

PREFACE.

[THE following pages will fittingly introduce the proceedings of the Oliver street meeting, in behalf of the common English version of the Sacred Scriptures. The historical sketch which they furnish is taken from the Annals of the English Bible, (Amer. Ed., pp. 400-412,) by CHRISTOPHER ANDERSON, of Edinburgh, a Baptist minister of the highest character, whose work is of unquestionable authority on the subject to which it relates. This sketch will serve to show how erroneous are the prevailing impressions with regard to the kind and degree of royal authority in the matter of our present version,—that its common use was not enforced by any authority whatever, but resulted from the estimation in which it was held by scholars and people,—and that it displaced other versions gradually by the natural course of events.]

1603.] Up to the present moment, the history of the English Bible had maintained a character peculiar to itself. Originating with no mere patron, whether royal or noble, the undertaking had never yet been promoted at the personal expense of any such party. But now in regard to that version of the Sacred Volume which for two hundred and thirty years has been read, with delight, from generation to generation, and proved the effectual means of knowledge, holiness, and joy to millions; it may be imagined by some, as there was now another and a final change, that our history must, at last, change, or in other words, *forfeit its character*. If, however, the accounts frequently given of our present version have been involved in as much inaccuracy of statement, as they have been with regard to all the preceding changes, there is the greater necessity for the public mind being disabused; and that, too, whether in Britain or America, or the British foreign dependencies. This is a subject which alike concerns them all, as they all read and prize the same version.

If, because that a dedication to James the First of England has been prefixed to many copies, though not to many others; and if because not only historians at their desks, but lawyers at the bar, and even judges on the bench, have made most singular mistakes—it has therefore been imagined by any, or many, that the present version of our Bible was either suggested by this monarch; or that he was at any personal expense in the undertaking; or that he ever issued a single line of authority by way of proclamation with respect to it, it is more than time that the delusion should come to an end. The original and authentic documents of the time are so far explicit, that, just in proportion as they are sifted, and the actual circumstances placed in view, precisely the same independence of personal royal bounty, and, on the part of the people at large, the same superiority to all royal dictation, which we have beheld all along, will become apparent. James himself, however vain, is certainly not so much to be blamed for any different impression, as some others who have misrepresented his Majesty. On the other hand, his character was such that to many writers it has occasioned some exercise of patience even to refer to it. But since his name occurs in connection with this final revision of the English Bible, it is of the more importance to ascertain the exact amount of this connection. From the moment in which he was invited to the throne, and to be King of Great Britain, his own favorite term, down to the year in which our present version was published, his "royal progress" is forced upon our notice.

Elizabeth had expired on the 24th of March, 1603, when the King of Scotland succeeded as James the First, finally assuming the style of King of Great Britain, France and Ireland. Having left Edinburgh for England on Tuesday the 5th of April, James preceded by way of Berwick and Newcastle, through York to Lon-

don, where he did not arrive till the 7th of May. Throughout this journey he had already furnished a strong contrast, in point of character, to his predecessor. With regard to rewards, whether in point of honor or emolument, Elizabeth had been so sparing, that she has been charged with avarice. But James, having once procured from London such supplies as might enable him to advance in befitting style, actually hunted most of the way, scattering the honors of knighthood with such profusion along the road, that by the day he entered his capital, the number of his knights was about one hundred and fifty; and before one fortnight had passed, or by the 20th of May, they were "accounted at two hundred and thirty-seven, or better, since the time he entered Berwick," on the 6th of April. The Queen, with her children, having followed in June, the coronation took place in July; after which, his Majesty immediately returned, with great ardor, to his favorite sport of hunting. Though now entered into his thirty-ninth year, and having affairs to manage which had demanded all the talents of an Elizabeth, never was a boy let loose from school more bent upon his amusement.

Of the learning or talent to be found in England, where he had done little else than follow the hounds and the hares, James as yet could know next to nothing. Of Oxford and Cambridge he was equally ignorant. He had not called any circle of learned men around him, nor indeed ever did. Such also was the state of his finances, when necessity forced him to call a Parliament. "It was," says Sir James Mackintosh, "his last resource. He had exhausted his credit with the money-dealers, both in London and Holland, to supply his prodigalities, before he issued his proclamation for the meeting of Parliament on the 19th of March."

It was in the midst of his sport at Wilton, and his preparations for the arraignment of Sir Walter Raleigh, that James issued a proclamation, dated the 24th of October—"Touching a meeting for the hearing, and for the determining, things pretended to be amiss in the Church." This meeting, known ever since as "*the Conference at Hampton Court*," was held in the drawing-room there, on Saturday, Monday, and Wednesday, the 14th, 16th, and 18th of January, 1604. The conference, it will be understood, was not with *any official body* of men whatever; and it should also be remembered, that however exalted were the ideas of James himself as to his prerogative, or of his right and title to the throne, strictly speaking, or according to law, he was *not yet King of England*, nor could he be, till the assembling of Parliament. That was the point to which, as we have seen, Lord Cecil was looking forward. This was a conference, therefore, of the King by courtesy, for the time being, with only nine Bishops, eight Deans, an Archdeacon, two Professors of Divinity from Oxford, two from Cambridge, to which one native of Scotland, Mr. Patrick Galloway, formerly of Perth, was also admitted. Nor were even all these parties present on any one day.

The 16th of January was the time appointed for hearing of things "pretended to be amiss," as the proclamation had phrased it; and it was among them that the necessity for another revision or translation of the Bible was first mentioned.

Dr. JOHN RAINOLDS, a man of high and unblemished character, then in his 55th year, was at that time nearly, if not altogether, the most eminent individual for learning and erudition in the kingdom. He was now the President of Corpus Christi College, and the chief speaker on this occasion. Having alluded to other subjects—After that, continues Dr. Barlow—"He, Rainolds, moved his Majesty, that there might be a new translation of the Bible; because those which were allowed in the reign of King Henry the Eighth and Edward the Sixth were corrupt, and not answerable to the truth of the original. For example: first, Gal. 4, 25, the Greek word is not well translated as now it is, *bordereth*; neither expressing the force of the word, nor the apostle's sense, nor the situation of the place. Secondly, Ps. cv. 28, 'They were not obedient;' the original being, 'They were not disobedient.' Thirdly, Ps. cvi. 30, 'Then stood up Phinehas and *prayed*;' the Hebrew hath it, *executed judgment*."

"To which motion there was at the present no gainsaying: the objections being trivial and old, and already in print, often answered: Only my Lord of London (Bancroft) will added—'That if every man's humor should be followed, there would be no end of translating.'

"Whereupon his Highness wished that some special pains should be taken in that behalf for one uniform translation (professing that he could never yet see a Bible well translated into English; but the worst of all, his Majesty thought the

Geneva to be;) and this to be done by the best learned in both Universities; after them to be reviewed by the Bishops and the chief learned of the Church; from them to be presented to the Privy Council; and lastly to be ratified by his royal authority; and so this whole Church [of England] to be bound unto it, and none other. Withal he gave this caveat (upon a word cast out by my Lord of London) that *no marginal notes* should be added—having found in them which are annexed to the Geneva translation (which he saw in a Bible given him by an *English lady*) some notes very partial, untrue, seditious, and savoring too much of dangerous and traitorous conceits. As for example, the first chapter of Exodus and the 19th verse, where the marginal note alloweth disobedience unto kings. And 2 Chron. xv. 16, the note taxeth Asa for deposing his mother only, and not killing her. And so he concluded this point, as all the rest, with a grave and judicious advice,—First, that errors in matters of faith might be rectified and amended; Second, that matters indifferent might rather be interpreted, and a gloss added.”

It was at the close of this day's conference that Barlow, in the genuine spirit of sympathy, repeats the expressions of certain parties bordering on profanity, in praise of his Majesty; and he himself, not willing to be far behind, must conclude the whole, though not in very elegant terms, by saying, that “all who heard the King might justly think him to be ‘a living library, and a walking study!’”

Barlow's account of the entire conference has justly been regarded not only as inaccurate, but chargeable with great omissions; but as his statement of what passed respecting the Bible is still referred to, we have allowed him to tell his own tale; and with what credit to those he labored to gratify and extol, let the reader judge. On the other hand, the account given by Galloway was corrected by the King's own hand. In this, the second of the articles, comprehended in the note of such things as shall be reformed, and as presented by Rainolds, was the following:—

“That a translation be made of the whole Bible, as consonant as can be to the original Hebrew and Greek; and this to be set out and printed, without any marginal notes, and only to be used in all churches of England, in time of divine service.” Now, by this version of the story, the exclusion of all marginal notes commensurates with Rainolds, as well as the proposal of a new translation.

The first Parliament held by the King assembled on the 19th of March, 1604, and the Convocation on the following day. The Primate Whitgift having expired on the 22th of February, Bancroft, the Bishop of London, was appointed to preside. James had commenced these proceedings with a speech longer than many a sermon, but at last, not being in the best humor with his English Parliament, he dissolved it on the 7th of July, and the Convocation rose. Among all the business of either House, not one word was spoken there respecting the Scriptures; nor do we hear of any movement in consequence of what had passed in January at Hampton Court, till the end of June. Some time had been required for the selection of suitable scholars, and before the end of that month a list was presented to James for his acceptance. They had been selected for him, and he of course approved. To the intended translators, on the 30th of June, Bancroft notified his Majesty's acceptance of the names given him; and to those at Cambridge he thus wrote:—

“His Majesty being made acquainted with the choice of all them to be employed in the translating of the Bible, in such sort as Mr. Lively can inform you, doth greatly approve of the said choice. And for as much as his Highness is very desirous that the same so religious a work should admit no delay, he has commanded me to signify unto you in his name that his pleasure is; you should with all possible speed meet together in your University and begin the same.” Concluding his letter in these terms: “I am persuaded his royal mind rejoiceth more in the good hope which he hath for the happy success of that work, than of his peace concluded with Spain. At Fulham the last of June, 1604.”

As the primacy of Canterbury was now vacant, on the 22d of July the King addressed a letter to the Bishop of London, then acting for that See, and soon to be chosen to it, equally intended for all his brethren; and to the same purport, Cecil, on the same day, as Chancellor of Cambridge, addressed that University. By the 31st of that month, Bancroft was ready, and the following is a copy of the letter which must have been sent to all the Bishops, as in duty bound:—

“After my hearty commendations unto your Lordship, I have received letters from his most excellent Majesty, the tenor whereof followeth:—

“Right trusty and well beloved, we greet you well. Whereas we have ap-

pointed certain learned men, to the number of four and fifty, for the translating of the Bible, and that in this number *divers* of them have either no ecclesiastical preferment at all, or else so very small, as the same is far unmeet for men of their deserts, *and yet, We of OURSELF in any convenient time cannot well remedy it: therefore* We do hereby require you, that presently you write, in our name, as well to the Archbishop of *York*, as to the rest of the bishops of the province of *Canterbury*, signifying unto them, that We do will, and straitly charge, every one of them, as also the other bishops of the province of *York*, as they tender our good favor towards them, that (all excuses set apart) when any prebend or parsonage, being rated in our book of taxations, the prebend to twenty pounds at least, and the parsonage to the like sum and upwards, shall next upon any occasion happen to be void, and to be either of *their* patronage, or of the patronage and gift of *any person whatever*, they do make stay thereof, and admit none unto it, until certifying Us, of the avoidance of it, and of the name of the Patron, if it be not of their own gift, that We may commend for the same, some such of the learned men, as we shall think fit to be preferred unto it; not doubting of the bishop's readiness to satisfy us herein, or that any of the laity, when we shall in time move them to so good and religious an act, will be unwilling to give us the like due contentment and satisfaction; We ourselves having taken the same order for such prebends and benefices as shall be void in our gift.

“What we write to you of others, you must apply it to yourself; as also not forget to move the said Archbishop and *all* the Bishops, with their Deans and Chapters of both provinces, *as touching the other point*, to be imparted otherwise by you unto them. Furthermore, We require you to move all our Bishops to inform themselves of all such learned men within their several dioceses, as having especial skill in the Hebrew and Greek tongues, have taken pains, in their private studies of the Scriptures, for the clearing of any obscurities either in the Hebrew or in the Greek, or touching any difficulties or mistakings in the former English translation, which we have now commanded to be thoroughly viewed and amended, and thereupon to write to them; earnestly charging them and signifying our pleasure therein, that they send such their observations either to Mr. Lively, our Hebrew reader in Cambridge; or to Dr. Harding, our Hebrew reader in Oxford; or to Dr. Andrews, Dean of Westminster, to be imparted to the rest of their several companies, &c. Given under our signet at our palace of Westminster, the two and twentieth of July, in the second year of our reign of England, France, and Ireland, and of Scotland xxxvii.”

But, before proceeding with our narrative, it is necessary to give here the list of translators, with their respective tasks, to which a few particulars are subjoined, from the best authorities.

WESTMINSTER. *Genesis to 2d Kings inclusive.*

Dr. LANCELOT ANDREWS, then Dean of Westminster, who is reported to have been such a linguist that he understood fifteen languages. Afterwards Bishop of Chichester, 1605; then of Ely in 1609; and finally of Winchester in 1619. Died 21st September, 1626, aged 71.

Dr. JOHN OVERALL, then Dean of St. Paul's. Bishop of Litchfield and Coventry, 1614. Of Norwich in 1618. Died 12th May, 1619, aged 60.

Dr. ADRIAN A SARAVIA, then Canon of Westminster. Of Spanish extraction; the friend of Hooker, and tutor of Nicholas Fuller. Afterwards Prebend of Gloucester, and Canterbury, where he died, 15th January, 1613, aged 82.

Dr. RICHARD CLARKE, then Fellow of Christ College, Cambridge; Vicar of Minster and Monkton, in the isle of Thanet. Died in 1634, and a folio volume of his sermons published in 1637.

Dr. JOHN LAIFIELD, then Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, afterwards Rector of St. Clements Danes. A Fellow of Chelsea College, which however was never founded. Died in 1617.

Dr. ROBERT TIGHE, or TEIGH, (*not* Leigh, as often misnamed,) then Archdeacon of Middlesex, and Rector of All-Hallows, Barking. An excellent textuary and profound linguist. He died in 1616, leaving his son £1,000 a year.

Dr. FRANCIS BURLEIGH, then Vicar of Bishop Stortford, if not of Thorley, Herts, and died in 1619?

Dr. GEOFFREY or WILFRID KING, then Fellow of King's College, Cambridge. As Regius Professor of Hebrew in that University, he succeeded Robert Spalding, about to be mentioned.

RICHARD THOMPSON, M. A., of Clare Hall, Cambridge; born in Holland of English parents; an admirable philologist, but better known in Italy, France, and Germany than at home.

WILLIAM BEDWELL, the best Arabic scholar of his time. The tutor of Erpenius and Pocock, (but not W. Bedell, of Kilmore, as has been conjectured; he was then at Venice.) “The industrious and thrice-learned,” said Lightfoot, “to whom I will rather be a scholar than take on me to teach others.”

CAMBRIDGE. *1st Chronicles to Ecclesiastes inclusive.*

EDWARD LIVLIE, Regius Professor of Hebrew for thirty years in this University; an eminent linguist, in high esteem by Usher and Pocock. His death, in May, 1605, is supposed to have retarded the work in hand.

Dr. JOHN RICHARDSON, then Fellow of Emmanuel College. Afterwards Master of Peter House, then of Trinity College. He is not to be confounded with Usher's friend of the same name. Died in 1625.

Dr. LAURENCE CHADERTON, distinguished for Hebrew and Rabbinical learning, then *first* Master of Emmanuel College. "If you will not be Master," said Sir Walter Mildmay; "I will not be *founder*." He was tutor to Joseph Hall, of Norwich, and W. Bedell, of Kilmore, who retained the highest veneration for him, and died the year after him. Chaderton, who never required the aid of spectacles, died, according to his epitaph, at the age of 103! Born in 1537, he lived to 1640 November, 1640. His life, in Latin, by W. Dillingham, was published in 1700.

FRANCIS DILLINGHAM, then Fellow of Christ's College, an eminent Grecian. He was Parson of Dean, and beneficed at Wilden, Beds. As an author, he, as well as Overall, *continues* to quote the Geneva version years after our present one had been published. He died a single and a wealthy man.

THOMAS HARRISON, Vice Chancellor of Trinity College, was eminently skilled in the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew tongues, as his own University has borne witness. Dyer ascribes to him a *Lexicon Pente Glotton*.

Dr. ROGER ANDREWS, brother of Lancelot, then Fellow of Pembroke Hall, and afterwards Master of Jesus College, and Prebendary of Chichester. Died in 1618.

Dr. ROBERT SPALDING, then Fellow of St. John's College, and afterwards the *successor* of Livlie as Regius Professor of Hebrew, a sufficient proof of his skill in that language.

Dr. ANDREW BYNG, (*not* Burge, as in Burnet and Wilkins,) then Fellow of St. Peter's College. In 1606 sub-dean of York, and in 1618 Archdeacon of Norwich. As Regius Professor of Hebrew he succeeded King, who had succeeded Spalding already mentioned.

OXFORD. *Isaiah to Malachi inclusive.*

Dr. JAMES HARBING, then Regius Professor of Hebrew in the University, and afterwards President of Magdalen College, and also Rector of Halsey, in Oxfordshire.

Dr. JOSEPH RAINOLDS, President of Corpus Christi College; the man who moved the King for this new translation. "The memory and reading of that man," said Bishop Hall, "were near to a miracle; and all Europe at the time could not have produced three men superior to Rainolds, Jewell, and Usher, all of this same College." At the age of 58, he died 21st May, 1607. Even during his sickness his auditors met at his lodgings once a week, to compare and perfect their notes.

Dr. THOMAS HOLLAND, then Fellow of Balliol College, afterwards Rector of Exeter, and Regius Professor of Divinity in Oxford. "Another Apollis," says Wood, "and mighty in the Scriptures." Died 17th March, 1613, aged 73.

Dr. RICHARD KILBY, the Rector of Lincoln College, highly esteemed by Isaac Walton. He was afterwards Prebendary of Lincoln, and Professor of Hebrew in the University of Oxford. He left commentaries on Exodus, drawn from the Rabbins and Hebrew interpreters. Died November, 1609.

Dr. MILES SMYTH, then Canon of Hereford. A Hebrew and Chaldee, Syriac and Arabic scholar. He is understood to have been the writer of the preface. He and Bilson we shall find to be the first examiners of the whole work. Bishop of Gloucester in 1612.

Dr. RICHARD BARTT, then Fellow of Lincoln College. Eminent as a linguist in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, to which he added Chaldee, Arabic, and Ethiopic. Rector of Quainton, Bucks, where he died, 15th April, 1607.

RICHARD FARRINGTON, of New College, Oxford? The Rector of Bucknell, Oxfordshire, and died there in 1635.

OXFORD. *Matthew to the Acts inclusive, and the Revelation.*

Dr. THOMAS BAVIS, then Dean of Christ church. Afterwards on the 14th March, 1605, Bishop of Gloucester, and in 1607, of London, where he died, 14th December, 1609.

Dr. GEORGE ARBAST, then Dean of Winchester and Vice Chancellor of Oxford. Bishop of Litchfield and Coventry in 1609; of London in 1610; and Bancroft dying, 2d November, Abbot became Primate in 1611. Died 4th August, 1623, aged 71.

Dr. JOHN AGILONEY, then Principal of St. Edmund's Hall and Rector of Islip, and afterwards chaplain in ordinary to the King. "Accomplished in learning and an exact linguist." Dr. Richard Eedes was indeed the first appointed, but he died 19th November, 1604; Agilony died 6th February, 1610.

Dr. GILES TOMSON, then Dean of Windsor, afterwards in March, 1611, Bishop of Gloucester, but died 14th June, next year. "He had taken a great deal of pains in translating."

Sir HENRY SAVILE, Greek tutor to Elizabeth and Provost of Eton. He was knighted by James this year, and losing his son about that period, he devoted his time and fortune to the encouragement of learning. He contributed several rare books and MSS. to the Bodleian, besides Greek type and matrices to the Oxford press. His fine edition of *Chrysostom's Works*, in Greek, with notes by John Bois, after-mentioned, and of which 1,000 copies, in 8 volumes folio, were printed, is said to have cost him £3,800. He died at Eton, 19th February, 1622, aged 73.

Dr. JOHN PERRY, Professor of Greek, and afterwards Canon of Christ church. Died 9th May, 1615.

Dr. LEONARD HUTTEN, then Vicar of Flouce, Northamptonshire; an excellent Greek scholar, and learned in other branches. He died at the age of 75, 17th May, 1632. Dr. Ravens had been first appointed, but his place vacated.

Dr. JOHN HARMAR, had been Professor of Greek, Warden of Winchester College. A noted

Latin and Greek scholar. He published Latin translations from Chrysostom; and his translation of Beza's sermons into English bespeaks him an excellent writer of English. He died 11th October, 1613.

WESTMINSTER. *Romans to Jude inclusive.*

DR. WILLIAM BARLOW, made Dean of Chester in December, 1604, Bishop of Rochester in 1605, of Lincoln, 1608. Died 7th September, 1613.

DR. RALEGH HUTCHENSON, then President of St. John's College, Oxford. Wood's *Athenæ*, by Bliss, ii. p. 92.

DR. JOHN SPENCER, Fellow of Corpus Christi College, and afterwards Chaplain to the King. On the death of Dr. Rainolds he succeeded him as President of Corpus Christi, and died 3d April, 1614.

DR. ROGER FENTON, it has been supposed; if so, Fellow of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, and Minister of St. Stephen's, Walbrook, London.

MICHAEL RABBETT, B. D., was Rector of St. Vedast, Foster Lane, London.

DR. THOMAS SANDERSON, of Balliol College, Oxford? Archdeacon of Rochester in 1606.

WILLIAM DAKINS, B. D., then Greek Lecturer, Cambridge, and afterwards junior Dean in 1606. He had been chosen for his skill in the original languages, but died February, 1607.

To these men the King is reported to have given the following instructions or rules: 1. The ordinary Bible read in the Church, commonly called the Bishops' Bible, to be followed, and as little altered as the *original will permit*. 2. The names of the prophets and the holy writers, with the other names in the text, to be retained as near as may be, according as they are vulgarly used. 3. The old ecclesiastical words to be kept: as the word *church* not to be translated *congregation*, &c. 4. When any word hath divers significations, that to be kept which hath been most commonly used by the most ancient Fathers, being agreeable to the propriety of the place, and the analogy of faith. 5. The division of the chapters to be altered either not at all, or as little as may be, if necessity so require. 6. No marginal notes at all to be affixed, but only for the explanation of the Hebrew or Greek words, which cannot without some circumlocution so briefly and fitly be expressed in the text. 7. Such quotations of places to be marginally set down as shall serve for the fit reference of one Scripture to another. 8. Every particular man of each company to take the same chapter, or chapters; and, having translated or amended them severally by himself where he thinketh good, all to meet together, confer what they have done, and agree for their part what shall stand. 9. As one company hath dispatched any book in this manner, they shall send it to the rest, to be considered of seriously and judiciously: for his Majesty is careful in this point. 10. If any company upon the review of the book so sent shall doubt or differ upon any places, to send them word thereof, note the places, and therewithal send their reasons: to which if they consent not, the difference to be compounded at the general meeting, which is to be of the chief persons of each company at the end of the work. 11. When any place of special obscurity is doubted of, letters to be directed by authority, to send to any learned man in the land, for his judgment in such a place. 12. Letters to be sent from every bishop to the rest of his clergy, admonishing them of this translation in hand; and to move and charge as many as, being skilful in the tongues, have taken pains in that kind, to send his particular observations to the company, either at Westminster, Cambridge, or Oxford. 13. The Directors in each company to be the Deans of Westminster and Chester for that place; and the King's Professors in the Hebrew and Greek in each University. 14. *These translations to be used when they agree better with the text than the Bishops' Bible, viz.: 1. Tyndale's; 2. Matthew's; 3. Coverdale's; 4. Whitchurche's, (i. e. Cranmer's;)* 5. *The Geneva.*

The authority, however, or the accuracy of these rules is considerably shaken by the account delivered in to the Synod of Dort on the 20th of November, 1618. They state that *only seven rules were ultimately prescribed*, and that after each individual had finished his task, *twelve* men (not six) assembling together revised the whole. Their first, second, and fourth rules coincide with the first, sixth, and seventh of the preceding list.

It has been questioned when these men sat down to their work; whether immediately, or not till 1607; but to suppose that they did not commence till then, is out of the question; and indeed Anthony Wood gives 1607 as the termination of their first revision. Livelie, a fine and ardent scholar answering to his name, would certainly not delay; and above all, the *original proposer* of the work, Dr. Rainolds, was busy, as we have seen, to his dying day, in 1607. The different parties

might not all commence at the same moment, but, on the whole, it may be presumed that, with the Hebrew of the Old Testament and the Greek of the New before them all along, the first revision of the sacred text, by the forty-seven, occupied about *four* years; the second examination by twelve, or two selected out of each company, *nine months* more; and the sheets passing through the press, other two years, when the Bible of 1611 was finished and first issued.

Twelve men paid at the rate of thirty shillings each, was equal to £18 weekly, and for the thirty-nine weeks £702 must have been expended, which expense was probably borne by Barker, who had the *patent* for printing the Bible.

The honor of payment for the whole concern, so often ascribed to James the First, is by no means to be taken from him, if one shred of positive evidence can be produced; but this, it is presumed, lies beyond the power of research. In this case, therefore, to speak correctly, we have come at last, *not* to an affair of government, *not* to a royal undertaking *at his Majesty's expense*, according to the popular and very erroneous historical fiction, but *simply to a transaction in the course of business*. If we inquire for any single royal grant, or look for any act of personal generosity, we search in vain.

There is one other inquiry to be made; and this, to some minds, may be not the least important. It is this. By whose *influence or authority* was it, that our present version of the Sacred Volume came to be read, not in England alone, but in Scotland and Ireland? This, too, is a question the more interesting to millions, as it is now the Bible of so many distant climes—read not only in the Americas and Canada, but in all the wide-spread and daily extending British colonies.

The reigning King had indeed signified his approbation of the undertaking, and when the Bible was published it bore on its title page, that the version had been “newly translated out of the original tongues, and with the former translations diligently compared and revised, by his Majesty’s special commandment.” In a separate line below, and by itself, we have these words, “Appointed to be read in churches.” Now as the book never was submitted to Parliament, never to any Convocation, nor, as far as it is known, ever to the Privy Council, James, by his title-page, was simply following, or made to follow, in the train of certain previous editions. As for Elizabeth, his immediate predecessor, we have already seen, that under her long reign there was another version, besides the Bishops’, and that the former enjoyed the decided preponderance in public favor: so, in the present instance, that there might be no mistake or misapprehension, in regard to the influence or *authority* by which our present Bible came to be universally received, a result somewhat similar took place.

Thus, for seven or eight years after the present version was published, we find Barker, or Norton and Bill, still printing the Geneva Bible, at least in ten editions, besides four of the New Testaments separately. The fact is, that the royal patentee went on to print both versions till the year 1617 or 1618. After that the Geneva Bibles, so frequently printed in Holland, were imported and sold, without the shadow of inhibition, during the entire reign of James the First, and longer still. As for Scotland, from whence the King had come, that Bible continued to be as much used there as the present version, for more than twenty years after James was in his grave. The influence or authority of James therefore cannot once be mentioned, when accounting for the *final* result.

The Bible was indeed first published in 1611, and being still further corrected in 1613; but did James, as a King, take one step to enforce its perusal? Not one; a fact so much the more notable, when the overweening conceit of that monarch, and the high terms in which he so frequently expressed himself as to his prerogative, are remembered. “We can assign,” says one of the best living authorities in the kingdom, “we can assign no other *authority* for using the present version of the Bible, except that of the conference at Hampton Court.” But that conference has been already described, and, in the circumstances, it actually amounted to no authority at all in point of law. James was not then King of England; though had it been otherwise, that conference certainly had not the slightest influence in recommending the version to which it gave rise. However, immediately after his Majesty had been recognized by Parliament, he had spoken *once*, as we have heard; and his solitary letter we have given at length. It was in part abortive, and after that, it seems, he must speak *no more*; a circumstance more worthy of notice, as James was notoriously so fond of speaking officially, and especially by

proclamations. In the first nine months of his reign he had issued at least a round dozen, but here there was nothing of the kind. "After this translation was published," says one writer, "the others all dropped off by *degrees*," that is, in about *forty* years, "and this took place of all, though I don't find that there was any *canon, proclamation, or act of Parliament* to enforce the use of it." "The present version," says Dr. Symonds, "appears to have *made its way* without the interposition of *any authority whatsoever*; for it is not easy to discover any traces of a proclamation, canon, or statute published to enforce the use of it."

As for the "appointment," noted on the title-page merely, it is to be borne in mind that this extended no farther than to *public* assemblies of the people, here indefinitely enough styled "churches;" and taking the translators themselves for our guide, they in their dedication looked no farther than *England*. Now even there, while there had been a proclamation and canons with regard to Matthew's, and Cranmer's, and the Bishops' Bible, in 1538, 1571, and 1603, it becomes very observable that neither the one nor the other was ever issued as to our *present* version. It is true that in various "Articles of Inquiry" on episcopal visitation, in succeeding reigns, such a question as, "Have you a large Bible of the *last* translation?" had been put to church-wardens. Such occasional inquiries however proceeded in all cases simply in virtue of the King's personal authority over that Church of which he was recognized as head; and they amount to nothing, as soon as we inquire for the cause of universal usage, whether in Scotland or even in England throughout.

As royal authority, therefore, had no influence in accounting for the change, *one* circumstance, far more tangible, must be observed, and it is well worthy of special notice. Our present version, on the whole, was no doubt superior to its predecessors, but then besides, it had one mighty additional advantage in its favor. It was *WITHOUT NOTE AND COMMENT*. On the other hand the Geneva of 1560, though an excellent version, and, for the sake of comparison, well worthy of another fresh edition even now, had been almost always accompanied with these appendages. Whatever may be said of the notes, no intelligent person can speak lightly of the *version* itself; but these *notes* proved the dead weight which at last sunk the translation into an oblivion which, but for them, the version might have longer survived. Thus once more, or from Tyndale's down to our present version, was Divine Providence marking out to this country the true and only path to *universal* usage of the Sacred Volume, whether in this or in every other land. It was *the Bible, but it must be without note and comment*.