

## THE GENEVA BIBLE.

**I**N 1560 \* the whole bible in 4to. was printed at Geneva by Rowland Harte ; some of the English refugees continuing in that city solely for this purpose.

The translators were Bishop Coverdale, Anthony Gilby, William Whittingham, Christopher Woodman, Thomas Sampson, and Thomas Cole ; to whom some add † John Knox, John Bodleigh, and John Pullain ; all ‡ zealous Calvinists, both in doctrine and discipline ; but §§ the chief and

\* Lewis. p. 58.

† Lewis : p. 50: who gives a short account of some.

‡ Johnson. p. 66.

§ Le Long. p. 430.

most learned of them were the three first.  
“ These \* were persuaded that the former  
“ English translation required to be re-  
“ examined; many errors being occasioned  
“ in it by the infancy of those times, and  
“ imperfect knowledge of the tongues, in  
“ respect of the ripe age, and clear light,  
“ which God afterwards revealed; as they  
“ speak in their preface. Hence many  
“ learned and godly men put them on this  
“ work by their earnest desire and exhorta-  
“ tion; being encouraged also by the ready  
“ wills of such, whose hearts God had touched  
“ not to spare any charge for the furtherance  
“ of such a benefit towards God’s church.  
“ Another encouragement to them was the  
“ present opportunity and occasion which  
“ God afforded them, by means of so many  
“ † godly and learned men where they were,

\* Preface to the Old Testament. Strype’s life of Parker.  
London. Fol. 1711. p. 205. Lewis. p. 66—70.

† They consulted Beza and Calvin. Johnson. p. 66.

“ and such diversities of translations into  
 “ divers tongues, which they had then the  
 “ liberty of consulting. And as to their  
 “ carefulness and sincerity in the work, they  
 “ said for themselves that they might with  
 “ a good conscience protest that, in every  
 “ point and word, according to the measure  
 “ of that knowledge which it pleased  
 “ Almighty God to give them, they had  
 “ faithfully rendered the text, and in all hard  
 “ places most sincerely expounded it. For  
 “ God is our witness, say they, that we have  
 “ by all means endeavoured to set forth the  
 “ purity of the word, and right sense of the  
 “ Holy Ghost, for the edifying of the  
 “ brethren in faith and charity. And as  
 “ they chiefly observed the sense, so they  
 “ reverently kept the propriety of the words ;  
 “ considering that the Apostles, who spake  
 “ and wrote to the gentiles in the Greek  
 “ tongue, rather constrained them to the  
 “ lively phrase of the Hebrew, than mollified  
 “ their language to speak as the gentiles did.  
 “ And for this and other causes, they in many  
 “ places

“ places reserved the Hebrew phrases, notwithstanding they might seem somewhat hard in their ears that were not well practised in the phrases of holy scripture.

“ So at last, after the labour and study of two years and more, day and night, they finished their translation, and published it; prefixing an epistle dedicatory to the Queen, and another epistle, by way of preface, to their brethren of England, Scotland, and Ireland.

“ That which was done in the Geneva bible, besides the translation, was what follows :

“ I. Because some translations read after one sort, and some after another, they noted in the margin the diversities of speech and reading, especially according to the Hebrew.

“ II. Where

“ II. Where the Hebrew speech seemed  
“ hardly to agree with our's, they noted it in  
“ the margin, using that which was more  
“ intelligible.

“ III. Though many of the Hebrew  
“ names were altered from the old text, and  
“ restored to the true writing, and first ori-  
“ ginal, yet in the usual names little was  
“ changed, for fear of troubling simple  
“ readers.

“ IV. Where the necessity of the sentence  
“ required any thing to be added, whether  
“ verb or some other word, they put it in  
“ the text with another kind of letter ; that  
“ it might easily be discerned from the com-  
“ mon letter of the text.

“ V. As to the division of the verses, they  
“ followed the Hebrew examples, adding the  
“ number to each verse.

“ VI. And

“ VI. The principal matters were noted ;  
“ and the arguments, both for each book and  
“ each chapter.

“ VII. They set over the head of every  
“ page some notable word or sentence, for  
“ the help of memory.

“ VIII. They set brief annotations upon  
“ all the hard places, as well for the under-  
“ standing of obscure words, as for declaration  
“ of the text. And for this purpose they  
“ diligently read the best commentaries, and  
“ had much conference with godly and learn-  
“ ed brethren.

“ IX. They set forth with figures certain  
“ places in the books of Moses, of the Kings,  
“ and Ezekiel: which seemed so dark, that  
“ they could be made easy to the reader by no  
“ other description.

“ X. They

“ X. They added certain maps of cosmo-  
“ graphy of divers places and countries; partly  
“ described, and partly by occasion touched,  
“ both in the Old and New Testament.

“ XI. They adjoined two profitable tables:  
“ the one of interpretations of Hebrew  
“ names, and the other containing all the  
“ chief and principal matters of the whole  
“ bible.”

Of this \* translation, which was mostly used in private families on account of the notes, there were above thirty editions in folio, quarto, or octavo, mostly printed by the Queen's and King's printers, from the year 1560 to 1616. Editions of it were likewise printed at Geneva, Edinburgh, and Amsterdam. It even † appears that, in the year 1565, Archbishop Parker applied to

\* Lewis. p. 70.

† Lewis. p. 58.

Secretary Cecil that a term of twelve years longer might be granted to Bodleigh for printing this bible, in consideration of the charges sustained by him in the former edition, and now in the revival of it ; and because his Grace and Bishop Grindal thought so well of the first impression and the review of it. The Archbishop added, that though another special bible for churches was intended to be set forth, as convenient time and leisure should hereafter permit, yet it would nothing hinder, but rather do much good, to have diversity of translations and readings. However, \* the book was to pass under the Archbishop's regulation, and was not to be published without his consent and advice. But the undertakers, unwilling to come under these restraints, deferred the impression till after Parker's death. † Neale assigns this as a

\* Johnson. p. 74.

† History of the Puritans. 1. 129. 8vo. Dublin. 1755.  
See also Collier. Eccl. Hist. 1. 504.



reason why it was stopped ; “ because, in  
 “ the dedication to the Queen, and epistle to  
 “ the reader, which are left out in the after  
 “ editions, the translators had touched some-  
 “ what severely upon certain ceremonies  
 “ retained in the church of England, which  
 “ they excited her Majesty to remove as hav-  
 “ ing a popish aspect ; and because the  
 “ translators had published fundry marginal  
 “ notes, which were thought to touch the  
 “ Queen’s prerogative, and to allow the  
 “ subject to resist wicked and tyrannical  
 “ Kings.”

To some editions of the Geneva bible, for instance to those of 1599 and of 1611, is subjoined Beza’s translation of the New Testament, englished by L. Tomson, \* who was Under Secretary to Sir Francis Walsingham : but though he pretends to translate from Beza, he has very seldom varied so

\* Essay &c. in the Bibliotheca Literaria. p. 14.

much as a word from the Geneva translation.

Dr. Geddes \* gives an honourable testimony to the Geneva version; as he makes no hesitation to declare that he thinks it in general better than that of King James's translators.

\* General answer &c. p. 4