We need not go into the old vexed question of whether or not it was ever actually authorized. For practically it certainly was so, and so regarded, being in fact the third Authorized Bible of the English Church. The first was the Great Bible of 1539, which was intended for church use. The second was the Bishops’

Bible of 1568, and the third was the King James of 1611. “Authorized” meant, of course, officially recognized for us in public worship, as the phrase “Appointed to be read in Churches” shows.

But when the Convocation of Canterbury in 1870 inaugurated the revision of the English Bible, it was definitely with a view to providing a more suitable Bible for purposes of public worship, and as a matter of fact the English Revised Bible of 1881-85 has, we are told, actually displaced the King James in the use of Canterbury Cathedral and Westminster Abbey.

In the Protestant Episcopal Church in America, Canon 45 provides that the lessons at the morning and evening shall be read in the King James Bible (“which is the standard Bible of this church”), or in the Revised Version, or in the American Standard Version.

The Roman Catholic Church in this country uses in public worship the Douay Bible. It will be seen that the King James is far from being the Authorized Bible today.

But the tragic part of it all is that the people who still call it the “Authorized Bible” understand by that term something very different from this. They understand it to mean DEVINELY AUTHORIZED. I have today received a letter from a very zealous young minister in Atlantic City, definitely declaring his belief in the verbal inspiration of the King James Version. This extraordinary view is very widely held.

Of course the Translators made no such claim; indeed, their account of their method of work fits very poorly with such an idea:

“Neither did we think much to consult the Translators or Commentators, Chaldee, Hebrew, Syrian, Greek, or Latin, no nor the Spanish, French, Italian, or Dutch; neither did we disdain to revise that which we had done, and to bring back to the anvil that which we had hammered; but having and using as great helps as were needful, and fearing no reproach for slowness, nor coveting praise for expedition, we have at length, through the good hand of the Lord upon us, brought the work to that pass that you see.”

“Some peradventure would have no variety of senses to be set in the margin, lest the authority of the Scriptures for deciding controversies by that show of uncertainty, should somewhat be shaken. But we hold their judgment not to be so sound in this point. ... Yet for all that it cannot be dissembled, that partly to exercise and whet our wits, ... and lastly, that we might be forward to seek aid of our brethren by conference, and never scorn those that be not in all respects so complete as they should be, being to seek in many things ourselves, it hath pleased God in his divine providence, here and there to scatter words and sentences of that difficulty and doubtfulness, ... that fearfulness would better beseem us than confidence, and if we will resolve upon modesty with S. Augustine, There be many words in the Scriptures, which be never found there but once, ... so that we cannot be helped by conference of places. Again, there be many rare names of certain birds, beasts and precious stones, etc. ... Now in such a case, doth not a margin do well to admonish the Reader to seek further, and not to conclude or dogmatize upon this or that peremptorily? ... Therefore as S. Augustine saith, that variety of Translations is profitable for the finding out of the sense of the Scriptures: so diversity of signification and sense in the margin, where the text is not so clear, must need do good, yea, is necessary, as we are persuaded.”

These candid, scholarly words of the Translators are not the words of inspired men, oracularly confident of every word they use; they are the unmistakable words of careful, sincere scholars, well aware of the inevitable limitations of their knowledge. The doctrine of the inspiration of the Translators was not held by them, and it is difficult to see how it can be held by anyone who will read even this much of their Preface.

Another prevalent notion about the King James Bible is that it is poetry. On this point Thomas Hardy wrote in his journal, in 1918:

“By the will of God some men are born poetical. Of these some make themselves practical poets, others are made poets by lapse of time who were hardly recognized as such. Particularly has this been the case with the translators of the Bible. They translated into the language of their age; then the years began to corrupt that language as spoken, and

to add gray lichen to the translation; until the moderns who use the corrupted tongue marvel at the poetry of the old words. When new they were not more than half so poetical. So that Coverdale, Tyndale and the rest of them are as ghosts what they never were in the flesh.”

It must be clear that the men who, by making innumerable small changes in the text of the Bishops’ Bible, produced the King James Version were poets, if at all, only in the most attenuated sense of the word. It is not thus that poems are made.

But if anyone had any doubt remaining as to the justice of Thomas Hardy’s judgment, it must unquestionably evaporate in the presence of the Preface. The Translators who there emerge are much closer to pedants than to poets. “They came or were thought to come to the work, not exercendi causa (as one saith) but exercitati, that is, learned, not to learn; ... Therefore such were thought upon as could say modestly with Saint Jerome, Both we have learned the Hebrew tongue in part, and in the Latin we have been exercised almost from our very cradle.”

Their aim was not poetry but clearness: “But we desire that the Scripture may speak like itself, ... that it may be understood even by the very vulgar.”

But of course the greatest illusion about the King James Bible is that it is the sole, unique, divine Bible, untouched by human hands. This doctrine, grotesque as it is, is actually held as a matter of course by the vast majority of people. The publication of any preface from the Translators to the Reader would, by its very presence, whatever its contents, do much to remedy this. The superstitious veneration with which some very pious people regard it would be corrected by the reprinting of the Preface.

But not the pious alone. Many editors, novelists, and professors cherish views about the version that are simply slightly rationalized forms of the same notion. Sentimental statements about it in current books and papers that its translators “went about their work in the spirit of little children,” or that “it is a finer and nobler literature than the

Scriptures in their original tongues,” are but survivals of the old dogma of uniqueness, so explicitly disclaimed in the Preface:

“... we are so far off from condemning any of their labors that travelled before us in this kind, either in this land or beyond sea, ... that we acknowledge them to have been raised up by God, ... and that they deserve to be had of us and of posterity, in everlasting remembrance. ... Yet for all that, as nothing is begun and perfected at the same time, and the later thoughts are thought to be the wiser; so, if we building upon their foundation that went before us, and being helped by their labors, do endeavor to make that better which they left so good; no man, we are sure, hath cause to dislike us; they, we persuade ourselves, if they were alive, would thank us.”

These great sentences, are well worth reproducing today. I have ventured to lay before the leading publishers of the King James Bible the duty of restoring the great Preface to its rightful place, at the beginning of it. They have courteously replied, giving various reasons for continuing to omit it. Let us examine these one by one.

The first reason is that it is too academic. But this does not justify them in omitting it. If they will let their readers know even this about the origin of the version, it will save them from grievous error. The King James revisers were university professors and scholars. They were an academic group. Why withhold this fact from their readers, especially if silence on this point is leading to such dire consequences?

One of the most unfortunate things about the adherents of the King James Version is their antipathy to scholars. They regard them with grave suspicion. Yet their own version is the masterpiece of biblical scholarship in Jacobean England. If the Preface reveals no more to them than this, it would be worth printing, for it is precisely this rift between piety and learning that is most dangerous to the church. As a matter of fact, we owe the English Bible to university men, from the sixteenth century to the twentieth. It could hardly be otherwise. But today, not one reader of King James in ten thousand even dreams that any biblical scholar had anything to do with his English Bible.

The argument of the publishers that the Preface is controversial is also nugatory. The version sprang out of controversy; the Preface reflects the fact; why conceal it? The hushing of the controversy in the history of Christianity does not make for intelligence. The New Testament itself sprang, much of it, out of controversy; I and II Corinthians, for instance. It is precisely this muting that has produced the impression that the version originated in some other, better world than ours. If the Preface shows its human background, let us have it, since it is a part of the truth.

The Translators were well aware that their work would have to encounter strong opposition:

“Zeal to promote the common good, whether it be by devising any thing ourselves, or revising that which hath been labored by others, deserves certainly much respect and esteem, but yet finding but cold entertainment in the world. ... For he that meddles with men’s Religion in any part, meddles with their customs, nay, with their freehold, and though they find no content in that which they have, yet they cannot abide to hear of altering [it]. ... Many men’s mouths have been open a good while (and yet are not stopped) with speeches about the Translation so long in hand, or rather perusals of Translations made before: and ask what may be the reason, what the necessity of the employment: Hath the Church been deceived, say they, all this while? ... Was their Translation good before? Why do they now mend it? Was it not good? Why then was it obtruded to the people? ...”

Without these trenchant sentences, people are left with the impression that the King James translation descended like the gentle dew from heaven, amidst universal acclaim. The silencing of the controversial note of the Preface puts a false face upon the version, for which its original makers are not to blame.

A third objection raised by the publishers to restoring the Preface is its obscurity, and the confusion it would create, in the mind of the ordinary reader. If this confusion means that the reader would be made aware that there had been and might be other versions of the Bible, it might better be called clarification. Confusion is the ordinary reader’s

present condition of mind, as I have tried to show. Left without the translator's guidance, he now believes the King James to be the "original" divinely inspired, unique, not made with hands, final, and definitive. To break in upon this false assurance with the clear statements of the Preface may produce a temporary confusion, but the confusion will be due to the disastrous practice of omitting the Preface, not to the healthful one of including it.

As for obscurity, is the Preface any more obscure than the version it introduced? This is the strangest of all reasons for the King James printers to adduce, yet I have it before me in writing from one of the greatest of them.

"The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd."

- Ecclesiastes 12:11

So reads the King James Version. Is there anything in the Preface that approaches this in obscurity? Yet publishers justify the omission of the Preface on the ground that it is "obscure." There is not a sentence in it as obscure as this one, or as hosts of others in the King James Version. No, if obscurity is the criterion, the publishers might have omitted the version and printed the Preface, but hardly the other way. It must be that the publishers are quite unaware of the marked obscurity of great areas of their own version.

A recent advocate of the King James Version says of the English Bible: "Much of the writing is inferior. ... Whole sections of the historical narratives are written in an immature and inferior manner. ... Some of the prophets have only a single verse that arrests attention. Only occasionally did Paul reveal his tremendous capacity to express thought in a memorable manner?" What does this mean, but that the writer does not understand his version? The simple truth is, the obscurity of the King James Version is its outstanding trait. When a man says things like this about Paul and the prophets, he is indicating, not the Bible at all, but his version of it. He reveals the fact that he is using a version he cannot understand.

It may require some patience for the modern reader to peruse the King James Preface. But think of the patience he is called upon to exhibit in reading long obscure areas of Paul and the prophets! He is by no means unaccustomed to reading his Bible in the midst of obscurity. And it is an admirable idea to have a genuine piece of first class Jacobean prose before him, side by side with the Jacobean revision, to show him how these revisers actually wrote when not translating but expressing their own thoughts. Here their real literary standards appear, in an authentic sample. If to their modern publishers their style appears obscure, it may in part explain the greater obscurity of their version. And at all events, it shows how they thought one should write. This affords their readers an example of what they considered clear and forceful English, and the value of this to any serious reader of King James, as a measuring rod, a standard of style, is unmistakable. Anyone who can understand the Preface can understand the version.

Especially for students, the Preface, with its wealth of contemporary materials and attitudes, is indispensable. In a humanities survey course for college Freshmen, a western university recently purchased 43 copies of the King James Bible without the Preface. In no other field of study would such a course have been dreamed of. To approach that version historically, and as any student should, without the Preface, is simply impossible. What has been said of the importance of the Preface to the general reader is even more true of the student, and it is high time our teachers of the English Bible in colleges awoke to the fact. But how can they be expected to awaken to it, when very few of them have ever seen a Bible containing the Preface? For the past hundred years, from the point of view of everyone -- ministers, professors, students, general readers, pious readers -- the Preface has been virtually suppressed.

The chief edition of the Bible containing it since 1821 is the English royal quarto, published by the Oxford University Press. This is an expensive pulpit Bible, seldom seen in America, which we cannot expect colleges to place in quantities in their reading rooms. On the other hand, the British and Foreign Bible Society and the American Bible Society seem never to have included the Preface in their Bibles at all. It has been

included in only two other printings of the Bible, so far as I can learn, in the past hundred years.

It is true, it has more than once been published in books about the Bible. J.R. Dore, at the special request of Christopher Wordsworth, Bishop of Lincoln, introduced the Preface as an appendix into the second edition of his *OLD BIBLES*; and A.W. Pollard, in his *RECORDS OF THE ENGLISH BIBLE*, reprinted it in full. "This preface," said Richard Lovett (*The Printed English Bible*), "most unhappily long ago ceased to form a part of the ordinary editions." "It is to be regretted," wrote John Stoughton (*Our English Bible*), "that while the dedication appears in all the editions, the address to the readers is inserted in very few. It would be good alteration to cancel the former and universally introduce the latter."

This is no idle demand of a few savants and specialists, in the interests of mere erudition, but a crying need of present-day religion, of which the King James Bible is undeniably still the chief stay. That that edition should continue to sink into greater and greater misconception and misrepresentation, when much of it might be prevented by the simple and obvious device of restoring the Preface, is intolerable. That version is too deeply freighted with religious values to be left at the mercy of every charlatan to exploit. Its Preface is a great monument of sound biblical learning and method. Its readers need it as they have never needed it before. It lies ready to our hands, enfolding in itself the very correctives modern vagaries about the King James Bible so sadly need.

It is not enough that it is somewhere available in public libraries, in books about the Bible. Who knows about these books? I have had letters and inquiries from intelligent, educated ministers, asking where the Preface can be found. They had never heard of it. What chance, then, has the ordinary reader to know of it or find his way to it? The King James Version is a tremendous force in the modern world, very potent for good if it be intelligently used, but for evil if it be left unexplained. What most of its readers chiefly need is education about it, and that is precisely what its Preface provides.

For my part, I know of no greater service that can be done to biblical study today than to put back the King James Preface into its rightful place, in every copy of that great version, to the understanding of which it is so indispensable.

The English university presses, which have been since the days of Charles I among the great printers of the King James Version, used to carry a separate printing of the Preface for free distribution to those who asked for it. But this supply is now exhausted. The Preface is practically out of print. The great version, in its day a monument of enlightened learning, is left defenseless, to the inevitable confusion of all its readers.

Sound learning and common sense alike demand the reprinting of the Preface. It is essential to any real understanding of the King James Version. This has at length been made possible through the liberality of Charles Forrest Cutter, Esq., a generous friend of the Bible in all its forms. The Oxford and Cambridge presses have given their consent to the reprinting, and the Huntington Library has permitted us to publish the text in facsimile from the Bridgewater copy of the first printing of 1611 in its collection. We are particularly happy to do this (with the spellings somewhat modernized) in 1935, the 400th anniversary of the first printed English Bible (by Myles Coverdale) of which the King James Bible is the most illustrious descendant.

To me, of course, the religious values of the Bible far outweigh any mere literary considerations. It has great messages which the modern world greatly needs. To obscure these messages in phraseology which may once have conveyed them but is now so quaint and antique as to belong to the museums of literature, seems to me a very shocking and tragic business. It is like denying a very sick man the medical aid of today and giving him instead the treatment of the 16th century, because it is so picturesque! It is like insisting upon cupping him and bleeding him, at the risk of his health and even his life.

But even to those who take the Bible less seriously -- to the dogmatist and the dilettante -- it must be clear that the King James Preface belongs at the beginning of the King James Bible, where its

makers put it and meant it to remain; and that the reasons advanced by its publishers for omitting it are really very cogent reasons for restoring it to its rightful place.

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[1]Hebrews 3:15