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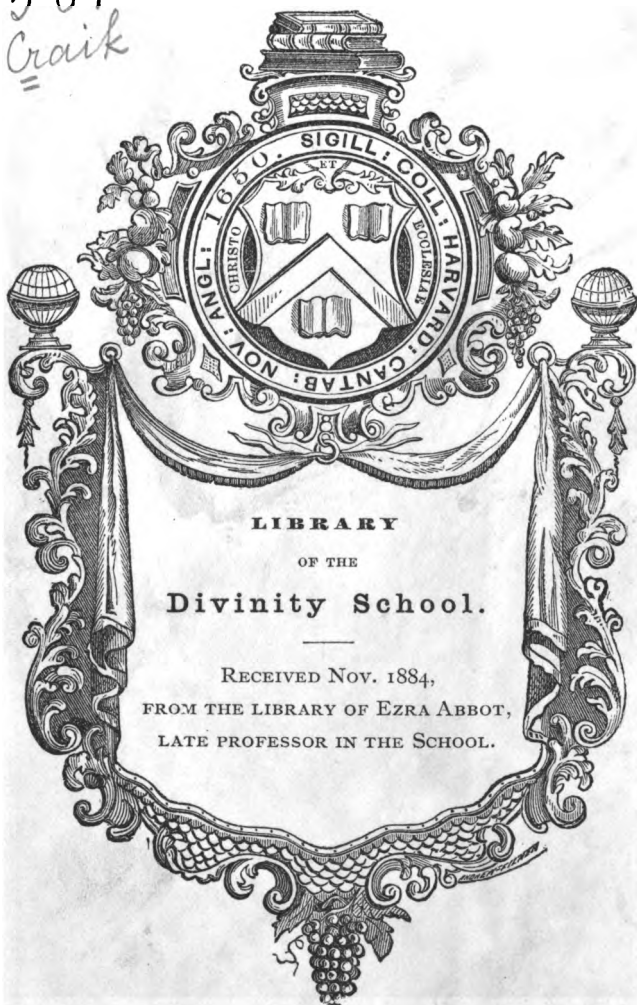
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THE  
HEBREW LANGUAGE:

*Its History and Characteristics,*

INCLUDING

IMPROVED RENDERINGS OF SELECT PASSAGES

IN

OUR AUTHORISED TRANSLATION

OF THE

OLD TESTAMENT.

BY

HENRY CRAIK.

*SECOND EDITION.*

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## PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

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THE design of the following pages is to aid in diffusing, among Christians in general, a measure of information relative to the external History and exact interpretation of the Holy Scriptures. I am very desirous that this little work should not be regarded as intended merely, or even chiefly, for those who are acquainted with the Original Languages. I am not without hope that the facts and criticisms which it contains may be found useful even to those who may have made some progress in acquaintance with Hebrew or Greek; but I have mainly had in view the instruction of that large class of intelligent readers of our English Bible who are disposed to welcome any work likely to assist them in the study of that precious volume.

About one-third of the whole was written several years since; and, in the form of Lectures, was publicly delivered in different places, both in England and Scotland. It was also, some time ago, submitted to the

critical judgment of the very accomplished Dean of Westminster, then Professor in King's College, London. I may say that he very courteously consented to peruse the manuscript, and afterwards favoured me with a kind note, in which he expressed himself approvingly of its contents. His approval, however, must not be understood as if it committed him to any responsibility in reference to my remarks on points of Old Testament criticism, inasmuch as, amidst the extent and variety of his other labours, he does not profess to have found leisure for the exact cultivation of Hebrew learning.

I may add that, having for several years past enjoyed the privilege of occasionally corresponding with some of the most distinguished of our Biblical scholars, I have found that a common interest in sacred studies has a very powerful effect in promoting Christian fellowship, even between those who have never had an opportunity of personal intercourse. Such fellowship may surely be regarded as, in some measure, an earnest of that time when we shall no longer see through a glass darkly, but shall know even as we are known.

The Work, although so small, involves altogether a great variety of particulars, and may possibly be found to contain some statements not perfectly accurate. I shall esteem it a great kindness if any scholar, skilled in

such studies, would be so kind as to point out to me any errors which he may meet with. As I desire nothing but truth, I shall thankfully welcome candid criticism, from whatever quarter it may come.

I think it right to mention that, in saving me the labour of transcription, and in the translation of the extract from Schultens, given in Appendix C, as well as in revising the proof sheets, &c., I have obtained valuable assistance from my learned and laborious friend, Mr. W. ELFE TAYLER, the author of many works on subjects connected with Theological study, and whose recent publication on "The History of the Popes' Temporal Power," is calculated to furnish most seasonable information in relation to matters fitted to excite very deep interest, both among Roman Catholics and Protestants. I heartily commend its details to all who feel alive to the importance of the present crisis in the history of Romanism.



## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

THE object of the present work is two-fold. In the *first* place, to furnish such information relative to the Hebrew Language as may be found interesting to Christians in general; *secondly*, to advocate its claims upon the attention of such as may have leisure, opportunity, and inclination to pursue the study of it.

In following out this two-fold object,—

- I.—I would endeavour to lay before the reader a Brief Sketch of the History of Hebrew Philology—accompanied with a notice of the principal sources of information relative to the meaning of its radical words.
- II.—I would attempt to point out and illustrate some of the leading Characteristics of the Language.
- III.—I would offer some observations on the benefits connected with a knowledge of Hebrew; and the spirit and temper of mind in which the study should be pursued.

There are one or two remarks, of a preliminary nature, which may aid in securing the attention of the reader.

It is well known, that some excellent Christians are disposed to shrink back, with a kind of sensitive timidity or dislike, from any public reference to the original

languages of the Scriptures ; and particularly object to any proposed alterations of the English Bible. I would desire to *respect* the scruples, while I am unable to *defer* to the judgment, of such individuals.

Let it be fully admitted that the Authorised Version is, on the whole, *admirably* executed ; that it is perfectly adequate for the instruction of the believing reader in all the leading essential verities of our holy faith ; that it furnishes a far more faithful representation of the Hebrew Original than either the Greek Septuagint, or the Latin Vulgate ; and that, in fine, when regarded as a whole, it may be looked upon as superior to any other English Translation. Let it, moreover, be firmly maintained, that a lowly heart and a dependent, prayerful frame of spirit, are of infinitely more importance for enabling the reader to profit by the perusal of the Scriptures, than the possession of the profoundest learning, apart from spirituality of mind and rectitude of purpose ; and that a prayerful reading of the English Translation will secure, for the humble and unlettered disciple, a higher degree of attainment in Divine knowledge, than can be acquired through the aid of unsanctified learning, however profound or extensive. In short, let those who cannot read the original languages of Scripture, and are not so situated as to be able to acquire them, be satisfied and thankful that they can read, *in their own tongue*, the wonderful works of God ; and let them prize the privilege of a Translated Bible, as one of their choicest blessings. On the other hand, no unprejudiced person capable of judging, can refuse to acknowledge that there *are* certain *secondary*, yet *important* advantages attendant upon a

knowledge of those languages, in which the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were originally written.

These advantages may be illustrated by a reference to a parallel case connected with the things of the present life. Were I to receive from some near and valued relative, who had resided for a very long time in some foreign country, a communication written in a language which I did not understand, I should thankfully avail myself of the help of a faithful translator. But supposing I were afterwards enabled to acquire the language, with what increased interest and satisfaction should I peruse the letter in the original! The satisfaction I should experience would be very much in proportion to the importance I might attach to the subject of the communication. Supposing a rich relation were to die in a distant country, and leave his last will and testament written in some foreign tongue, would not most of those to whom property had been left, and who valued the possession of earthly riches, deeply regret their inability to understand the language which their wealthy relative had chosen to employ in the composition of so important a document? And shall the men of the world be more interested in the last will and testament of a wealthy relative, than Christians are found to be in reference to the meaning of that book which describes their heavenly inheritance, and contains the record of the "exceedingly great and precious promises?"

Again: there may be some who are disposed to regard the subject of this little work as suited only for *students*. To what purpose, say they, should we occupy ourselves with a work on Hebrew, inasmuch as we are altogether



unacquainted with that ancient language, and are never likely to apply ourselves to the study of it? Now I would just remind such persons, that there are *many* subjects, respecting which it is important that we should have *some* information, although we never intend thoroughly to investigate them. Most educated persons have some slight acquaintance with astronomy, mechanics, geology, &c., &c., in their results, though they may never have attempted to make themselves masters of those branches of science. In a similar way, it may be affirmed that there are many facts relative to the language of the Old Testament, that have a measure of interest for all intelligent believers in Divine revelation.

How many interesting enquiries may suggest themselves to the mind of a reflecting but ill-informed reader of our Authorised Version ! The title-page informs him that the English Translation of the Old Testament was made from the original tongue ; and the dedication to King James, still retained in the ordinary editions, may lead him to infer that this Translation was first published in the early part of the Seventeenth century. But whence he may enquire, did the Translators obtain *their* knowledge of the Hebrew Original? How were they able definitely to determine the meaning of its vocables? Did they servilely follow the guidance of previous Translators? Did they proceed on grounds of plausible conjecture, or on principles of moral certainty? Such an individual may have *heard* of the existence of Hebrew Lexicons, as books that explain the meaning of Hebrew terms ; but whence did the authors of such works obtain their information? Do all such authorities agree in

their testimony? And, if they differ, what occasions this diversity? And on what grounds are the statements of *one* writer to be judged preferable to those of *another*?

Such are some of the leading questions that may suggest themselves to a reflecting reader. Consider the importance of such enquiries to those who are resting their prospects for eternity on the assumption that the representation of what the Original Scriptures contain, as given in the English Version, is substantially correct; and it will be acknowledged that just in so far as any individual is imbued with a devout reverence for the Divine oracles, so will he be interested in those questions that relate to their exact interpretation. May I not, therefore, reasonably expect to carry along with me the thoughtful attention of the reader, while, in tracing the History of Hebrew Philology, and in expounding the mode in which the meaning of its vocables has been determined, I endeavour to furnish a satisfactory solution of such enquiries as I have supposed likely to arise in the mind of an intelligent Christian unacquainted with the facts that supply the needed information?

Perhaps the question may be suggested to the minds of some who may peruse these pages, How, amid the incessant pressure of ordinary employments, and the loud calls for the labours of Christian philanthropy, can leisure be obtained for studies of such a character? The requirements of duty must be discharged; the ignorance and vice that are festering all around us urgently demand our self-denying efforts; and is there not a danger of neglecting such calls while devoting ourselves to the luxury of mental improvement?

• There is, undoubtedly, such a danger. But, on the other hand, everything that tends to make us better acquainted with the excellencies of the Scriptures will help us to enjoy them more fully ; and the legitimate result of the richer enjoyment of Divine Truth will be to impel us more earnestly and prayerfully to seek its wider diffusion. Every Christian must see to it that he keep up devotional reading of the Bible, and secret intercourse with God in prayer, meditation, and thanksgiving. He may not warrantably neglect the duties of his position in society. He may not entirely keep himself aloof from the labours and the delights of Christian philanthropy. But, without these calls being neglected, many hours may still be husbanded—from *trivial occupations, unprofitable visiting, and needless sleep*—for the pursuit of such knowledge as may aid the apprehension and the enjoyment of the Divine Testimonies. Generally speaking, those who are pre-eminently studious will not be prominent in outward service ; while those whose qualifications and dispositions lead them to devote themselves to outward service, will not become distinguished for their studious habits, or their eminent attainments. Yet I apprehend, although not always *apparently* the most successful, *he* will be found to be the happiest and most useful Christian, who seeks to combine, in some measure, the labours of the philanthropist and the scholar, and who, while active in the discharge of external duties, is diligent also in the labours of studious retirement.

## CHAPTER II.

HISTORY OF THE HEBREW LANGUAGE DOWN TO THE  
COMMENCEMENT OF THE MIDDLE AGES.

I NOW proceed briefly to sketch the history of Hebrew Philology.

The grounds upon which the ancient Hebrew may be regarded as the Primitive Language of our race are of very great weight, and have been repeatedly brought forward in works adapted to the general reader. I do not therefore intend to dwell at any length upon this part of my subject. I would merely remark, that no other known language can furnish *equal* evidence of so remote an antiquity. •It would be altogether out of the question to compare, in this respect, the Latin or Greek with the Hebrew. The Sanscrit, or Chinese, might urge their claims on grounds of much greater plausibility ; but I am not aware that any scholars, adequate to form a correct judgment, would affirm that the claims of either will bear investigation, or can be established on grounds of historical certainty. The Hebrew belongs to what is generally called the Shemitic family of languages, all of which were doubtless originally one, and in course of time diverged into several dialects. Of those the most important, besides the Hebrew, are the Chaldee, Syriac, and Arabic.

The evidence for the antiquity of the Biblical Hebrew is of an obvious character. In perusing the writings of

Moses in the original, we find a correspondency between the names appropriated to persons, and the circumstances under which the names were given, that is not to be found in any other language. *The proper names in the Book of Genesis carry along with them a significance in the Hebrew which is lost to the mere reader of a translation.* This can only be satisfactorily accounted for on the assumption that the language in which Moses wrote was substantially the same as that which had been spoken from the beginning of the world.

There is no reason for supposing that the language of Noah was materially different from that which had been spoken in Paradise by our first parents : neither is it at all likely that the sons of Noah would substitute another form of speech in place of that to which they had been habituated from their earliest youth. And still further, we may infer that the language of Moses, as exhibited in the Pentateuch, did not substantially differ from that which had been employed by Adam and the Antediluvian Patriarchs. There is, therefore, no good reason for supposing that the primitive language was totally lost at the confusion of tongues. Those who were engaged in the erection of the Tower of Babel had *their* form of speech so affected that they could no longer understand one another ; but this would only apply to those who were actually engaged in that audacious enterprise. There was probably a godly remnant who stood aloof from that rebellious effort at aggrandizement, and retained, in consequence, their primitive tongue. Such are some of the most obvious and convincing reasons tending to establish the substantial identity between the Hebrew

of the Old Testament and the primitive language of the human family.

With such slight modifications as almost all languages undergo through the lapse of ages, the primitive Hebrew continued a living language, at least down to the period of the Babylonish Captivity. At what period the pure dialect ceased to be vernacular cannot with certainty be determined. Some maintain that during their residence in the country of their captivity the Jews adopted the dialect of their conquerors, and that thus the Chaldee was substituted for the language of the ancient Patriarchs. This, I suppose, is the commonly received opinion; but there are some strong reasons which make me hesitate to adopt it. The prophets Zechariah and Malachi addressed themselves to their countrymen in Hebrew. Is it likely that they would have been led to employ a form of speech which, like the Latin during the middle ages, had become unintelligible to the great mass of the people? At whatever period the ancient Hebrew fell into desuetude among the bulk of the community, there can be no question but that at the time of Christ a Syro-Chaldaic dialect prevailed in Judea.

This fact appears evident from the specimens of the language then spoken, which have been preserved in the writings of the Evangelists and Apostles. It would seem to have been a compound of the Chaldee, (or Eastern Aramæan), with the Syriac, (or Western Aramæan), both of which, as mentioned above, were closely connected with the Hebrew. It would be interesting to collect together all the instances of this compound dialect that are to be found in the New Testament, and to compare

each particular example with the corresponding expression in the earlier form of the language. This, however, would far exceed the limits of the present work. Still, it may be desirable, at the close of the work, to refer to some of these, in connection with the passages of Scripture in which they occur.\* But although, as these passages will convince the reader, the dialect in use when our blessed Lord appeared on earth was very different from that employed by Moses and the Prophets, still, the Biblical Hebrew continued to be cultivated by the *Literati* among the Jewish people.

After the times of the Apostles, and during the early centuries of the Christian Church, the knowledge of the Scriptures was almost entirely confined to the Jews. The leading Christian teachers, with the exception of Origen in the second century, and Jerome in the fourth, seem to have been entirely unacquainted with the original of the Old Testament, and to have regarded the Greek Version, commonly called the Septuagint, as the authoritative standard. Exceedingly valuable from its antiquity, as that version may unquestionably be considered, it is nevertheless disfigured by almost innumerable blunders and mistranslations. Let any competent scholar read the fifty-third of Isaiah in the Septuagint, and compare the Greek Translation of that chapter with the original Hebrew, and he will perceive, most distinctly, the superiority of the latter. The doctrine of a propitiatory sacrifice—the central truth of the Christian system—is clearly and unmistakeably taught in the Hebrew; that

\* Appendix (A).

doctrine is very much obscured in the 9th and 10th verses of the Greek version.\* This is the more remarkable, inasmuch as the Hebrew Bible was in the hands of the enemies of the Gospel ; while the Septuagint was the standard of authority among Christians. The mistranslation of the Seventy, in this instance, becomes important, as an incidental proof that the Christians, on the one hand, did not alter the Greek version to make it speak in accordance with Christianity ; and that the Jews, on the other hand, did not dare to alter the language of the Prophet, so as to obscure the doctrine of a propitiatory sacrifice.

Had the Greek Translation clearly expressed the doctrine of the Christian Scriptures, while the Hebrew original less distinctly taught it, the Jews might have alleged, with some show of plausibility, that Christians had accommodated the version of the Prophet, so as to suit the doctrines which they had received from the New Testament. How satisfactory it is to find, that the Hebrew Scriptures themselves bear the clearest testimony to the doctrine of the Christian Atonement ! Every fresh illustration of this vital truth is welcome to the heart of the believer in Jesus. Without this truth, there is no repose nor refreshment for the weary spirit. A Gospel, without a propitiatory sacrifice, fails to meet the necessities of a sinful creature ; fails to manifest the attributes of God ; fails to reveal the links of that golden chain, which serves at once to unite the children of Adam to God, and to each other. Apart from this truth,

Learning is dull to us, pleasure is vain.

\* See Appendix (B).



Neither can

The golden idols that deceive the world,  
Ambition, glory, riches, fame, applause,

minister to the heart such calm and satisfying enjoyment as may be derived from a single half-hour's believing meditation on the love of Him who laid down His life on the Cross for sinners!

Some of the leading Christian teachers—the distinguished Augustine among the rest—appear to have regarded the Seventy Translators as having been *inspired*. This baseless fancy has been lately revived and advocated with considerable ingenuity by a modern theologian, in a work entitled “An Apology for the Septuagint.” *Inspired* translators could not have been permitted to fall into the errors which abound in this ancient Version ; and very few persons of sound judgment—moderately conversant with the facts of the case—would yield their assent to so groundless an hypothesis.

## CHAPTER III.

STATE OF HEBREW LEARNING DURING THE MIDDLE AGES, DOWN  
TO THE EARLY PORTION OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

DURING the long and dreary period of the dark ages, almost every species of solid learning was neglected throughout Christendom, and Hebrew found scarcely a single cultivator among the few Christian scholars, scattered here and there, throughout the European nations, like the stars in a cloudy sky. Yet amongst that people who were not "reckoned among the nations"—whose hearts refused to receive Him of whom "Moses in the law and the Prophets did write,"—there was preserved the knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures—those very writings which contained the germ of Christianity, and the evidence that Jesus of Nazereth was indeed the Messiah promised unto the fathers. In the twelfth century, Raymond, a monk of the Dominican order, attempted to revive the study of Hebrew in the Church, and in 1311, Pope Clement the Fifth published a decree, requiring that in every University in Christendom, there should be appointed six professors of Hebrew and the cognate dialects; but for the space of two centuries, it was found impossible to provide a single professor in any University with the exception of Oxford. Seldom have the Papal decrees aimed at objects so blameless and beneficial; but even the power of the Popedom in its palmy days could not secure the appointment of quali-

fied teachers—when none were to be found within the pale of Christendom.

In 1506, at the early dawn of the Reformation, John Reuchlin compiled the first dictionary and grammar of any real value, excepting such as had, at an earlier period, been composed by the Jewish grammarians. This eminent scholar may be regarded as the *founder of Hebrew Philology and Lexicography among Christians*. Immediately afterwards, the general revival of learning gave a new impulse to the study of the ancient Scriptures. From the time of Reuchlin, the names of distinguished Hebraists appear, either as cotemporaries, or in rapid succession, on the page of literary history. Among these, the two Buxtorfs, father and son, deserve to occupy a very prominent place. Luther's eminence as a Reformer, has almost cast into the shade his high attainments as a scholar; otherwise his name would legitimately occupy a distinguished position among those who devoted themselves to the study of the Hebrew Bible. He himself tells us that, "*limited as was the measure of his attainments in the knowledge of the sacred language, he would not exchange what he did possess for all the treasures of the universe.*" This was the deliberate and recorded judgment of one of the most eminent servants of God ever given to the Church of Christ.

Among the other eminent men of learning who devoted themselves to this study, may be enumerated the following:—Fabricius Capito, Conrad Pellican, Sebastian Munster, John Forster, Avenarius, Schindler, Marius de Calasio, Neumann, Loescher, Bohlius, and Cocceius.

But time would fail me to recall the names and achievements of those who, about the time of the Great Reformation, and after that memorable deliverance, devoted the energies of their minds to the pursuit of sacred studies. The names of most of them are now scarcely ever mentioned; their writings, for the most part, are neglected and forgotten. But if they, through the knowledge of the letter, penetrated into the hidden meaning of the Divine testimonies, they have not lost their reward. Their labours brought along with them a *present* satisfaction, and ensured a *future* recompense. I would only add the names of Bochart, Leigh, Castel, Robertson, Lightfoot, and Pococke—the first of the list being a French Protestant, the other five being our own countrymen.

## CHAPTER IV.

PROGRESS OF HEBREW LEARNING DOWN TO THE PRESENT  
TIME.

COMING down to a later period—the early part of the eighteenth century—we reach the period at which Albert Schultens was raised up to give a fresh impetus to the study of the Old Testament. When that very distinguished scholar began to devote the powers of his penetrating genius and the resources of his capacious mind to the promotion of sacred learning, he found that very much remained to be accomplished in order to the complete elucidation of the sacred tongue. The signification of the far greater number of words which make up its vocabulary was matter of ascertained knowledge ; but there remained several terms the force of which was matter of entire uncertainty ; a good many others about the meaning of which there was considerable ground for doubt ; and a still larger number, respecting which it had to be acknowledged that, whilst their *general import* was well understood, their *primary* or *ideal* meaning was unknown. The mode in which the defective information might be successfully enquired after had, previously to his time, been matter of diligent investigation and earnest controversy ; and, in connection with the further history of Hebrew Philology, it may be interesting to be furnished with a brief account of some of the various theories which were started in

reference to the important enquiry, as to the way in which the meaning of unknown or doubtful words might be satisfactorily determined.

Let me first, however, recall to the reader's mind the deep interest connected with such an investigation. On the correct rendering of *one single term*, the whole force and bearing of a passage of Scripture may depend. The correctness of any such rendering must depend upon the soundness of the principles according to which the meaning of the particular term has been determined ; and if any given number of Hebrew words should have a false meaning assigned them, the passages of Scripture wherein those words happen to occur must be either obscured or perverted by inaccurate translation. How deeply important, then, is the enquiry relative to the principles on which we are warranted to decide, in doubtful instances, the exact meaning of the words employed in the Hebrew Scriptures ?

Some learned men maintained that the Septuagint translation was to be taken as the authoritative standard by which to ascertain the meaning of doubtful terms ; others upheld the authority of the Latin Vulgate ; whilst a third class of critics looked up to the Rabbinical writers, as furnishing the only true key to the interpretation of the Old Testament. Others, who took a more comprehensive view of the subject, proposed to call in the aid of *all* the ancient versions, and thus to enjoy the advantage of several distinct and independent witnesses. The celebrated Forster, who flourished about the middle of the sixteenth century, dissatisfied with the theories advocated by other scholars, and especially indignant at

the thought of Christians being required to learn at the feet of Jewish Rabbis, propounded an hypothesis of his own. He maintained that from the Hebrew Bible itself, without the aid of the ancient versions, or that of the Jewish teachers, the exact knowledge of the language was to be obtained. According to this singular notion, the Hebrew Bible was to be dealt with in a similar way to the mode employed in deciphering a MS. written in some unknown character. There is an art by which, supposing the *language* to be intelligible to the reader, an unknown *character* may be deciphered. But it would be altogether miraculous were any one to arrive at the knowledge of a *language previously unknown*, without any help from grammars, or dictionaries, or cognate dialects, or assistance from such as already understood it.

Avenarius may be regarded as a follower of Forster. The metaphysical Bohlius undertook to demonstrate, *a priori*, the exact signification of the words employed in the Hebrew Scriptures ; or, to use his own language, "to extract the universal and abstract signification of the radical terms out of the bowels of the sacred Scriptures solely by the aid of assiduity and acuteness." Similar to the above hypothesis was that of Gussetius, who maintained that, just in the same way as the sun shines by its own light, so the Hebrew Bible contains within itself the evidence of its own meaning. Lastly, I would notice the theory of Neumann and Loeschner, which for a while obtained some credit, that the letters of the Hebrew alphabet severally denoted certain ideas, and that the combination of the ideas inherent in the three letters of which any root was composed, made up the radical signification of that particular root.

It is unnecessary to occupy the reader's attention in minutely investigating and exposing such unfounded speculations. It would be sad, indeed, to be under the necessity of resting the interpretation of the Old Testament upon such unsatisfactory grounds. .

Previously to the period at which Schultens flourished, the kindred Oriental dialects had begun to be cultivated in Europe; and those who had devoted themselves to such studies found that thence fresh aid was to be derived for the elucidation of the ancient Hebrew. Schultens took up this discovery with earnestness, assiduity, and zeal. He studied—and with almost unparalleled success—the cognate languages. In an incredibly short space of time he obtained an extraordinary knowledge of the Arabic; and then applied the knowledge of that language to the determining the signification of those terms the exact import of which had previously been unascertained. But, while he gave great prominence to the cognate dialects, and particularly to the Arabic, as important helps, he did not discard the aid of those other sources of information which the providence of God had left open. According to Schultens—and what qualified scholar would refuse to agree with him?—there are, at least, *five* or *six* sources whence important aid may be derived. The ancient versions; the testimony of the Rabbinical writers; the kindred dialects; the exigence of the context; the comparison of parallel passages; the correspondency between certain letters; may all be considered as so many distinct auxiliaries in enabling us, on principles of moral certainty, to determine or verify the exact force or general import of particular radical terms.\*

\* Appendix (C).



Schultens may have carried his partiality for the Arabic too far ; some of his explanations thence derived may be questionable ; but, unlike some men of eminent attainments, he was equally distinguished for *comprehensiveness* and *acuteness* of mind. His writings manifest a devout reverence for the Divine oracles ; an earnest love of truth ; a power of penetrating perception ; soundness of judgment ; large mental resources ; and a fine enthusiasm for sacred learning that must have exerted a powerful corresponding influence upon young and ardent minds. His *Origines Hebraeae*, his *Vetus et Regia Via Hebraizandi*, his *Philological Commentaries on Job* and the *Book of Proverbs*, remain as monuments of his diligence, piety, and unrivalled erudition. *He* led the way, and *others* have followed in his track. No modern Lexicographer would revive, or maintain, the fanciful speculations which, previous to the time of Schultens, prevailed so extensively among sacred philologists ; and Gesenius himself—perhaps the greatest of our modern Lexicographers—may, in some respects, be regarded as having reached his eminent position through carrying out the principles which his distinguished predecessor had promulgated and defended. Instead of contending for the *sole authority* of any *one* source of information relative to the force of disputed terms, Hebrew Lexicographers are now agreed in having recourse to them all. It surely becomes us thankfully to avail ourselves of every legitimate mode of satisfactorily determining the meaning of those Divine utterances which “ holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”

If any of my readers were previously uninformed

respecting the points to which I have directed their attention in the foregoing pages, they will now be in some measure competent to answer the enquiries suggested above, relative to the sources of information respecting the meaning of Hebrew terms, and the principles according to which their signification may be determined. The true rendering of Hebrew words depends, not upon conjecture, but upon evidence; and that evidence is of so satisfactory a character, as, in most cases, to produce the confidence of moral certainty.

The result of the labours bestowed by ancient and modern philologists on the elucidation of the Hebrew language, may be found perhaps most fully in the well-known Lexicon of Gesenius. I must, however, add one word respecting his theology. It cannot be denied, and it ought not to be concealed, that Gesenius was defective in reverence for those very Scriptures to the elucidation of which he devoted the labours of a life-time, and that he was unhappily imbued with the rationalistic sentiments so common among German theologians. For this reason, his works need to be read with caution. An admirable translation of his Lexicon has been published by Bagster, and the careful revisal to which that edition has been subjected by a faithful and orthodox translator—my learned friend, Dr. Tregelles, of Plymouth—exceedingly enhances the practical value of the work. It is to be hoped, that for English students, this edition will soon supersede every other; and that thus the excellencies of the original work may be enjoyed, without any peril being incurred, by the unestablished Christian, from the incorrect and even scoffing remarks that now

and then obtrude themselves on the notice of the reader. Having been for several years past in the habit of using Bagster's edition of Gesenius, I can confidently recommend so valuable a help to the study of the Old Testament Scriptures to all who feel interested in the pursuit or the promotion of sacred learning.\*

In writing this sketch of Hebrew Philology, the works of Loesceer and Schultens have been my chief sources of information ; but as both these authors have written in Latin, the deeply interesting facts and criticisms which they contain are inaccessible to the English reader. I would also acknowledge my obligations to a very able German writer, who has written a very learned introduction to the new edition of Buxtorf's Concordance, of part of which introduction a translation appeared some years ago in an American periodical. Without at all desiring to detract from the learning and ability of the treatise referred to, I may just take this opportunity of guarding inexperienced readers against taking their impression of the views of Schultens from the representations of that work. My conviction of the substantial value of the views maintained by that admirable philologist has already been given. I ask no one, capable of testing the point himself, to take *my* judgment, any more than submit it to the decision of the writer referred to. But let only his briefest treatise—his *Vetus et Regia Via Hebraizandi*—(*i.e.*, “The ancient and royal mode of studying the Hebrew language,”)—be appealed to, and the excellencies of this matchless scholar will shine forth with a lustre that must overpower all the

\* Appendix (D).

opposition of those who would detract from his reputation. His writings have never, so far as I know, been presented in an English dress ; and the limited demand for such works in this country operates as a prohibition upon any prudent bookseller from incurring the risk of publishing a translation. But to the Christian scholar, his flowing periods—reminding one of the majestic language of Cicero—furnish at once gratification for the taste, information for the understanding, and profitable instruction for the heart.

And now in concluding this branch of my subject, let me pause to enquire how the reader is affected by the necessarily rapid and imperfect sketch which has been brought before him ? Ought not the past history and present position of Hebrew Philology to excite lively gratitude to the giver of every good and perfect gift, not only for the bestowment, but for the preservation of the sacred volume ? Had the knowledge of Hebrew been once entirely lost, (and such *might* have been the case), it could never, except by miracle, have been restored. So far from having been lost, we may affirm without fear of contradiction, that at no period since it ceased to be a spoken language, has it been more scientifically studied than during the last and the present century. It may be safely affirmed, that Hebrew has been more thoroughly investigated since the early part of the eighteenth century, than it had ever been for at least two thousand years before. It carries along with it the venerable dignity of age, while it retains the vigour and energy of youth.

There is something imposing and affecting to a

thoughtful mind, in the view of any object of very remote antiquity. Antiquarian tendencies, ridiculous when carried to an extreme, are deeply seated in the nature of our mysterious humanity. We should become neither better nor happier beings by uprooting them, even if that were possible. That utilitarianism which boasts of superiority to such weaknesses and prejudices, is inimical to the higher interests of man. Who would wish to gaze without elevated emotion on Melrose or Tintern? All thoughtful minds regard with feelings of solemnity and reverence the memorials of bygone ages, the ruins of a monastery, an abbey, or baronial castle. We think of the multitudes that once trod the deserted floor, and whose voices once echoed through the silent walls, and the grey ruins become sublime through association with the hoary antiquity of other days. On the same principal, to a religious mind, how venerable an object is a copy of the Hebrew Scriptures! As you open it, the page exhibits the very words that Moses, and David, and Isaiah uttered; and those words convey to the instructed reader, the very thoughts that filled their minds. How wonderful that the language in which the patriarch Job expressed his resignation, and poured forth his complainings, should, after a lapse of perhaps *four thousand years*, be still read and understood, and enjoyed! And then again, how cheering to think of the value of those utterances which came forth mysteriously prompted by the Divine Spirit! and of the thousands and tens of thousands who, in meditating over them, have found enlightenment, consolation, and joy!

What a subject for serious reflection is a Hebrew

Bible! How many minds have devoted themselves to the investigation of its meaning! How many have looked upon its characters and found the page to them entirely meaningless; and resolved, that by the help of God, and by dint of honourable toil, they would make that page give forth its hidden significance! How many have become so familiar with the ancient language of the patriarchs, as to prefer it to the accents of their own mother tongue! How many have felt a force, a tenderness, a sublimity in the language of David, which led them to prefer the Hebrew Psalter above all the specimens of Sacred Song! And if the course of time runs on, how many ingenuous minds will yet find themselves inwardly impelled to the study of these holy oracles; and will become the instruments of guiding and assisting the studies of their successors in the same field of inquiry! The acquisition of the ancient Hebrew is not to be attained by the labour of a few months, or even of a few years. The longer we pursue the study of it, the more will fresh fields for investigation open upon our view; whilst in pushing onward our peaceful conquests, we shall not be left to weep like Macedonia's madman, that there are no more worlds to be subdued. He who seeks to make solid acquisitions must gird himself for vigorous exertion, and adopt as his motto the energetic language of the poet:—

Toiling, rejoicing, sorrowing,  
Onward thro' life he goes,  
Each morning sees some task begun,  
Each evening sees its close;  
Something attempted, something done,  
Has earned a night's repose.

## CHAPTER V.

ON THE LEADING CHARACTERISTICS OF THE HEBREW  
LANGUAGE.

I COME now to the exposition of some of the *leading characteristics* of the ancient Hebrew. As the glassy lake reflects the image of external nature, so language may be regarded as the mirror of intelligent mind ; and just as the surface of the lake reflects, with equal faithfulness, the tiniest shrub that grows upon its banks, and the dread magnificence of the starry firmament, so language serves alike to express the feeble conceptions of early childhood, and to give forth the thoughts and purposes of Jehovah. The history of any form of speech is, to a greater or less extent, the record of thought and feeling ; and the record of thought and feeling constitutes the history of humanity.

There are various external circumstances upon which the characteristic features of any given language may be said to depend ; various types and models according to which the several languages employed by the various tribes of the human family have been moulded and conformed. *Climate* is one of those external circumstances. The general results of climate may, according to the ingenious Loeschner, be summed up in the following couplet :—

“ The Western tongues *flow on*, the Eastern *leap* ;  
The Southern *run*, the sluggish Northern *creep*.”

These several characteristic qualities may be mingled *in diverse proportions*, according to the locality, and other modifying circumstances.

Thus, of the Western tongues, the Greek has more vivacity than the Latin, Greece lying south-east from Italy. The Latin, as most readers are aware, is distinguished for gravity and stateliness, and moves, as in the page of Cicero, with a slow, dignified, majestic step. The languages of the East, on the other hand, abound in sparkling imagery, corresponding to the ardent temperament proper to that sunny clime ; while the Northern tongues correspond with the temperature of a cold and inclement sky. Thus the intonation of many natives of Scotland is slow, when contrasted with the livelier utterance of an Englishman. France, as situated to the south of England, is possessed of a still more vivacious form of speech. French—the language of superficial politeness—is rapid, lively, flowing, and well fitted to be the medium of intercourse among a polished, talkative, and thoughtless people. It is but little adapted for elevated writing of any kind, least of all for elevated poetry. In this respect it is far inferior to our own. What Englishman would be willing to surrender his mother tongue, and take in exchange the language of our Gallic neighbours ? And who does not perceive a correspondency between the proverbially frivolous and excitable character of the French people, and the whole cast and composition of their language ? or between the masculine character of Englishmen, and our fine old nervous Anglo-Saxon dialect ?

The situation of Palestine, on the Eastern shore of the



Mediterranean, would lead us to infer that the language of its people would partake of the qualities belonging to the other Eastern dialects. Accordingly, it is forcible, picturesque, abrupt, delighting in figurative expressions, and abounding in bold and impressive imagery. But, in comparison with Persia, India, and other Oriental countries, Palestine might almost be reckoned as belonging to the Western world ; and thus we find that the Hebrew is characterised by the simplicity, dignity, and gravity that distinguish the languages of the West.

This leads me to remark how greatly the influence of climate may be modified by other circumstances. *Locality* is only *one* of the several congruous, or incongruous influences that act upon the character of a people, and mould their form of speech ; and if we would satisfactorily account for the peculiar characteristics of any particular language, we must investigate the causes that have exerted their combined influence in imparting to it the form and features which it is found to have assumed.

In the case of the Hebrews, those causes were of the most marked and obvious nature. The early history, the civil and religious institutions of any people, naturally stamp their impress upon the national mind. If any circumstances happen to have imparted a *peculiarity of character* to a nation, this peculiarity will necessarily be developed in their language. The domestic habits, the moral principles, the general pursuits of any people, serve to colour their whole phraseology.

This may be illustrated by reference to any sect of religion, or to any school of philosophy. What observant

man, who has mingled in general religious society, can have failed to recognize a peculiar mode of expression among the followers of the devoted Wesley? or among the readers of German theology? or among the disciples of any distinguished teacher? The fact that we are all exposed to such a tendency should lead us earnestly to study and devoutly to receive the instructions of Him who has commanded us to call no man master upon earth. The mannerism, into which we are so ready to fall, is always more or less the index of weakness. How common is it to meet with individuals whose judgment concerning matters of deepest moment has been decided, not by the testimony of Scripture, but by the authority of eminent, energetic, devoted, but uninspired men! John Knox and John Wesley—very different in their mental constitution, and no less opposed to each other in certain doctrinal opinions—have continued, even down to the present day, to influence the judgment, the feelings, and the phraseology of thousands and tens of thousands. If we would give forth before the world a fair impression of the large and unsectarian character of Christianity, we must guard against the habitual iteration of certain current phrases; remembering that there is, in general, a noble distinctness and individuality about the writers of the Old and New Testaments. Moses, David, Isaiah, Solomon, have, each of them, their distinct style. Paul, and Peter, and John, all proclaim the same Gospel, all testify to the same Saviour; yet, how perceptible to every reader is the difference of their mode of expression!

But to return from this long digression, let me proceed

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to apply to the particular case of the Hebrew, what has been said respecting the circumstances that tend to modify any language. Their early history, their sojourn in Egypt, and their deliverance from their bondage in that country; the ceremonial institutions; the Priesthood; the Theocracy; the Prophetic order:—all these tended to influence the national character, and to stamp that character upon their form of speech.

Were the present population of France to be swept away, and the soil given over to the occupation of a people similar to the Scottish Covenanters, or to the Puritan founders of New England—supposing the substance of the language to remain—how many forms of expression, now current, would be neglected, and fall into utter desuetude, among such a people! Supposing the Puritan character to be maintained, although French should remain the language of the country, and although the influence of climate would, of course, be the same as ever, can there be any reason to doubt, that, as employed by a grave, an earnest, and a religious people, the language would become more nervous, serious, dignified? A people devoted to whatsoever things are noble, good, and true, would naturally be led so to mould and fashion their current phraseology, as that it should become the fitting vehicle for the expression of holy feeling and elevated thought.

The Patriarchs were the founders of the Jewish nation. Their walk of separation, simplicity, and godliness, required a corresponding medium of intercourse. Hence the simple dignity, the elevated seriousness, the earnest tenderness by which their language is characterized.

How utterly uncalled for, among such a people, would have been many of the terms and phrases constantly employed by the present population of France ! Paris—so long the centre of European luxury, and now, after repeated revolutions, the seat of *an imperial despotism*—Paris requires such a copiousness of diction as would only have encumbered the ancient Hebrews. Their manners were simple, their wants comparatively few ; their thoughts, all, more or less, coloured with the religious element. These mental characteristics were reflected in their form of speech.

Having thus, by some observations on the general characteristics of languages, prepared the way for remarks of a more definite character, I would now attempt to point out more particularly some of the *Leading Characteristics of the Hebrew Tongue*.

(1.) In all languages, terms descriptive of mental states and feelings are, *in their primary import*, applicable to material objects ; or, to express myself, perhaps more clearly, words, strictly and primarily representative of external objects or conditions, are employed to designate ideas belonging to the world of mind. Thus in our own language, “*to apprehend*,” in its primary signification, denotes “to lay hold of ;” its application to denote an act of the mind is secondary and figurative. It is the same with the words “understand,” “conceive,” “recollect,” “disposition,” etc. Indeed, examples might be multiplied indefinitely.

There is in Hebrew a remarkable appropriateness and expressive energy in the terms employed to denote mental qualities or conditions. The original notions inherent

in those terms serve to picture forth, with prominent distinctness, the mental quality which they are employed to designate. Thus, for instance, the usual term for "meek" is derived from a radical word signifying "to afflict;" thus intimating the well known connection between *sanctified sorrow*, and the *grace of meekness*. The usual term for "wicked" comes from a root that expresses the notion of *restlessness, tumult, or commotion*. "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." A "sinner" is one who *misses the mark*; who turns aside from his "being's end and aim"—even the favour and enjoyment of God. To "delight in" anything is radically to "bend down" towards it, such a direction of the body being an *outward* expression of *inward* complacency. The word applied to the "law of God" (the Torah), is derived from a verb signifying "to cast," "to send out," thence "to put forth," as the hand for the purpose of giving directions, "to point out," "to indicate," "to teach." *The Law* is that which *indicates, or points out* to us the mind of God. "Righteousness" is properly *that which is perfectly straight*. "Truth," that which is *firm or staple*. "Vanity," that which is *empty*. "Anger" is derived from a root meaning *to breathe*; quick breathing being one of the external signs of irritated feeling. "To trust," is expressed, sometimes by a term meaning *to take shelter under* any object of confidence; sometimes by a word meaning *to lean upon*; in other cases by a word, the radical signification of which appears to be *to throw one's-self upon anyone, or to hang upon him*. Trust in God may be described, either as a putting ourselves under the shadow of His wings, a

taking refuge in Him ; or as a casting ourselves upon His care, a hanging in helplessness upon His Almighty strength. "To judge," is radically *to smooth, to make even, to equalise*.

The second verse of the eleventh chapter of Proverbs furnishes an apt illustration of the energy of expression resulting from combining together the ideal import of the several words that make up a sentence :—

" When pride cometh, then cometh shame ;  
But with the lowly is wisdom."

*Pride* comes from a root which means "to swell ;" *shame* from a word denoting "to be light, or empty ;" *lowly*, from a root meaning "to chip, or smooth with a hatchet ;" and *wisdom*, from a word expressing "solidity." Put these several primary significations in combination, and you get two striking images corresponding to the two divisions of the sentence :—

" When *swelling* cometh, then cometh *lightness* :"  
" But with those who have been pruned (chipped,  
exercised by trial), there is solidity."

It may be interesting to compare the distinct, radical notions of the several terms employed respectively, in the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, for the idea of *justice*, or *righteousness*.

The Hebrew term, as we have seen, denotes *that which is perfectly straight* ; the Latin, *jus*, from *jubeo, jussi, that which is commanded* ; and the Greek, *δικη*, *that which divides equally to all,—apportions to everyone his due*. The thought expressed by the Hebrew root is deeper than that which is conveyed either by the Latin or Greek. The Romans were a military people,—a nation of soldiers

—and the idea of *rightness* was, in their minds, naturally associated with that of *obedience to orders*. The Greeks were a people foremost in all that ministers to social enjoyment and civilisation, and *their* idea of *rightness* was that which secured to all the possession of his due. The thought of an antecedent and eternal distinction between right and wrong, apart altogether from the present results of good and evil, runs through the whole system of Old Testament morality, and that thought is graphically presented to us under the image of *that which is perfectly straight*.

“Truth,” again, in Hebrew, *firmness*, is in Greek *that which cannot be hid*, or that which is *unconcealed*, *open*, in opposition to falsehood, which lurks in the darkness. Such an instance serves to show how full of practical teaching may be the details of philology, and to remind us of our Lord’s words :—

“He that doeth *truth*, cometh to the *light*.”

“Truth,” says the *Greek* derivation, is *that which cannot be hid*. It may be *suppressed* for a time—it may *seem* to be *buried* for ever ;—but its very nature secures its ultimate revival and resurrection. The oppressor, and the persecutor, may tread it down ; the bones of the martyrs may—

“Lie scattered on the Alpine Mountains cold :”

Their ashes may be sown—

“O’er all the Italian fields where still doth sway  
The Triple Tyrant.”

But from their ashes will grow—

“A hundred-fold who, having learnt Christ’s way,  
Early will fly the Babylonian woe.”

*Truth* may be consumed in the person of John Huss, but must spring forth with renewed life in the person of Martin Luther; and neither Pope Pius IX., nor any other persecuting ruler, can uproot, from the hearts of his subjects, that deep-seated apprehension of *truth* which Divine grace has imparted.

The *Hebrew* derivation again reminds us of its indestructible *firmness*. The everlasting hills may tremble—the solid rocks may be shattered to atoms—the heaven and the earth may pass away—but truth remains immoveable,

“Unhurt amidst the war of elements,  
The wreck of nature, and the crash of worlds.”

It will thus be seen that the study of the Hebrew language—even as a *language*—(apart from the consideration of its use, in enabling us to read the original of the Old Testament)—is full of *moral* instruction. The great Coleridge delighted to trace these ideal meanings, in his perusal of the Hebrew Scriptures; and although other languages, to a certain extent, are constructed on the same principle, yet I question whether any other form of speech contains such an amount of ethical meaning inwrought into its very framework, and pervading it as a whole.

The precious name of Jesus (in Hebrew, Jehoshua or Joshua) is derived from a root-term, that in its primary meaning, denotes “*amplitude*,” “*spaciousness*.” It thence was employed in the sense of “*setting at large*,” “*delivering from distress*,” “*saving from every kind of evil*.” Let us trace this instance with some particularity:—



First, we have the root denoting :—

(1.) *To be spacious, ample, broad, wealthy, abundant, rich.*

Then (2.) *To set in a large place, to set at liberty, help, succour, aid, save.*

Then the nouns—*Deliverance, aid, safety, salvation.*

Then, prefixing the abbreviated form of Jehovah, we get the noun, *Joshua—Jehovah—Salvation*, or *Jehovah the Saviour*. How admirably this derivation illustrates the declaration of the Angel ! (Matt. v. 21.)

“ He shall be called Jesus, *i.e.* Jehovah the Saviour,  
For He by Himself shall save His people from their sins.”

The proper name of the most distinguished of all the prophets, is compounded of the very same elements, only in a different order—Jesus and Isaiah are each of them made up of the syllable, denoting Jehovah, and the word denoting “salvation.” In Jesus, the name of God is *prefixed*, in Isaiah it is *appended*. Jesus therefore may be rendered, Jehovah—Salvation; *i.e.* Jehovah the Saviour. Isaiah denotes Salvation—Jehovah; *i.e.* the Salvation of Jehovah. The same root furnishes one or two other words which it may be interesting to notice. Shuah denotes a “cry for help.” It is also used for “wealth.” Shevah is another form of it occurring in Psalm v. 2.

“ Harken unto the voice of *my* cry, my King and my God.”

Thus “salvation,” “riches,” and the “cry” of a suppliant sufferer, are all derived from the same root, and all find their answer in our Joshua, or Jesus. His salvation brings not only deliverance for the captive, but succour

to the suppliant, and boundless riches to the poor. Everything opposed to *bondage, straitness, or oppression*; everything *free, ample, plentiful, abundant*, meets and centres in the name and person of the Saviour. Earthly treasures may enable their possessor to adorn his lordly mansion with costly pictures, elegant furniture, and all that may minister to the lust of the eye, and the pride of life; but it is only by the knowledge of Jesus that the chambers of the soul can be "furnished with all precious and pleasant riches." That root Yashah recalls to the eye and ear of the reader of the Hebrew Scriptures the thrice-beloved name which is as "ointment poured forth," for the refreshment of the weary heart. It recalls the thought of Him who is, to His faithful people,—

"Their never-failing treasury filled  
With boundless stores of grace."

Let no one, therefore, assert that the study of Hebrew roots is a barren and profitless speculation. The rod of Aaron "brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds;" so the radical terms of the Hebrew language, when cultivated with intelligence and care, yield refreshing fruit, pleasant to the spiritual taste, and nourishing to the inner man. Shall the best years of youth be devoted to the pursuit of Greek and Roman learning, and shall nothing be done to advocate the claims, or to expound the beauties, of the earliest of all tongues? Shall Homer and Virgil, Demosthenes and Cicero, Thucydides and Livy, be allowed entirely to absorb that mental strength which might more profitably be expended in seeking a familiar acquaintance with the writings of Moses and the Prophets?

## CHAPTER VI.

## ON THE LEADING CHARACTERISTICS OF THE HEBREW LANGUAGE.

(Continued.)

THE ancient Hebrew, as comprehended within the pages of the Old Testament, is exceedingly limited in its vocabulary. We are not however justified in inferring, that the language, as it existed in the days of David, or Isaiah, was deficient in copiousness. It has, *of all languages generally studied*, the fewest number of vocables; but this fact may be explained simply on the ground that so small a portion of Hebrew authorship has come down to modern times. The number of distinct roots in the ancient Hebrew may be reckoned rather under 2000; and the number of words altogether does not probably exceed 7000 or 8000. It should be observed, however, that on such points, all that we can do is to *approximate* to an exact statement. But, although possessed of so limited a vocabulary, it abounds in synonymous terms, *i.e.*, such terms as express the same generic idea under different aspects. For example, in Hebrew we have, at least, six different words for man:—

(*mdth* or *mēth*.)—A man. Used only in the plural: and in the Ethiopic distinctively applied to a husband, like the word “man,” in some provincial dialects of our own country.

(*ādām.*)—Man—the name of the species—answering to *ἄνθρωπος*, in Greek, and *homo*, in Latin. (See Genesis v. 1, 2.)

(*ēnosh.*)—Man—frail, weak, mortal.

(*eesh.*)—Man—active, energetic, emphatically “a man,” like *vir* in Latin, and *ἄνθρωπος* in Greek.

(*gever.*)—A man, a strong man, a hero.

(*zākār.*)—A Man as distinguished from a woman; a male.

Now a very little reflection must serve to convince any one, at all conversant with the nature of language, how much the whole force and meaning of a passage, the energy and point of a sentence, may depend upon the particular one of these six words that the writer may have chosen to employ. Those readers who are capable of consulting the original Hebrew are referred to the following instances in the Book of Job, as illustrative of my meaning:—

Job xi. 3; v. 7; vii. 20; xi. 12; xiv. 1, 10; i. 1, 3, 8; ii. 3; iv. 13, 17; vii. 1, 17; ix. 2; xxv. 6.—The last of which passages may be rendered thus:—

“How much less mortal man, that is a *reptile*!  
And the son of Adam, who is a worm!”

Job iii. 3; xiv. 10.—The last of which passages may be rendered thus:—

“But the *hero* dies, and is laid prostrate.  
Yea man (every child of Adam) breathes his last, and where is he?”

But it would be impossible within the limits of this work fully to illustrate the peculiar power of such synonymes, and the special adaptation of each particular

term to express that very idea it is designed to convey. There are seven or eight terms for "rain." Thus we have "rain in general," "heavy rain," "abundant rain," "stormy rain," "hairy, thin, small rain;" "the former rain," which fell in Palestine from the middle of October, to the middle of December, and prepared the soil for the reception of the seed; and "the latter rain," which fell in March and April before the harvest.

Again, there is one word for "sleep," another for "slumber," and another for "deep sleep," such as that into which Adam was cast, in order that Eve might be produced out of his wounded side. There are twelve terms reducible under the same generic notion of "seeing;" and seven or eight under "that of speaking."

One term signifies "to look," another "to behold," another "to perceive." One, "to look upon with favour;" another "to glance at," and another "to inspect narrowly and closely." We have one term for "looking forth as from a watch-tower," another "to look down from a height," another "to look upon with envy." We have one term implying "to speak rashly," another "to speak oracularly," and another "to speak so as to announce, or publish." We have one word for "a lion" in general, another for "a full grown young lion," another for "a lion's cub," and another "a strong lion." (Ps. xxxiv. 10.) How many passages of the Old Testament might be illustrated by careful reference to the distinctive import of the Hebrew terms which, in these and other instances, the writers have been led to employ!

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE HEBREW LANGUAGE.

*(Continued.)*

IN order more fully to illustrate what has been said relative to the expressive richness of Hebrew, I would direct the attention of my reader to the beautiful phraseology of the xix. Psalm. The literal rendering of the 1st and 2nd verses may be thus given :—

“The heavens are *telling* the glory of God,  
The firmament *displaying* the work of His hands ;  
Day unto day *welleth forth* speech,  
Night unto night *breatheth out* knowledge.”

Thus the four distinct terms in the original are preserved in the translation ; and the overflowing fulness with which day unto day pours fourth divine instruction, and the gentle whisperings of the silent night, are contrasted, as in the Hebrew.

This expressive, self-descriptive quality constitutes the Hebrew, perhaps, the most *picturesque* of all languages. The words do not serve merely to distinguish persons, or objects, but serve, at the same time, to call up before the mind the *qualities* of the objects to which they are applied. A verse of Scripture, read in any faithful translation, will accurately convey the information, or instruction, contained in the original. But the same verse in Hebrew will do more than this. It will suggest to the mind of the intelligent reader a host of interesting associations.

Macaulay remarks of Milton, “The effect of his poetry is produced, not so much by what it expresses, as by what it suggests ; not so much by the ideas it directly

conveys, as by other ideas which are connected with them." The same may be said of Hebrew. *Its terms are suggestive of thoughts which no version could convey, because pregnant with unuttered meanings, which the most faithful transtator would fail in attempting to represent in another language.* This fact may serve to show the kind of benefit to be derived from the study of the original Scriptures. Such study is not needed in order that we may rightly understand, and enjoy, the great doctrines of revelation ; or, in order that we may apprehend those practical directions, or feel the force of those exhortations which the Scriptures contain. All things needful for life and godliness may be gathered from the prayerful perusal of our common English Bible. But in seeking to feed upon the truth ourselves, or in endeavouring to expound that truth to others, we may be often very much assisted by the suggestive fulness inherent in the terms of the original tongues.

In this particular, the Hebrew is far superior even to the classic languages of Greece and Rome. I am not insensible to the expressive richness and overflowing copiousness of the Greek. That language has been to me an object of great interest from early boyhood. Before my revered father thought me old enough to enter upon the study of it, I attempted to learn it *without a teacher*. I well remember, when quite a child, purchasing a well-worn copy of the Greek Testament from one of my play-fellows. It was in a sadly dilapidated condition, and cost me only a few pence ; but I looked upon it as a valuable acquisition. When I became a few years older, I set about acquiring Greek, with earnest diligence ;

and it formed my chief subject of study, during the best years of my early life. It was a pleasant task to me, when emerging out of boyhood, to devote my hours of voluntary solitude to the study of that noble and energetic tongue. "The studious habit that spontaneously seeks retirement," was formed in those early days, and has never been relinquished. During the long college vacation which I spent in the quiet seclusion of the paternal roof, the bright sun, lighting up the surrounding landscape, often invited me to the pleasant fields in vain. Submission to parental admonition might lead me to seek company or relaxation ; taste and disposition, combined with a certain sense of duty, kept me at my books. But, in those days, I almost entirely neglected the study of Hebrew. The original of the NEW TESTAMENT was associated with the poets, orators, and philosophers of Greece ; and I read it with interest. The original of the OLD TESTAMENT seemed to me harsh, difficult, and unattractive ; and I hardly expected ever to become acquainted with it. It appeared to me like a field overgrown with thorns and briars. I knew nothing of the treasures that were hidden under its surface.

The above reference to personal history might seem altogether out of place, were it not a well-known fact that multitudes of intelligent persons are labouring under similar prejudices. It was not until my twenty-third year, that I gave myself, in good earnest, to the study of the Hebrew. My acquaintance with it is only that of a learner still. Judging from the rapidity with which the modern languages of Continental Europe may be acquired, persons sometimes entertain most unfounded notions



relative to the amount of time and labour necessary for the acquisition of an ancient language. I remember having been once told by a lady, in perfect simplicity and seriousness, that she understood that a knowledge of the Hebrew language might be acquired *within the space of six weeks*. All such notions originate either from ignorance, or from the impudent assertions of quack teachers. *In six weeks*, some knowledge of the elements may be gained ; but, after six years, or even twenty years of study, the successful scholar will find that his very attainments serve to discover to himself how much yet remains to be acquired.

In copiousness of diction, in variety of phraseology, in definite exactness, in capability of indicating distinct shades of meaning, the Greek excels the Hebrew ; but in a prevailing moral element, and in a species of pictorial expressiveness, the more ancient language bears away the palm. But in order to enjoy this peculiar characteristic, it is not enough that we be able to read the Hebrew Bible grammatically, and so as to translate it into English. We shall fail in appreciating the hidden beauties of the language, except as we trace the words to their radical signification. When read with exactness and intelligence, almost every leading term in a sentence will be found to exhibit traces of its origin, and to picture forth, before the eye, an image of the idea intended to be conveyed.

In the observations I have made, relative to the leading characteristics of the Hebrew language, I have by no means exhausted the subject ; but have only thrown out hints which may serve to excite interest and to aid

further investigation. I might have endeavoured to illustrate the *sanctity* and *purity*, *comprehensiveness* and *expressive brevity*, *sublimity* and *tenderness* by which the original language of the Old Testament is so pre-eminently characterized. But I leave the elucidation of such qualities to the earnest and studious reader.

## CHAPTER VII.

## ON THE ADVANTAGES CONNECTED WITH THE STUDY OF HEBREW.

HAVING thus briefly exhibited some of the leading *characteristics* of the Hebrew, I would now, in conclusion, advert to some of the *advantages* connected with the study of it.

We are all so constituted by nature, that the exercise of our mental powers is a source of the purest gratification, and the most important self-improvement. The exact study of languages subserves this great object. The Hebrew has claims, simply *as a language*, and still higher claims, as having been constituted the depository of so large a portion of those truths which God has been pleased to reveal. It may be acquired without the learner having previously attained a knowledge of Greek or Latin, or of any other foreign language. It is not needful that every Christian, or even the majority of Christians, should be acquainted with any other than their mother-tongue ; but it is of deep importance, that among Christian scholars, and especially among Christian ministers, there should always be some who are able to read, with intelligence and accuracy, the original language of the Old Testament as well as the New. Even some of our best Commentators have fallen into strange mistakes from trusting to impressions derived

from the English translation. Thus, in Genesis xlv. 20, Pharaoh commands Joseph to say to his brethren :—“ Regard not your stuff, for the good of all the land of Egypt is yours.” On this passage, the excellent Matthew Henry remarks—“ What they had in Canaan, he reckoned but *stuff*, in comparison with what he had for them in Egypt ;” and then proceeds to spiritualize this interpretation. “ Thus,” adds he, “ those for whom Christ intends a share in His heavenly glory, ought not to regard the *stuff* of this world ; the best of its enjoyments are but *stuff*, but lumber,” &c. Now, the whole of this strain of exposition is founded on an entire mistake. Our translators evidently did not employ the word “ *stuff* ” in its modern acceptation, as descriptive of that which is, comparatively, of little value. The Hebrew term assuredly conveys no such meaning, but it is applied to articles of the most valuable description. As a specimen of the variety of renderings that may sometimes be given to one single word, I may instance some of the many expressions by which this word is represented in the English : — “ armour,” “ bag,” “ furniture,” “ jewels,” “ instrument,” “ tools,” “ vessels,” “ wares,” “ weapons,” &c. The word is applied in such a variety of ways, that, perhaps, no one English term could be found exactly corresponding to it.

And here I would take the opportunity of referring to a mistake into which even educated Christians are apt to fall. Such persons may suppose that the knowledge of *Greek* and *Latin* may afford them *equal* advantages with those attendant upon an acquaintance with the Hebrew. They can, it is true, in doubtful or difficult

cases, refer to the Latin Vulgate, or to the Greek Septuagint. Now, let us notice one or two passages, by way of testing the value of such secondary authorities.

In Proverbs xiv. 9, we read in the English version—

“Fools make a mock at sin ;  
But among the righteous there is favour.”

Here there is an apparent want of correspondency between the two members of the sentence. We have recourse for light to the Latin Vulgate, and find the verse rendered thus :—

“The fool will mock at sin,  
And favour will linger among the righteous.”

If we turn to the Septuagint, we find that the translators of that version understood the original very differently, as appears by their rendering of the verse :—

“The houses of transgressors will need *expiation* ;  
But the houses of the just are acceptable.”

This rendering differs considerably from the English and Latin, but seems to convey a notion contrary to Evangelical truth. The finding such a translation may *stimulate* our curiosity, but assuredly cannot satisfy it ; and the student who seeks for full satisfaction must feel, with all the aid which the venerable versions of antiquity can render him, still like a person groping in the dark. Whence did the idea of *expiation* get into the text of the Septuagint ? Why is that idea entirely wanting in the English translation ? Why is there no trace of it in Jerome's Vulgate ? The reader of the Hebrew Bible has recourse to the original, and there he finds that the words may literally be rendered thus :—

“Fools scoff at the offering for sin ;  
But among the righteous it is an object of delight.”

He observes that the word rendered “sin” in the common versions, is not the term generally so used, but is the same as that used in the memorable fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, in verse 10, and rendered “An offering for sin.” Thus interpreted, this proverb becomes parallel with the declaration of the Apostle, 1 Corinthians i. 23, 24.

In the instance just noticed, the common translation is such as to suggest the need of further examination. Let us take another example, and one in which the difficulty does not appear to the mere English reader, but would be suggested by reference to the ancient versions above referred to.

In Proverbs xviii. 8, and xxvi. 22, we find the following sentence :—

“The words of a talebearer are as *wounds*,  
And they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.”

In the Latin vulgate, we find a two-fold rendering of xviii. 8, either—

“The words of a double-tongued person are, as it were, simple ;  
Yet these very words penetrate even to the inner parts of the belly.”

Or—

“Fear casts down the sluggard ;  
But the souls of the effeminate shall hunger.”

If we turn to xxvi. 22, which ought to be exactly the same, we shall find that the former of these interpretations, very slightly altered, is alone given in the Latin.

On referring to the Septuagint version of xviii. 8, it appears that the second of the Latin interpretations is

given by the Greek translators, and xxvi. 22 is thus rendered :—

“The words of cunning knaves are soft ;  
But they smite even to the inmost parts of the bowels.”

Now, amidst all this confusion and variety, one thing is evident. The English rendering, “wounds,” was unknown to the authors of the ancient versions ; or, at least, those versions afford no support to that rendering. An intelligent and inquisitive reader must be greatly perplexed to arrive at the true interpretation of the verse in question. The reader of the Hebrew—acquainted with the light which modern philologists have derived from the cognate dialects—finds that the sense of the proverb, according to the best authorities, is thus represented :—

“The words of a talebearer (slanderer, calumniator) are as delicious viands,  
That go down into the innermost parts of the stomach.”

Just in the same way as delicious viands gratify the natural appetite, so the corrupt taste of the depraved heart is gratified by listening to the tale of scandal. The term, on which the whole force of the sentence depends, never occurs elsewhere in the Hebrew Scriptures. Its derivation and meaning must, therefore, be sought elsewhere, and both of these are supplied by the Arabic.

Are any disposed to ask—What is the use of such studies to a Christian ? I ask them in return—What is the advantage of an exact acquaintance with the meaning of the Old Testament ? If it be granted that to lose the knowledge of the original languages of Scripture would be a great and grievous calamity, then, either the

cultivation of such studies must be given over to the ungodly, or must be taken up by Christian scholars. Could any intelligent Christian desire the former alternative? It remains that some of those who have devoted themselves to the ministry of the truth should give themselves to the task of cultivating such studies.

But it may be alleged that this will take them off from more necessary labours. The reply to this is, that whatever takes off ministers in general from their more important duties, it is not, in one case in five hundred, the study of Hebrew. Nay, for a hundred Christian teachers who can read their Greek Testament, you will not find one who has any critical and scholarlike acquaintance with the original language of Moses and the Prophets.

In conclusion, I would remind the reader, that, important as such a subject of study is in itself, any real profit or blessing resulting from it, must depend on the *spirit* and *frame of mind* cultivated by the student. *There is no true satisfaction in anything, apart from its relation to the knowledge and enjoyment of God.* It will profit us nothing to study the Hebrew Bible in an unhumbled, unbelieving, prayerless frame of spirit. If the reader feels led to enter upon this subject of enquiry from motives of curiosity, or from a desire to be admired for superior attainments, I could not advise him to go forward. But if, on the other hand, he should possess a little leisure time, and some measure of capacity for such pursuits; should he, moreover, seek, through the attainment of an acquaintance with the language of the ancient Scriptures, to understand them better, and to



enjoy them more fully, the rectitude of the motive will promote his success. The *written Word* is the appointed *instrumentality*, as the *blessed Spirit* is the revealed *agent*, in illuminating our understandings, and graciously impressing our hearts. Every legitimate means of endeavouring to grow in the knowledge of the Word, may be expected to aid us in yielding compliance with the exhortation :—"Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

The great subject of controversy between the Christian church on the one hand, and the various forms of infidelity on the other, is—the Divine origin of the Old and New Testaments. The great subject of controversy between Protestantism and Popery relates to the amount of practical submission due to the authority of *Scriptures acknowledged to be Divine*. But the questions between the several bodies of Protestants relate to the *meaning* of the Word of God. The question among true Protestants is not—Shall Scripture be allowed to decide our differences? but, rather—What deliverance do these Scriptures give? What is the decision they announce? The day is come when ancient traditions, time-honoured observances, venerated creeds, accredited doctrines, must all be upheld or rejected, just in so far as they are found to be in accordance, or otherwise, with the *one* standard from which there is no appeal. At such a time as the present, the minds of Christians are exposed to dangers of the most opposite character. Those whose tempers are ardent and sanguine are in danger of rejecting truth itself, because held by our forefathers, and embodied in ecclesiastical confessions. Those, again, who are differently

constituted, are in danger of being so much alarmed at the innovating tendency of others, that they are disposed to reject truth itself, if it come to them under an appearance of novelty. The truly wise man will seek to avoid these opposite dangers. What saith the Scripture? will be his habitual enquiry. And surely, in reference to the Old Testament, a knowledge of the Hebrew language will instrumentally assist in ascertaining the reply. A constant reference to God should pervade all our efforts for the acquisition of profitable knowledge. We should cultivate every mental endowment He hath imparted. We should let no faculty of the mind become torpid for want of exercise—no affection of the heart wither away for want of suitable objects on which it may expend its strength. But, mind and heart should be devoted to Him. Our intellect—our memory—our powers of apprehension and imagination, should be devoted to the habitual perusal and prayerful examination of the lively Oracles; and our tempers and dispositions, our whole cast of character and course of conduct, be moulded and fashioned in accordance with the elevating and purifying principles with which these Oracles are pervaded and imbued.

In carefully studying the writings of Moses and the Prophets, we shall find much to gratify our taste, and to excite our admiration. But it were a melancholy desecration, to allow one's self to stop short at such a result of their perusal. In addition to such a gratification, there should be a constant endeavour after a realization of their sanctifying power. He who so gazes upon that Divine mirror, as to behold the glory of the Lord, and so

beholdeth that glory as to be changed into the same image—whether he be skilled in the original, or only able to read his English Bible—attains to that which excelleth all human learning, and has gathered upon his spirit the impress and the earnest of that conformity to Christ in which will consist the essential blessedness of the redeemed. “Whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophecy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away” (1 Cor. xiii. 8—10).

Before concluding this chapter, I think it right to add a few words of an explanatory character, in reference to the subject of improved renderings. In our authorized translation of the Scriptures, there are to be found, both in the Old and New Testaments, many passages which, according to the judgment of all competent scholars, are capable of being more accurately translated. In *many* instances the mistake is so obvious, that an examination of the original suffices to produce entire agreement as to the correction required. But there are not a few passages about the exact rendering of which even the most qualified critics are found to differ. Such cases are to be found in all ancient writings. A considerable number occur in the New Testament, and a still larger number in the Old. If there be room for difference of opinion about the correct translation of a passage in a *Greek* writer, much more may we expect such difficulties to occur in the rendering of difficult passages in *Hebrew*. Greek is remarkable for definiteness and perspicuity ;

Hebrew, on the other hand, from its inherent character as well as from the limited range of its authorship, is far more likely to present difficulties ; which are sometimes of such a character, as to leave the meaning, to a certain extent, ambiguous. Such passages are more frequent in Job, the Psalms, and the Proverbs, than in the historical books of the Old Testament. Such being the case, I cannot expect that *every* proposed alteration suggested in this little work will meet with acceptance, even from those to whose judgment I should be disposed to defer. In the rendering I have given of Proverbs xiv. 9, I anticipate that many critics will refuse to acquiesce. That the original is capable of being so translated, without any violence being done to the idiom of the language, I am ready to maintain. But I do not assert that some of the other proposed renderings of the verse may not be capable of being plausibly defended. I am entirely dissatisfied with the rendering given in our English Bible ; and I do not know of any modern critic who would be disposed to retain it. Correction is needed, but the most eminent Hebraists differ as to the extent and character of the correction required. I shall be most ready to defer to any qualified critic who will undertake to furnish solid grounds for the rejection of the version I have given, and who will at the same time establish any other rendering on a satisfactory basis.

None but those whose hours of study have been devoted to such enquiries, can estimate the difficulties attending them. Sometimes the leading term in a sentence is one occurring nowhere else within the whole range of the Hebrew Scriptures, so that its meaning must

be ascertained either from the kindred dialects, or by the help of the ancient versions. In some instances, our highest authorities differ as to the rendering of such terms. Again, the apparently lax use of the tenses, and the consequent indefiniteness thence resulting, occasions, particularly in Hebrew poetry, considerable obscurity. I confess, that often when grappling with difficulties, and hardly knowing where to look for light—dissatisfied with the dogmatic assertions of the most accomplished critics—I have longed, in reading the Hebrew Bible, for an inspired Greek version ; or, as such a desire never can be satisfied, for some association composed of learned and prayerful Christian men, in whom scholarship should be united with reverential regard for the authority of the Divine testimonies. Where learning is altogether wanting, or only of a superficial character, the best of men will always be liable, in difficult cases, to make grievous mistakes. The valuable Commentary of Matthew Henry, and others of a similar class—can never be regarded as of authority in questions of Hebrew scholarship ; and, on the other hand, even the profound learning of the most distinguished German critics, being unaccompanied by higher qualifications, fails in many instances to render them trustworthy translators. Why should there be so frequently found a sort of repulsion between men of earnest Christianity and men of high scholarly attainments ? Scholarship would be of infinitely more worth if accompanied by prayerfulness ; and believing reverence for the Word of God would find most important secondary aid, in the possession of those acquisitions that bear on the exact study of the Divine Oracles.

## CHAPTER VIII.

SPECIMENS OF AMENDED TRANSLATIONS FROM THE OLD  
TESTAMENT.—  
GENESIS XLIX.  
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## THE PROPHECY OF JACOB.

1. And Jacob called unto his sons, and said :—  
“Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that  
which shall befall you in the last days.
2. Gather yourselves together, and hear, ye sons of Jacob :  
And hearken unto Israel your father.
3. Reuben, thou art my first-born,  
My might, and the beginning of my strength,  
Pre-eminent in dignity, and pre-eminent in power :
4. Impetuous as the water-floods, thou shalt not retain the  
pre-eminence,  
Because thou wentest up to thy father's bed :  
Then didst thou defile it :—he went up to my couch !
5. Simeon and Levi are brethren ;  
Their swords are weapons of violence ;
6. O my soul, come not thou into their secret,  
Let not my heart unite in fellowship with them ;  
For in their anger they slew men,  
And in their wantonness they ham-strung oxen.

7. Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce,  
And their wrath, for it was cruel.  
I will divide them in Jacob,  
And scatter them in Israel.
8. Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise :  
Thy hand shall be on the neck of thine enemies :  
Thy father's children shall bow down before thee.
9. Judah is a lion's whelp :  
From the prey, my son, thou art gone up :  
He stooped down, he couched as a lion,  
And as a lioness, who shall rouse him up ?
10. The sceptre shall not depart from Judah,  
Nor a lawgiver from between his feet,  
Until Shiloh come :  
And to Him shall the nations yield obedience.
11. Binding his foal unto the vine,  
And his ass's colt unto the choice vine,  
He washes His garments in wine,  
And his clothes in the blood of grapes.
12. His eyes sparkle with wine ;  
And his teeth are white with milk.
13. Zebulon dwells by the haven of the sea,  
He is a haven for ships,  
His coast stretches to Zidon.
14. Issachar is a strong ass,  
Couching down between the cattle-pens.
15. He saw that repose was good,  
And the land that it was pleasant,  
And he bowed his shoulder to bear,  
And became subject to servitude.
16. Dan shall judge his people,  
As one of the tribes of Israel.
17. Dan shall be a serpent by the way,

- An adder in the path,  
That biteth the horse's heels,  
So that the rider falls backwards.
18. For Thy salvation have I waited, O Jehovah !
19. Gad, a troop shall attack him, but he shall drive them  
back at the last.
20. From Asher—rich shall be his food,  
And he shall yield delicacies fit for kings.
21. Napthali—a bounding hind,  
Words of pleasantness he utters.
22. Joseph is a fruitful bough,  
Even a fruitful bough by a well,  
Propelling its branches over the wall.
23. The archers harassed him ; they shot at him ;  
They bitterly persecuted him :
24. But his bow abode in strength,  
And the arms of his hands were made strong,  
By the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob,  
By the name of the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel,
55. By the God of thy Father who will help thee,  
And by the Almighty who will bless thee  
With blessings of heaven above ;  
Blessings of the deep that lieth under ;  
Blessings of the breasts, and of the womb.
26. The blessings of thy Father have prevailed  
Above the blessings of the eternal mountains—  
The glory of the everlasting hills :  
May they rest on the head of Joseph,  
On the crowned one among his brethren !
27. Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf,  
In the morning he shall devour the prey,  
And in the evening he shall divide the spoil."



## DEUTERONOMY XXXII.

## THE SONG OF MOSES.

1. Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak ;  
And hear, O earth, the words of my mouth.
2. My doctrine shall drop as the rain :  
My speech shall distil as the dew :  
As the small rain upon the tender herb :  
And as the showers upon the grass.
3. Because I will proclaim the name of Jehovah,  
Ascribe ye greatness unto our God.
4. He is the Rock—His work is perfect :  
For all His ways are judgment,  
A God of truth—and without iniquity,  
Just and right is He.
5. The crooked and perverse generation have acted wickedly  
against Him,  
That they are not His children is their disgrace.
6. Do ye thus requite Jehovah,  
O foolish people and unwise ?  
Is not He thy Father that bought thee ?  
Hath He not made thee, and established thee ?
7. Remember the days of old ;  
Consider the years of many generations,  
Ask thy father and he will shew thee :  
Thine elders and they will tell thee.
8. When the Most High divided to the nations their  
inheritance :  
When He separated the sons of Adam :

- He fixed the boundaries of the peoples,  
According to the number of the children of Israel.
9. For the portion of Jehovah is His people ;  
And Jacob is the lot of His inheritance.
10. He found him in a desert land :  
In a waste, howling wilderness :  
He led him about, He instructed him,  
He kept him as the apple of His eye.
11. As an eagle stirreth up her nest,  
Fluttereth over her young,  
Spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them,  
Beareth them on her wings :
12. So Jehovah alone did lead him :  
And there was no strange god with him.
13. He made him ride on the high places of the earth,  
That he might eat the increase of the fields :  
And He nourished him with honey out of the rock,  
And oil out of the flinty rock.
14. Butter of kine, and milk of sheep,  
With the fat of well-fed lambs,  
And rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats,  
With the nourishment of the choicest wheat ;  
And thou didst drink the pure blood of the grape.
15. But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked,  
Thou art waxen fat, thou art overgrown, thou art covered  
with fatness.  
Then he forsook God his Maker,  
And lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation.
16. They provoked Him to jealousy with strange gods ;  
With abominations they provoked Him to anger.
17. They sacrificed unto dæmons, not to God,  
To gods whom they knew not :

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- To new gods that came newly up,  
Whom your fathers feared not.
18. The Rock that begat thee thou hast abandoned,  
And hast forgotten God that formed thee.
19. And when Jehovah saw it He abhorred them,  
Because of the provocation from His own sons and  
daughters.
20. And he said : " I will hide My face from them :  
I will see what their end will be.  
For they are a very froward generation :  
Children in whom is no faith.
21. They have moved Me to jealousy with that which is  
not God :  
They have provoked Me to anger with their vanities :  
And I will move them to jealousy with those which are  
not a people :  
I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.
22. For a fire is kindled in mine anger,  
That shall burn to the lowest hell :  
And shall consume the earth with her increase,  
And set on fire the foundations of the mountains.
23. I will heap calamities upon them,  
I will spend mine arrows upon them.
24. They shall be emaciated through hunger,  
And consumed with the burning pestilence,  
And with bitter destruction.  
I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them,  
With the hot poison of serpents, [*lit*: the reptiles of the  
dust.]
25. Without, the sword, and within, the terror,  
Shall cut off both the young man and the virgin,  
The suckling and the man of grey hairs.
26. I said : I would scatter them as with the wind,

I would make the remembrance of them to cease from  
among men,

27. Were it not that I feared the provocation of the enemy :  
Lest their adversaries should not recognize My hand ;  
Lest they should say—‘ Our hand is high,  
And Jehovah hath not done all this.’
28. For they are a nation void of counsel :  
Neither is there any understanding in them.
29. O that they were wise, that they understood this :  
That they would consider their latter end !
30. How should one chase a thousand :  
And two put ten thousand to flight :  
Except their Rock had sold them :  
And Jehovah had delivered them up ?
31. For their rock is not as our rock :  
Our enemies themselves being judges.
32. For the vine is of the vine of Sodom,  
And of the fields of Gomorrah :  
Their grapes are grapes of gall :  
Their clusters are bitter.
33. Their wine is the poison of dragons :  
And the cruel venom of asps.
34. Is not this laid up in store with me :  
And sealed up among my treasures ?
35. To me belongs vengeance and recompense,  
Their feet shall slide in due time :  
For the day of their calamity is at hand :  
And the things that are appointed are hastening on.”
36. For Jehovah will judge His people,  
And repent Himself for His servants,  
When He seeth that their power is gone,  
And that there is none shut up or left.

37. And He will say—"Where are their Gods?  
Their rock in which they trusted?
38. Which did eat the fat of their sacrifices :  
And drink the wine of their drink-offerings ?  
Let them rise up and help you,  
And be your protection.
39. See now that I, even I, am He,  
And there is no God with Me,  
I kill, and I make alive :  
I wound and I heal :  
Neither is there any that can deliver out of My hand.
40. For I lift up My hand to heaven,  
And say—"I live for ever."
41. If I whet My glittering sword,  
And Mine hand take hold on judgment,  
I will render vengeance to Mine enemies :  
And will repay them that hate Me.
42. I will make Mine arrows drunk with blood :  
And My sword shall devour flesh :  
With the blood of the slain and of the captives,  
From the head of the chiefs of the enemies."
43. Rejoice, O ye nations, His people :  
For He will avenge the blood of His servants :  
And will render vengeance to His adversaries :  
And will be merciful to His land and to His people.

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### DEUTERONOMY XXXIII.

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#### THE BLESSING OF MOSES.

1. Now this is the blessing wherewith Moses,  
the man of God, blessed the children of Israel  
before his death ; and he said :—

2. Jehovah came from Sinai,  
And rose as the sun from Seir unto them ;  
He shined from Mount Paran ;  
And came with ten thousands of holy ones ;  
At His right hand was the fire as their guide.
3. Truly He loveth the people,  
All His saints are in Thy hand ;  
And they were prostrate at Thy feet,  
And received of Thy words.
4. Moses commanded us a law :  
Even the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob.
5. And He was king in Jeshurun :  
When the heads of the people were assembled  
Together with the tribes of Israel.
6. Let Reuben live and not die,  
And let not his men be few.
7. And this is the blessing of Judah, and he said :—  
Hear, O Jehovah, the voice of Judah,  
And bring him to his people :  
Let his hands be sufficient for him,  
And be Thou a help against his enemies.
8. And of Levi he said :  
Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy Holy One,  
Whom thou didst prove at Massah,  
And with whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah.
9. Who said of his father, and of his mother—" I have not  
seen him."  
Neither did he acknowledge his brethren,  
Nor know his own children :  
For they have observed Thy word,  
And kept Thy covenant.
10. They shall teach Jacob Thy judgments,

And Israel Thy law.

They shall put incense before Thee,

And whole burnt sacrifice upon Thine altar.

11. Bless, O Jehovah, his substance,  
And accept the work of his hands :  
Smite through the loins of them that rise against him,  
And of them that hate him that they rise not again :
12. And of Benjamin he said :—  
The beloved of Jehovah shall dwell in safety by Him :  
And Jehovah shall cover him all the day long,  
And he shall dwell between His shoulders.
13. And of Joseph he said :—  
Blessed of Jehovah be his land :  
With the precious gifts of heaven—the dew,  
And with the deep springs that lie beneath :
14. And with the precious fruits, the produce of the sun,  
And with the precious fruits, the produce of the months ;
15. And with the chief things of the ancient mountains,  
And with the precious things of the lasting hills,
16. And with the precious things of the earth, and the fulness thereof.  
And let the good will of the Dweller in the Bush  
Come upon the head of Joseph,  
And upon the crown of the head of him—the crowned one  
among his brethren.
17. His glory is like the firstling of his bullock,  
And his horns are like the horns of buffaloes.  
With them He shall push the people together to the ends  
of the earth :  
And they are the ten thousands of Ephraim :  
And they are the thousands of Manasseh.
18. And of Zebulon he said :—

Rejoice Zebulon in thy going out,  
And Issachar in thy tents.

19. They shall call the people to the mountain :  
There shall they offer sacrifices of righteousness :  
For they shall be satisfied with the abundance of the seas :  
And with treasures hid in the sand.
20. And of Gad he said :—  
Blessed be He who enlargeth Gad.  
He dwelleth as a lion :  
And teareth the arm and the crown of the head.
21. And he saw that the first-fruits were his,  
For there, in the portion assigned by the lawgiver, he  
was securely located :  
And he went forth, as leading the people,  
To execute the justice of Jehovah,  
And His judgments with Israel.
22. And of Dan he said :—  
Dan is a lion's whelp,  
He shall leap from Bashan.
23. And of Naphtali he said :—  
O, Naphtali, satisfied with favour,  
And full of the blessing of Jehovah :  
Possess thou the Sea and the South.
24. And of Asher he said :—  
Let Asher be blessed in his children ;—  
Let him be acceptable to his brethren :  
And let him dip his foot in oil.
25. Thy bars shall be iron and brass.  
And as thy days, so shall be thy tranquility.
26. There is none like God, O Jeshurun,  
Who rideth upon the heavens, for thy help :  
And in His excellency on the sky.



27. The eternal God is thy refuge :  
 And underneath are the everlasting arms :  
 He shall thrust out the enemy from before thee :  
 And shall say—‘ Destroy them.’
28. Israel then shall dwell in safety alone :  
 The eye of Jacob shall behold a land of corn and  
 wine.  
 His heavens also shall drop down dew.
29. Happy art thou, O Israel, who is like unto thee ?  
 O people saved by Jehovah !  
 The shield of thy help.  
 And who is the sword of thy excellency.  
 Thine enemies also shall yield thee feigned submission,  
 And thou shalt tread upon their high places.

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## II. SAMUEL XXIII. 1—7.

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### THE LAST WORDS OF DAVID.

1. Now these are the last words of David :—  
 The oracle of David, the son of Jesse :  
 Even the oracle of the man raised up on high :  
 The anointed of the God of Jacob :  
 And the sweet psalmist of Israel :
2. The spirit of Jehovah speaketh by me :  
 And His word is on my tongue.
3. The God of Israel saith,  
 To me speaketh the Rock of Israel :  
 “ A righteous one ruleth over men—  
 Ruleth in the fear of God :
4. And as the light of the morning shall that sun arise—

- A morning of unclouded brightness,  
 As the tender grass springing up from the earth after rain.
5. Shall not my house be thus with God ?  
 For an everlasting covenant hath He made with me—  
 Ordered in all things and sure.  
 For will not He promote all my salvation and all my desire?
6. But the wicked shall be as thorns which must all be cast out,  
 For they cannot be taken hold of with the hand,
7. He who would touch them must be full-armed with the  
 iron and shaft of the spear.  
 And with fire shall they be utterly burnt in their dwelling.

Verse 4 has been thus rendered by Dr. Kennicott :—

As the light of the morning ariseth Jehovah ;  
 A sun, without clouds, for brightness ;  
 And as the grass from the earth, after rain.

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JOB XIX. 23—27.

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JOB'S PROPHECY OF A REDEEMER.

23. Oh ! that even now my words were recorded !  
 Oh ! that they were inscribed in a memorial !
24. That with an iron point and lead,  
 They were graven in the rock for ever !
25. Surely I do know my Redeemer, the Living One ;  
 And He, the Last, will arise over the dust,
26. And though after my skin this body be consumed,  
 Yet in my flesh shall I see God.
27. Whom I shall see for myself, [or "appearing on my behalf."]  
 And my eyes shall behold Him, and not as a stranger.  
 For this my heart languishes within me.

## JOB XXVIII.

## THE SEARCH AFTER WISDOM.

[In the following chapter there are passages of very great difficulty, about the exact rendering of which the most eminent critics are not agreed. I have adopted, with very slight exceptions, the revised version of Dr. Conant. The 4th and 5th verses are, in the Hebrew, exceedingly obscure. I am not able to satisfy myself with any of the various suggestions which have been proposed for the elucidation of their meaning.]

1. Surely there is a vein for silver,  
And a place for gold which they refine.
2. Iron is taken out of the earth,  
And stone is fused into copper.
3. He puts an end to darkness,  
And searches out to the very end  
Stones of thick darkness and of death shade.
4. He drives a shaft away from man's abode,  
Forgotten of the foot,  
They swing suspended far from men !
5. The earth, out of it goes forth bread ;  
And under it is destroyed as with fire.
6. A place of sapphires are its stones,  
And it has clods of gold.
7. The path, no bird of prey has known it ;  
Nor the falcon's eye glanced on it ;
8. Nor proud beasts trodden it ;  
Nor roaring lion passed over it.
9. Against the flinty rock He puts forth His hand ;  
He overturns mountains from the base.
10. In the rocks He cleaves out rivers ;  
And His eye sees every precious thing.
11. He binds up streams that they drip not ;  
And that which is hidden He brings to light.
12. But wisdom, whence shall it be found ?  
And where is the place of understanding ?

13. Man knows not its price ;  
Nor is it found in the land of the living.
14. The deep saith, " It is not with me ;"  
And the sea saith, " It is not with me ;"
15. Choice gold shall not be given in exchange for it ;  
Nor shall silver be weighed for its price.
16. It cannot be weighed with gold of Ophir,  
With the precious onyx and sapphire.
17. Gold and glass shall not be compared with it ;  
Nor vessels of fine gold be an exchange for it.
18. Corals and crystal shall not be named ;  
And the possession of wisdom is more than pearls.
19. The topaz of Ethiopia shall not be compared with it,  
It shall not be weighed with pure gold.
20. Whence then cometh wisdom ?  
And where is the place of understanding ?
21. Since it is hidden from the eyes of all living,  
And covered from the fowls of heaven.
22. Destruction and death say :—  
" With our ears we have heard the fame of it."
23. God understands the way to it,  
And He knows the place of it.
24. For He looks to the ends of the earth,  
And sees under the whole heaven.
25. To make the weight for the wind,  
And He meted out the waters by measure.
26. When He made a decree for the rain,  
And a track for the thunder's flash.
27. Then He saw, and He declared it ;  
He established it, yea, and searched it out.
28. And unto man He said :—  
" Behold the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom ;  
And to depart from evil is understanding."

In the above specimens of revised translation, the attentive reader will observe that I have made only a few alterations in the text of our Authorized Version. My object has been, to exhibit illustrations of the importance of comparatively slight corrections. For all practical purposes, I consider that a Revision of our English Bible would be preferable to a new Translation. Ever since the Scriptures were first published in English, the leading Protestant Versions have been successively founded on those which preceded them. To this, the Authorized Version was no exception. It was simply a revised edition of the Bishop's Bible of 1568, and that again was founded on Cranmer's of 1540. Cranmer's was a revision of Matthews', published in 1537; and this last, which we owe to Rogers, the martyr, was based upon the previous labours of Coverdale and Tyndale. Tyndale's translation of the New Testament, published in 1525 or 1526, together with his labours on the Old Testament, led the way, and furnished the basis, for all the English Translations since published in this country.

Our Authorized Translation probably owes much of its excellence, to the fact of its being the result of frequent and successive revisions. As the Bishop's Bible was a decided improvement on the previous Translation of 1540, so few will be disposed to deny that the former was improved upon by the revisers appointed by King James. But during the 250 years that have elapsed since the last revision was executed—although very great progress, both in England and on the Continent, has been made in those studies connected with Biblical interpretation—no further improvement has been attempted.

All students of the originals are well aware that many mistakes might be corrected, and some obscure passages set in a clearer light by the labours of judicious and qualified Christian scholars. The substance of the book might be left untouched. The whole cast and character of the style might be left unaffected ; and only such amendments introduced, as would render our English Bible a more exact representation of the Hebrew and Greek Originals. No honest revision would alter a single doctrine ; or affect, in any way, the leading principles of Divine truth. The great saving verities of our holy faith would come out with greater force and clearness. Neither Unitarianism on the one hand, nor Romanism on the other, would gain any advantage from our English Version being more exactly conformed to the original Scriptures.

I proceed now briefly to notice some of the corrections which I have ventured to make in Genesis xlix. 1—27. The language in verse 4 obviously refers to the crime of which Reuben had been guilty, and which is recorded xxxv. 22. The term rendered "*unstable*," denotes "*extravagant*," "*dissolute*," "*licentious*." It describes Jacob's eldest son, as boiling over with incontinent desires ; and thus the rendering given in the English version is neither in accordance with the scope of the passage nor with the meaning of the word. Times without number, has the saying been quoted, as illustrating the evils resulting from *instability* of character. When an intelligent reader of his Hebrew Bible hears the passage so quoted by those who have devoted themselves to the ministry of the Word, he can hardly help regretting that such glaring errors

should be suffered to remain in a Translation generally so faithful.

The last clause of verse 6 I have corrected in accordance with the reading of the best Hebrew MSS., and also with the rendering suggested in the margin of our Bibles.

In verse 24 I have ventured to alter the punctuation of one word. The punctuation forms no part of the original text ; and, in a case like the present, although I greatly value the Masoretic vowel system, and would protest against the recklessness with which Horsley and Lowth were in the habit of disregarding it, the alteration may, perhaps, be justified by the requirements of the passage. However, I am ready to defer to scholars who may have studied the subject more fully ; and may, therefore, have a better title to be heard on such a question. Should any reader demur to the alteration of a single vowel point, let him retain the authorized version of the clause. Few who have at all studied the controversy respecting the vowel system, will uphold the extravagant notions maintained by Buxtorf, Loescher, and others, respecting the antiquity, and consequent authority, of the Masoretic punctuation ; but no modern Hebraist would be found disposed to sanction its rejection, or to adopt the absurdities of the school of Parkhurst and his followers. The system is so marvellously self-consistent, so evidently derived from the essential character of the spoken tongue, so universally diffused, so necessary to those who would hold intercourse with the descendants of Abraham, and so valuable, as a help to the student of Hebrew—that only very urgent

reasons would induce me, in any instance, to disregard it.

Throughout the prophecy, repeated reference is made to the *signification* of the names of Jacob's sons. It may, therefore, be interesting to the reader, to have before him the exact meaning of each of them. In the following list, the order is in accordance with that adopted by the dying patriarch.

Reuben	=	Behold a son.
Simeon	=	Hearing with acceptance.
Levi	=	Adhesion or union.
Judah	=	Praised.
Zebulon	=	Dwelling.
Issachar	=	Hire.
Dan	=	Judging.
Gad	=	A troop.
Asher.	=	Happy.
Naphtali	=	My wrestling.
Joseph	=	He shall add.
Benjamin	=	Son of the right hand.

I may just add, that I have thought well to discard the use of italics in the above specimens, from reasons which will be best understood by those who know the difficulties connected with translating from ancient languages. I consider the use of italics by our translators, as originating in their thoroughly upright intentions, and expressive of their scrupulous desire to represent exactly the words of their original. They evidently wished to say neither more nor less than they were warranted in expressing. But this very scrupulosity has sometimes led them into the obscurity of metaphrase.



By attempting too literally to render the *words* of the sacred writers, they have sometimes failed in conveying their *meaning*. Thus, in Exodus iii. 6, the language of God to Moses is thus given in the Authorized Version:

“I *am* the God of thy father,” &c.

To this memorable declaration, our Lord refers in Matthew xxii. 32, and bases His argument on the *mode of expression* employed by Jehovah.

Had the verb of existence been in the *past tense*—had the assertion run thus:—I *was* the God of thy father, &c.—the inference relative to the undying existence of the patriarchs would not have been deducible from the words. The stress is evidently laid upon the fact, that the verb of existence is in the *present tense*. But the English reader finds, on referring to Exodus iii. 6, that the “*am*” is marked as an insertion. Why, he may ask, should so much stress be laid upon what, after all, is not expressed in the Hebrew original? The answer is obvious to everyone acquainted with the idiom of the Shemetic tongues. The *present tense* is necessarily implied in all such cases by the very structure of the language. The personal pronoun, if followed by a noun, involves a proposition, and therefore requires the insertion of the verb of existence, in order fairly to exhibit the meaning of the sentence. In such cases, no verb is used in Hebrew, whereas, had the assertion related either to the past or the future, we should have found the verb inserted in the corresponding tense.

## NOTES ON DEUTERONOMY XXXIII.

In verse 2, I have inserted "as the sun," although there are no corresponding words in the Hebrew. The thought thus expressed is contained in the verb.

As given in our English Version, the passage fails to convey the image suggested to the reader of the original, and to exhibit the connection between the *early brightness*, expressed by the first verb, and the *noonday splendour*, described by the second.

In verse 14, the idea conveyed in the Hebrew is very obscurely rendered in the Authorised Version. It is difficult to say what our translators understood by "the precious things put forth by the moon." The first clause seems to refer to those crops which are produced annually, and the second clause to those more rapidly growing vegetable productions which the successive months yield for the food of man and beast. The word rendered *moon* in A. V. is plural in Hebrew, and ought to be translated *months*. The cognate term for "moon" is never found in the plural.

The amended rendering of verse 25 is sanctioned by the best authorities; but the meaning of the term rendered in A.V. "strength," is somewhat doubtful. The rendering of this verse in the LXX. agrees with our Authorised. The Vulgate gives—

"His shoe shall be iron and brass ;  
As the days of thy youth, so also shall be thine old age."

## II. SAMUEL XXIII., VERSE 1—7.

The brief prophecy entitled "THE LAST WORDS OF DAVID," is one of the most difficult, as well as one of the most interesting passages recorded in Old Testament history. It may be interesting to give the passage as it stands in the ancient versions, and also as rendered by some of the most eminent of our modern critics. Careful students of Scripture may often derive valuable hints even from those versions, the general character of which is acknowledged to be very defective. In critical accuracy, the more modern versions excel the ancient. But, in spite of these numerous mistakes, the LXX. and Vulgate Versions of the Old Testament often serve to elucidate the meaning of particular terms, and to aid us in the study of the Hebrew Scriptures.

THE LATIN VULGATE,  
AS TRANSLATED IN THE DOUAY VERSION.

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1. Now these are David's last words. David, the son of Isai, said : The man to whom it was appointed concerning the Christ of the God of Jacob, the excellent Psalmist of Israel, said :
2. The Spirit of the Lord hath spoken by me, and His word by my tongue.
3. The God of Israel said to me, the strong one of Israel spoke, the ruler of men, the just ruler in the fear of God.
4. As the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, shineth in the morning without clouds, and as the grass springeth out of the earth by rain.
5. Neither is my house so great with God, that He should make with me an eternal covenant, firm in all things and assured. For He is all my salvation and all my will, neither is there ought thereof that springeth not up.
6. But transgressors shall all of them be plucked up as thorns, which are not taken away with hands.
7. And if a man will touch them, he must be armed with iron, and with the staff of a lance ; but they shall be set on fire and burnt to nothing.

THE VERSION OF THE GREEK SEPTUAGINT.

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1. AND these are the last words of David : Faithful is David, the Son of Jessæ, and faithful the man whom the Lord raised up to be the anointed of the God of Jacob, and beautiful are the Psalms of Israel.
2. The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me, and His word was upon my tongue.
3. The God of Israel says : A watchman out of Israel spoke to me a parable : I said among men,—How will ye strengthen the fear of the anointed ?
4. And in the morning light of God, let the sun arise in the morning, from the light of which the Lord passed on, and, as it were, from the rain of the tender grass upon the earth.
5. For my house is not so with the Mighty One, for He has made an everlasting covenant with me, ready guarded at every time ; for all my salvation and all my desire (is) that the wicked should not flourish.
6. All these (are) as a thorn thrust forth, for they shall not be taken with the hand.
7. And a man shall not labour among them ; and (one shall have) that which is fully armed with iron and the staff of a spear, and he shall burn them with fire, and they shall be burnt in their shame.

TRANSLATION OF THE ANCIENT SYRIAC  
VERSION.

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1. **THESE** are the last words of David.  
David, the son of Jesse, spoke ;  
The man who set up the yoke of Christ,  
And of the God of Jacob, said,  
Who uttered the sweet songs of Israel :—
2. The spirit of the Lord spake in me,  
And His word is on my tongue.
3. The God of Israel said,  
And the Rock of Israel said to me :  
He that ruleth among just men,  
Who ruleth over those that fear God.
4. Like the morning light when the sun ariseth,  
The morning light without clouds.  
Thence from the dawn and from the rain,  
Which maketh the earth to bring forth.
5. Is not my house such with God ?  
He hath made with me an everlasting covenant,  
And all things are prepared and secure ;  
For He Himself hath accomplished all my pleasure and  
my request.
6. But all the wicked are like rough thorns,  
For none of these are taken with the hand.
7. But when any one is about to take hold of them,  
Then are they burnt with fire utterly.

## DR. KENNICOTT'S TRANSLATION.

1. THE oracle of David, the son of Jesse ;  
Even the oracle of the man raised up on high :  
The anointed of the God of Jacob ;  
And the composer of the psalms of Israel.
2. The Spirit of Jehovah speaketh by me,  
And his word is upon my tongue :
3. Jehovah the God of Israel sayeth ;  
To me speaketh the Rock of Israel.  
THE JUST ONE ruleth among men !  
He ruleth by the fear of GOD !
4. As the light of the morning ariseth JEHOVAH ;  
A sun without clouds for brightness ;  
And as the grass from the earth after rain.
5. Verily thus is my house with God ;  
For an everlasting covenant hath he made with me,  
Ordered in all things, and safely secured :  
For he is all my salvation, and all my desire.
6. But the sons of Belial shall not flourish ;  
As a thorn rooted up shall be all of them :  
For they will not be taken kindly by the hand ;
7. And the man who shall reprove them,  
Shall be filled with iron and a wooden spear ;  
But in the fire shall they be utterly burnt with ignominy.

## DR. PYE SMITH'S TRANSLATION.

## THESE ARE THE LATER WORDS OF DAVID.

1. THE oracle of David the son of Jessai,  
Even the oracle of the high-raised hero,  
Anointed by the God of Jacob,  
And the delightful author of the songs of Israel.
2. The Spirit of God speaketh by me,  
And His word is upon my tongue ;
3. The God of Israel saith,  
To me speaketh the Rock of Israel :
4. Ruling over man is a Righteous One,  
Ruling in the fear of God :  
Even as the light of the morning shall He rise,  
Jehovah, the sun,  
A morning without clouds for brightness,  
(As) after rain the herbage from the earth.
5. Truly thus is my house with God,  
For an everlasting covenant hath He fixed with me,  
Ordered in everything and secured ;  
For (this is) all my salvation and all (my) desire.
6. But the wicked shall not grow.  
As prickles to be moved away, all of them ;  
For they cannot be taken with the hand.
7. And the man who shall touch them :  
Will be filled with the iron and shaft of the spear ;  
But with fire shall they be utterly burned in their dwelling.



## MAURER'S TRANSLATION.

1. **THESE** are the later words of David.  
David the son of Jessai said,  
(Who) was raised up on high,  
The anointed of the God of Jacob,  
And the sweet singer of Israel.
2. The God of Israel spake by me,  
And His word was on my tongue.
3. The God of Israel said  
The Rock of Israel said to me.
4. There shall be a righteous ruler over men,  
A ruler fearing God.  
And (he shall come forth) as the morning light shineth,  
(As) the sun ariseth, (as) the cloudless morning light,  
(As) the grass springeth forth from the earth, by reason  
of the brightness after rain.
5. For shall not my house be thus, with (the help of) God ?  
For He hath made with me an everlasting covenant  
ordered in all things, and to be kept,  
For will He not promote all my salvation, and all my  
desire ?
6. But the impious shall be all as thorns to be cast out,  
For no one can take them with the hand.
7. He who wishes to take them must be furnished with iron,  
and a spear.  
They shall be burnt with fire in their place.

## APPENDIX.

[A. Page 10.]

IN turning from the study of the pure Hebrew to the so-called Chaldee of Daniel and Ezra, we find, in addition to certain distinct *grammatical* differences, dialectical changes in the *words*. Some of the terms we meet with are the same, both in form and meaning, with those with which we are already familiar. Others again are very slightly altered. A third class are so much disguised, that, at first sight, we are unable to trace their relation to the corresponding terms in the pure Hebrew. While a fourth class consist of such as are entirely unknown to us, because never found in that form of the language employed by Moses and the Prophets.

Such is the case also with the Aramaic dialect, which appears to have been in use during the period in which our Lord and His Apostles were on the earth.

Thus the Hebrew word AB (pronounced AV), becomes, in the dialect then prevalent in Palestine, ABBA. See Mark xiv. 36 ; Rom. viii. 15 ; Gal. iv. 6. Here, it will be observed, the alteration consists merely in the addition of a syllable.

The Hebrew word for Lord is ADŌN, but in the Aramaic sentence quoted in 1 Cor. xvi. 22, we read,

not	ADŌN ATHA,
but	MARAN ATHA—
the Lord cometh.	

In the memorable words uttered by the Saviour on the cross, and taken from Psalm xxii. 1, we have a still more important illustration of the differences between the ancient Hebrew and the more modern Dialect.

The Hebrew words, as contained in the Old Testament, may be thus represented in English characters :—

AILEE, AILEE, LAMA AZABTANEE.

While the words, as recorded by the Evangelist, Matt. xxvii. 46, would read thus :—

EELEE, EELEE, LAMA SABACHTHANEE.

Here the difference is altogether slight, except in the last word. The common Hebrew word AZAB, “to forsake,” is exchanged for the Aramaic term SABACH, (or rather SHEBACH), which is found in Daniel iv. 12.

It is deserving of notice, that our blessed Lord quoted the words, not in the language in which the Psalm was originally written, but in the Vernacular dialect of the people by whom He was surrounded.

They had therefore no excuse for misapprehending His meaning. Some of them may have understood their application, and afterwards, when the Spirit was poured out from on high, may have savingly experienced their power.

[B. Page 11.]

ISAIAH LII. 13—LIII. 12.

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AMENDED VERSION.

13. Behold ! my servant shall prosper,  
He shall be raised up, and exalted, and be very high ;
  14. Even as many were shocked at Thee,  
(So disfigured was His appearance, more than that of man,  
And His form more than that of the sons of men,)
  15. So shall He sprinkle many nations ;  
Kings shall shut their mouths because of Him ;  
For what had not been told them, they shall see,  
And what they had not heard, they shall perceive.\*
- 

CHAPTER LIII.

1. Who has believed our report,  
And to whom has the arm of Jehovah been revealed ?
2. For He grew up as a sucker before Him [or them],  
And like a root out of a dry ground,  
He had neither form nor comeliness, that we should  
regard Him,  
Nor beauty, that we should desire Him.
3. He was despised and rejected of men,  
A man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs,  
So that we hid our faces from Him ;  
He was despised and we esteemed Him not.

\* Or, For they who had not been told, they see,  
And they who had not heard, they hear.

## ISAIAH LII. 13.—LIII. 12.

## THE SEPTUAGINT VERSION, IN ENGLISH.

13. Behold ! My servant shall understand ; and be exalted,  
and glorified exceedingly.
14. As many shall be amazed at Thee, so shall Thy face be  
inglorious among men ; and Thy glory shall not be  
honoured among the sons of men.
15. Thus shall many nations wonder at Him ; and kings shall  
keep their mouths shut ; for they to whom no report was  
brought concerning Him, shall see ; and they who have  
not heard, shall consider.

## CHAPTER LIII.

1. O Lord, who has believed our report,  
And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed ?
2. We brought a report as of a child before Him,  
He is as a root in a thirsty land,  
He has no form nor comeliness ;  
And we saw Him, but He had no form or beauty.
3. But His form was ignoble, and inferior to that of the  
children of men,  
He was a man in suffering, and acquainted with the  
bearing of sickness ;  
For His face is turned from us,  
He was dishonoured, and not esteemed.

## AMENDED VERSION.

- 
4. Yet surely it was our griefs that He bore,  
It was our sorrows that He carried ;  
As for us, we indeed accounted Him stricken,  
Smitten of God and afflicted ;
  5. But He was wounded for our transgressions,  
He was bruised for our iniquities ;  
The chastisement of our peace was upon Him,  
And with His stripes we are healed.
  6. All we like sheep were gone astray,  
We had turned each to his own way ;  
But Jehovah made the iniquities of us all to fall on Him.
  7. He was oppressed and He was afflicted,  
Yet He opened not His mouth.  
As a lamb that is led to the slaughter,  
Or as a sheep before her shearers is dumb,  
So He opened not His mouth.
  8. By oppression, and by a judicial sentence, He was taken  
away :  
And who can describe His generation ?  
For He was cut off out of the land of the living :  
For the transgression of my people was He smitten.
  9. They had assigned Him His grave with the wicked ;  
But He was with the rich man after His death,  
Because He had done no violence,  
Neither was deceit found in His mouth.

## THE SEPTUAGINT VERSION IN ENGLISH.

4. He bears our sins, and is pained for us ;  
Yet we account Him to be in trouble,  
And in suffering and in affliction.
5. But He was wounded on account of our sins,  
And bruised because of our iniquities ;  
The chastisement of our peace was upon Him,  
And by His bruises we are healed.
6. All we, as sheep, have gone astray ;  
Every one has gone astray in his way ;  
And the Lord gave Him up for our sins.
7. And He, because of His affliction,  
Opens not His mouth.  
He was led as a sheep to the slaughter ;  
And as a lamb before the shearer is dumb,  
So He opens not His mouth.
8. In His humiliation His judgment was taken away ;  
Who shall declare His generation ?  
For His life is taken away from the earth,  
Because of the iniquities of my people He was led to death.
9. And I will give the wicked for His burial,  
And the rich for His death :  
For He practised no iniquity,  
Nor craft with His mouth.

## AMENDED VERSION.

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10. But it pleased Jehovah to bruise Him ; He put Him to grief.  
When His soul shall have made a sacrifice for sin,  
He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days,  
And the pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in His hands.
11. He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied.  
By the knowledge of Himself shall He, the Righteous One,  
my Servant, justify many ;  
For He shall bear their iniquities.
12. Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great,  
And with the strong He shall divide the spoil ;  
Because He poured out His soul unto death,  
And was numbered with the transgressors,  
And bare the sin of many,  
And made intercession for the transgressors.



THE SEPTUAGINT VERSION IN ENGLISH.

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10. The Lord also is pleased to purge Him from His stroke,  
If ye can give an offering for sin,  
Your soul shall see a long-lived seed.
11. The Lord also is pleased to take away from Him the  
travail of His soul,  
To show Him light, and to form Him with understanding,  
To justify the just one who serves many well, and He  
shall bear their sins.
12. Therefore He shall inherit many,  
And He shall divide the spoils of the mighty ;  
Because His soul was delivered unto death,  
And He was numbered among the transgressors,  
And He bore the sins of many,  
And was delivered because of their iniquities.

[C. Page 19.]

The following are the leading *Principles* on which the System of Schultens is based :—

1. All languages have something *peculiar* and *special*; something *belonging to them*, both in their derived, and in their primitive meanings, which cannot be transferred to other languages with equal *force, propriety, felicity, and fulness*.

2. This characteristic is by far most conspicuous—(on account of the great antiquity of the language)—in the Hebrew, and in its dialects, the Chaldee, the Syriac, and the Arabic.

3. In all languages, each word has only one *primary* and *proper* meaning belonging to it.

4. Yet all languages abound in secondary meanings—as we term them—imparted to them by means of Metaphor, Metonymy, Synechdoche, Irony, Catachresis, and other figures of speech.

5. So great is this copiousness, that the *one radical*, and *proper* force of a single word sometimes spreads out into *thirty, sixty, a hundred* or more, *secondary* and *figurative* significations; just as a trunk of a tree will shoot forth principal and smaller branches, in every direction.

6. There is oftentimes not the slightest *resemblance, connexion, or agreement*, perceptible between these *secondary* meanings;—on the contrary, they appear utterly unlike, and even *opposed to one another*. But this can never really be the case in any language properly constructed.

7. It is plainly impossible to discover any mode of reconciling these *contrary* and *conflicting* significations—at least so as to carry conviction to the mind—unless we have before us the original meaning from which such secondary meanings have been derived.

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8. This *original, radical, proper, single* meaning is, in all languages, of very rare occurrence. On the other hand, the *metaphorical*, and other *secondary* meanings, are exceedingly common, and every where preponderate.

9. So true and unquestionable is this, that sometimes the *original* force of a word will not once occur in a large book by a copious writer, yea, not even in several books ; while the *secondary* meanings fill every page, and occur times without number.

10. In proportion to the *fewness* of books in any language will be the *difficulty* of investigating the *original* or *radical* ideas from which the *secondary* meanings have been derived.

11. If only *one* work in any language remains which treats copiously and eloquently concerning things human and Divine, it is impossible—from the very nature of language itself—that the *primitive meanings* of the majority of the vocables should be contained in that book ; but, as already stated, none of these will appear there, or else they will occur very seldom.

12. Still further, those *radical* meanings, which are not contained in the book itself which we possess, can certainly never be obtained from that source, so as to convince the judgment, even should we spend a whole life in most diligently bringing together, and comparing different places.

13. Those *secondary* ideas, too, which arise by means of metaphors, and other figures of speech, are of so arbitrary a nature, so unconfined and unfettered, that they can never be arrived at, or demonstrated by any human ingenuity, or critical skill, or logical or metaphysical speculation ; but are deducible only from the proper consideration of the *primary* meaning of the term.

14. Inasmuch as these *primary* meanings of Hebrew words cannot be transferred into any vernacular translation, so it is

altogether contrary to common sense to endeavour to obtain them from either the ancient or modern versions.

15. Such *primary* meanings as do not exist in the Hebrew original, still less could have been expressed in the versions.

16. It is plain from the very nature of the thing, and sound reason, that those primary meanings which are not to be found in the book itself, nowhere exist, nor ought to be searched for, except in the *Dialects* of the language, or other *Oriental Tongues*.

17. No *one* of those *Dialects*—amongst which any affinity exists—is sufficient in itself to furnish the primary meanings ; but such investigations require the mutual assistance and light of several of the dialects.

18. It is impossible to arrive at the marrow of a language, and the vivid perception and sense of its *primary* words, by means of lexicons. The continual study of its books and ancient documents is indispensable for this purpose.\*

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[D. Page 22.]

The following sketch of the recent History of Hebrew Philology, is extracted from a valuable article contributed to the "Journal of Sacred Literature," several years ago, by my able and accomplished friend, Rev. F. Bosworth, M.A., of Bristol :—

"While Gesenius was thus giving importance to Hebrew literature, and facilitating its acquisition, the study of the Indo-European languages had been making rapid advances. Buttmann, Matthiæ, Thiersch, Zumpt, Bopp, Humboldt, Rosen, Schlegel, and Grimm, had been striving for higher aims and more sound results. Grammar was no longer a mere

\* *Vetus et Regia Via Hebraizandi. Lugduni Batavorum, 1738, p.p. 36—39.*

collection of Phenomena, but a science demanding and deserving philosophical investigation and analysis. The advancement in classical philology necessarily brought with it a desire that Oriental literature might share in the benefits thus largely enjoyed and highly prized. This wish, as far as Hebrew was concerned, was strengthened by the improvements introduced into the study of Arabic, by Rosen, Kosegarten, and especially De Lacey ; and into that of Ethiopic, by Hupfeld. The honor of having, to any considerable extent, satisfied these new demands, belongs undoubtedly to Ewald.

"This distinguished scholar was, at the time he published his 'Critical Grammar of the Hebrew,' Professor in the University of Gottingen. 'From the appearance of this work,' says Nordheimer, 'dates the commencement of a new and important era in Semitic philology.' . . . . Basing his investigations on the philosophical views of language in general, he has elucidated some of the deepest obscurities of Hebrew grammar, and raised the study to an equality with that of the Indo-European tongues.

"Applying the doctrine of sounds to the language, Ewald has eminently succeeded in giving a life-like character to this ancient tongue. In treating on the accents, his bold and keen spirit of research has led to the most valuable results, and enabled him to show the 'beautiful harmony between the accentuation and the syntax.' His sections on 'nominal stems,' and 'verbal flexion,' are invaluable ; while his treatment of the syntax is such as scarcely to leave a difficulty untouched. . . .

"While Ewald, the uncompromising and sometimes bitter opponent of Gesenius, was thus prosecuting his researches, and publishing his works, Hupfeld, a pupil, and subsequently the successor of the great Halle Hebraist, was preparing a new Hebrew grammar, 'which,' says Tholuck, 'must surpass that

of Ewald in the fundamental character of its researches.' As early as 1825, three years before Ewald's first grammar was published, Hupfeld printed his first work '*Exercitationes Ethiopicae*,' in which he presented to the world his researches into the doctrine of sounds, and well illustrated the quadriliteral and quinquiliteral forms in Hebrew, from Ethiopic sources. His views were more fully carried out, and much light thrown upon the language, by two subsequent Essays. Indeed, all the writings of this eminent scholar are of the greatest value to the student of Hebrew—distinguished as they are by profound erudition, no less than by a careful avoidance of extreme views.

“ Shortly after the publication of Ewald's Critical Grammar, the increasing attention paid to Philology led to so successful a comparison of languages, as to call for the formation of a new science—that of Comparative Philology. Bopp, Pott, and W. de Humboldt, were the great leaders of the movement. The connexion between the so-called Semitic tongues had been, at least to some extent, long known ; and valuable aid in the study of Hebrew had been afforded by means of the cognate dialects. The union between the Indo-Germanic languages was a discovery of later years. It could not but be, that the impulse given to the study of these two families of languages should lead to the desire to inquire into their relationship. The result was, that the Semitic family was no longer found to occupy an isolated position, but was connected with the other great families of tongues, and, with them, forms the great object of Comparative Philology. It was beginning to be felt that the true solution of the contrast of stability and fluctuation which is found in language, lies in the unity of human nature. The question, however, still remained, and is not answered yet—What is the connection between the Semitic and Indo-Germanic families ?

“Gesenius, who in his Latin Manual, in 1833, was the first to deduce lexical analogies from the Iudo-Germanic tongues, asserted at the same time, that the connexion between the languages was but remote. Roediger, the pupil of Gesenius, and the editor of his Grammar, is still more decided. He says, that though a remote relationship exists between these families, which renders comparison valuable for lexicography ; they ‘do not stand in a sisterly, or any close relationship to each other.’

“Other scholars have been induced to think differently. In 1834, Lepsius traced some striking resemblances between the Hebrew and the Sanscrit ; and the year after, in letters to Chevalier Bunsen, proved the remarkable agreement between the numerals in Coptic, Semitic, and Indo-Germanic ; and announced, that his discovery of the meaning of the ancient numeral roots, had placed the whole cycle of Semitic and Indo-Germanic languages ‘in a very remarkable harmony with one another.’ Three years later, Nordheimer, in the preface to his excellent Hebrew grammar, affirmed it to be one of the objects he had in view, in treating of the Hebrew language, ‘to point out its surprisingly intimate connexion, both lexicographical and grammatical, not only with the other Semitic languages, but also with those of the Japhetish or Indo-European stock.’

“This object was still more steadily pursued by Furst, who may be said to have founded the third School of Hebrew study. He, Delitzsch, Caspari, and others, while they style the school of Gesenius, the *empiric*, and that of Ewald, the *rational*, term their own, the *historico-analytic*: making, as they do, equal use of the writings of the Rabbins, the philosophy of speech, and the comparison of languages. Cultivating with the utmost assiduity and success Talmudic learning, they

at the same time, boldly, and sometimes rashly, as it appears to us, make the greatest use of the Sanscrit, claiming for it a close and sisterly relation to the Hebrew.

“Furst boldly asserts, that of the list of 375 Sanscrit roots given by Pott, whose meaning is established beyond a doubt, there is not one which is not also Semitic. In defence of the same views, Delitzsch wrote his ‘Jesurun.’ It was reserved for Meier, however, to theorize most daringly in this direction. In his large work, ‘Hebräisches Wurzelwörterbuck,’ 1845, he asserts, that the simplest form of the verb in Hebrew, in the perfect, has been formed from monosyllabic roots, by the *reduplication of the radical syllable*, just as in Sanscrit, Gothic, Greek, and Latin. . . .

“It is worthy of remark, that while an almost exclusive reference to tradition distinguished the first students of Hebrew, and a peculiar fondness for the use of the cognate dialects marked the scholars of the Reformation, and the early Dutch philologists, all the sources of information are now open, and are, alike and in union, brought to bear upon the study in question. Thus, while Ewald and his followers are, with the greatest success, pursuing the philosophical study of Hebrew; and while Winer, Hupfeld, Bernstein, and Roediger, are displaying the riches of the cognate dialects; Zunz, Sachs, and others, are placing their researches in ancient Hebrew literature within the reach of students; and Furst, Delitzsch, and Lassen are throwing light upon the ancient Scriptures from the sacred tongue of the Hindoos. Especially active at present, are the Hebrew scholars in Germany, in the direction of comparative philology and the early literature of the language.” \*

\* See Journal of Sacred Literature, Jan. 1853, pp. 429—436.



## ON THE HEBREW POINTS.

MANY of my readers, although unacquainted with the Hebrew language, may probably have heard of the controversy respecting the Vowel Points. According to the system adopted by the Jews themselves, and by almost all Christian scholars, the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew Alphabet are all reckoned as consonants. There is very strong reason for believing that, so long as the Hebrew continued to be a spoken language, the vowels were generally left to be supplied by the reader from his previous familiarity with the words. Thus, to any one familiar with English, such a sentence as the following would occasion no difficulty :—

“Blek brds bld nsts.”

If *a* were denoted by – and *i* by . and *ui* by : and *e* by ' the words might be written more fully thus :—

“Blek brds bld nsts,”

so that the dullest reader might be able to pronounce them. This simple illustration may serve to explain the use of the marks employed in Hebrew to designate the vowel-sounds. As long as Hebrew was a living language, such marks were scarcely at all needed. In the sixth or seventh centuries of the Christian era the system of marks for the vowels was invented, evidently with the view of perpetuating the mode of pronunciation which the Jews had received from their forefathers.

The controversy respecting the antiquity, and consequent authority, of the points, might have been much more easily settled, had the learned disputants only been led to define with exactness the terms of the question. There is no reasonable ground for maintaining that the *marks* and *names*, by which the vowels are now expressed, were in use when the Hebrew Scriptures were written; but, on the other hand, it is quite certain that the *system of vowel-sounds*, or something analogous, was in use centuries before the *marks* were appended to indicate the pronunciation; just as the words of our own language were pronounced in accordance with certain rules, before any pronouncing dictionary had been given to the world. Just as, in certain systems of Stenography, the vowels are, for the most part, left to be supplied by the reader, so the Hebrew language was originally written without the marks that indicate the correct vocalisation. Words consisting of the same letters were differently sounded according to their difference of meaning; but the meaning was left to be gathered from the context, and the obvious meaning guided the mode of pronunciation. Thus DBR, if intended to denote "pestilence," was sounded DeBeR; but, when used to signify "a word," it was pronounced DaBaR. This instance is expressly given by Jerome, in his Commentary on Habakkuk iii. 5. This most learned of all the fathers of the Church was evidently acquainted with the *vowel-sounds*, but makes no reference to the *marks* by which those sounds were afterwards indicated. The former were inherent in the living language: the latter were invented at a later period, to preserve distinctions which might otherwise have been lost. Surely much precious time might have been saved, and much unseemly controversy been prevented, had the above explanation of the matter been accepted by the eminent scholars of

the sixteenth century, who advocated extreme and untenable opinions on both sides of the question at issue.

If Buxtorf and his followers were influenced by prejudice, in defending the antiquity of the whole system, Capellus and his disciples were, at least, equally mistaken in their rejection of so venerable a guide to the correct pronunciation of the ancient Hebrew. When, about thirty-five years ago, I began the study of Oriental learning at the University of St. Andrews, the system there pursued was founded on the views of Capellus, and in accordance with the mode recommended by the laborious but fanciful Parkhurst. On taking up the study with more earnestness, some years afterwards, I found that the anti-punctist system was generally discarded by Hebrew scholars, both in England and on the Continent. Increased familiarity with the language has only served to strengthen my conviction of the value of the vowel-system, as incomparably the most reliable guide to the ancient pronunciation. The system adopted by Parkhurst, appears to me, entirely without foundation ; and no language would be too strong to express my sense of its absurdity. If some learned foreigner should assert, that because he had found the words “Brd nd chs fr sppr” written in short-hand without the vowels for the sake of brevity, therefore, the proper pronunciation of the words was to be so represented, he would hardly be guilty of a greater error than into which those who reject the vowel points have fallen.

*Berd* for *bread*, *chs* for *cheese*, *fer* instead of *for*, *sepper* instead of *supper*, sound no more strange to the ear of an Englishman, than the anti-punctist mode of reading Hebrew sounds in the ear of a Jew acquainted with the language of his own Scriptures. The above observations may, perhaps, serve in some measure to satisfy the laudable curiosity of those readers who have heard something respecting the two different

modes of pronouncing Hebrew words, but may have felt a wish for further information respecting the subject. If anyone would wish to go deeply into the question, let him, by all means, consult a most elaborate and valuable treatise, entitled "Hebrew in the time of Jerome," inserted in the sixth number of the "Journal of Sacred Literature" (First Series), by my friend, the Rev. F. Bosworth. Amidst the general neglect of Hebrew learning, by those who have devoted themselves to pastoral labours, I am thankful that some of those so occupied, in our own city, have given themselves to the study of their Hebrew Bible. The article to which I have just referred must have required many months of studious investigation before it could have been written, and deserves to be better known, and more extensively circulated.

I do not know that I can more profitably sum up all that I should wish to add, respecting the subject of these concluding observations, than by laying before the reader the following extract from an article by Dr. John Nicholson, which occurs under the word "Hebrew," in Kitto's "Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature."

"The origin of the vowel-points is to be ascribed to the effort which the Jewish learned men made to preserve the pronunciation of their sacred language at a time when its extinction, as a living tongue, endangered the loss of the traditional memory of its sound. Every kind of evidence renders it probable, that these signs for the pronunciation were first introduced about the seventh century of the Christian era, that is, after the completion of the Talmud; and that the minute and complex system which we possess, was gradually developed, from a few indispensable signs to its present elaborateness. The existence of the present complete system can, however, be traced back to the eleventh century.

The skilful investigation of Hupfeld (in the *Studien und Kritiken* of 1830), has proved that the vowel-points were unknown to Jerome and the Talmud ; but, as far as regards the former, we are able to make a high estimate of the degree to which the traditionary pronunciation, prior to the use of the points, accorded with our Masoretic signs: for Jerome describes a pronunciation, which agrees wonderfully well with our vocalisation. We are thus called to avail ourselves thankfully of the Masoretic punctuation, on the double ground, that it represents the Jewish traditional pronunciation, and that the Hebrew language, unless when read according to its laws, does not enter into its full dialectual harmony with its Syro-Arabian sisters."

I have thought it well to append to this little work on the Hebrew Language, a paper in relation to a question which has recently been agitated in connexion with the circulation of the Holy Scriptures.

DOUGHT PROTESTANT CHRISTIANS TO AID IN THE  
CIRCULATION OF ROMAN CATHOLIC TRANSLATIONS  
OF HOLY SCRIPTURE?

The recent Discussions, relative to the Circulation of Roman Catholic Translations of the Bible on the Continent of Europe, have necessarily excited considerable interest among all who truly appreciate the value of Holy Scripture. Very decided judgments have been arrived at by Christian men, on both sides of the question. Many consistent Protestants, who cannot at all be suspected of the slightest leaning towards Romanism, are inclined to uphold and advocate the course hitherto pursued by the Bible Society, whose agents endeavour to reach the hearts and consciences of ignorant Roman Catholics through means of such Translations as are approved and sanctioned by their own Church ; while other upright and zealous Christians condemn such a course as almost equivalent to acting on the principle of doing evil that good may come out of it.

There is evidently, among the generality of good men, a readiness to adopt decided opinions, on such subjects, without taking the pains to furnish themselves with the information on which all legitimate judgments must be based. Patient enquiry should ever precede positive convictions. On the whole subject of the Ancient Version denominated the Vulgate, the only authentic and standard Bible in the Church of Rome, and the source whence the Translations above referred to have been derived—an incredible amount of ignorance and misapprehension prevails, even among intelligent Christians.

In such a state of things, it has appeared to me that aid might be obtained towards settling the matters in dispute, were certain leading facts, relative to the Vulgate, put forth in such a way as to be within the reach of general readers interested in the deeply important question of Bible circulation. There is no work in the English Language, so far as I am aware, wherein the subject is treated in a manner at once scholarly and yet popular, condensed and yet clear, comprehensive and yet free from overmuch critical minuteness. As a step towards supplying this desideratum, and with the view of bringing the subject before the notice of those Christian scholars whose studies and tastes may dispose them to such an undertaking, I have drawn up the accompanying Prospectus. Very few English scholars would be qualified to fill up the sketch here presented, without being indebted to the help of those who may have made one or other of the matters involved in the execution of the plan here proposed the subject of their more special attention. But if some few of our more advanced Biblical scholars were to take up the idea and improve upon it, the result might tend to furnish to intelligent Christians at large a very considerable amount of most interesting information bearing on practical questions connected with the circulation of Roman Catholic versions in any part of Christendom.

## PROSPECTUS OF A MONOGRAPH ON THE VULGATE.

## CHAP.

- I. Origin and History of the Vulgate.
- II. General Characteristics of that Ancient Version.
- III. Past and present condition of its Text, with particular reference to the Codex Amiatinus.
- IV. Leading Instances in which the Vulgate has preserved readings-which the labours of recent critics have proved to be genuine, as being possessed of higher critical authority than the corresponding readings of the received Greek Text, from which, for the most part, our own Translation was derived.
- V. Leading Instances of erroneous renderings referable to the fact of the Translator having mistaken the meaning of the Original.
- VI. Leading Instances in which the Vulgate misrepresents the meaning of the inspired writer, through having followed an erroneous Hebrew or Greek Text.
- VII. Influence of the LXX upon the Vulgate Version of the Old Testament.
- VIII. Relation of the Vulgate to the Douay and Rhemish Translation, as originally published, and to the various editions of the Scriptures in English issued by Roman Catholics, since the publication of that Version.
- IX. Influence of the Vulgate upon our own Authorized Translation.



- X. Leading errors in the Roman Catholic Versions circulated on the Continent.
  - (1) Erroneous renderings derived from the Vulgate.
  - (2) Errors resulting from such Versions not fairly representing the meaning of the Vulgate.
- XI. Enquiry into the propriety of circulating such Versions.
- XII. Brief recapitulation of the previous chapters, and presentation of the salient points most directly bearing on the controversy, relative to the course hitherto pursued by the Bible Society.

#### APPENDIX.

- A. On the Latinity of the Vulgate, and its more remarkable deviations from the phraseology of the Classic Writers.
- B. Review of the Effects on the Mediæval Theology resulting out of the use of the Vulgate Version, during the dark ages, and Reflex Effects of the Mediæval Theology on the mode of interpreting the Vulgate.
- C. Terms and phraseology, derived from the Vulgate, still retained in Modern English, and influence of that Version on certain modes of expression current among Protestant Theologians.





Dec. 22, 1908

