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TERMS.

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From the Gospel Witness.

CONCISE HISTORY OF THE VULGATE.

In the revision of the Italic version of the New Testament, Jerome employed what is termed the common edition of the Greek text. Previous to this period Lucian and Hesychius had published editions of the original, carefully corrected, yet as the common one had served as the exemplar of the Italic, that he might not depart too far from that early version, Jerome did not avail himself of their aid. Still he compared various Greek copies of the common edition, and from this collection endeavored to restore it to its purity, in cases where the carelessness of transcribers had introduced manifest errors.

Any one who compares the Vulgate with the original will, we think, be satisfied that Jerome considered a literal translation as a proper one for the Scriptures. To this principle, he has adhered so closely that there are instances in which words and phrases are employed, which may properly be termed barbarisms. Unpopular as the Vulgate is among Protestants in consequence of the exaggerated praise bestowed on it by Catholics, and what is more, they folly in ascribing to it an authority superior to the inspired original—still, candid men will give Jerome the credit for laboring to present a faithful version to the world. When we reflect on his iron industry, his firmness in standing almost single handed against a host of opponents, in an attempt to advance the cause of divine truth in an age when the science of translation was in its infancy—we must award to him the merit of praise which he has so fairly won.

The following books though forming a part of what we now term the Vulgate, were not revised by Jerome, viz: Psalms, and the Apocryphal books, Baruch, Ecclesiasticus, Wisdom, the first and second book of Maccabees. All these are copied verbatim from the Old Italic version. The Vulgate was gradually introduced into the churches, not in consequence of any ecclesiastical decree, but from its superiority to the Italic. This was not accomplished however without some clamor on the part of the ignorant. Jerome relates in a letter to Augustine, that when his revised Bible was introduced into a certain African church, as it was read aloud, the crowd noticed that in the passage, a single word differed from the Italic, and instantly commenced an uproar against the altered Bible, nor could the Bishop induce the people again to attend church, until he had consented to change the new word for the old one. In fact, it was not until the sixth century, that the Vulgate obtained that place to which its merits fairly entitled it. Gregory the great, Bishop of Rome, made it the basis of his expositions of Job, and as he continued to cite it in his other writings, his great influence decided the churches generally in its favor.

After the death of Jerome, the same causes which had corrupted the Septuagint and the early Latin versions operated injuriously in reference to the Vulgate. It was often copied without a careful revision by the writers, hence errors were introduced into the copy—each careless transcription would augment the mistakes and these mischiefs increased until, in the 8th century, Charles the Great directed that a revision of the Vulgate should be made. He committed this work to the charge of Alcuin, a learned monk, who collected various manuscripts of Jerome's version, and thus endeavored to restore the text to its original purity. No attempt however was made by Alcuin to effect any correction by a comparison with the original languages.

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, new revisions had become necessary. These were executed by several religious communities. The plan now adopted however, was different from that employed by Alcuin. The monks made their critical remarks and corrections in the margins of their copies, and did not venture to introduce them in the body of the text. Several of these revised copies are yet extant in various libraries in Europe. They are known by the name of *correctoria* or *Biblia correctoria*.

As however these works were published at the discretion of various orders of monks, without any ecclesiastical authority, which might give any one of them a general circulation in the Catholic church, the text of the Vulgate was left (with errors which increased by time) in a state of great imperfection until the era of the Reformation.

The prevailing ignorance of the original languages of the Scriptures previous to that period, led many ecclesiastics, to advance the opinion that the version of Jerome was made by divine inspiration, & that it was consequently absolutely faultless. Jerome himself however was very far from cherishing this sentiment. In his preface to the Pentateuch he says, "To be a prophet and an interpreter, are very different things.—The first, being inspired by the Holy Ghost,

foretells things to come, but the last must have a sufficient share of learning and a supply of expressions to translate what he already understands." In his commentary on the fortieth chapter of Ezekiel, he remarks, "when we translate the Hebrew words into Latin, we are sometimes guided by conjecture."

Notwithstanding the great deference which had been paid to the Vulgate for many ages, the Reformers in preparing translations of the Scriptures into the vernacular languages of Europe saw the necessity of recurring to the Hebrew and Greek as the standard of divine truth.

By a critical comparison of these with the Latin version, they ascertained that it was deformed by many errors, some of which might be traced to the unwillingness of Jerome to depart from the reading of the ancient Italic, others to his want of a more perfect acquaintance with Hebrew, a still larger portion to the want of skill or care in the Scribes who furnished copies by transcription. The Catholics, most of whom were grossly ignorant of the real character of the Vulgate, and who were aware that their rites and ceremonies were falling on every side before the light of truth—and who knew not what the end of these things might be, raised the most violent clamors against the German translation of Luther and others, which were not made from the Vulgate. This subject came before the council of Trent. In its fourth session, that body passed a decree in which the following language is used—"The Holy Council, taking into consideration the advantage the Holy church would reap by determining, which of all the Latin editions of the sacred writ published to the world, ought to pass for authentic, ordains and declares, that the same ancient and Vulgate version, which has been approved and used in the church for many ages past, shall be considered as the authentic version in all public lessons, disputes, sermons, and expositions, which no one shall presume to reject, under any pretence whatever." It is a curious fact, that while this council attributed this high authority to the Vulgate, its members directed that this authentic version, should undergo a revision. It will be recollected that the above decree applies not only to such portions of this Vulgate as had been corrected by Jerome, but also to the book of Psalms which was copied verbatim from the Italic, and even to the apocryphal books. In the list of what are termed Canonical books the following are found in addition to those received by Protestants as inspired, viz: Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, and the first and second book of Maccabees. After thus consecrating these apocryphal productions, the decree closes with the following sweeping clause, "Now if any one, reading or these books in all their parts, as they are usually read in the Catholic church, and being in the Latin Vulgate edition, does not hold them for sacred and canonical, and knowing these aforesaid traditions, does industriously condemn them, let him be Anathema."

From the Ch. Watchman.

THE LICENSE LAW.

According to the old license system, the retailing of ardent spirit is necessary for the public good. Every physician, every jurist, every philanthropist, every intelligent teacher of morality and religion, knows this to be a gross inconsistency. Nothing can be plainer, to any one acquainted with the effects of dram shops, than that they are the nurseries of ignorance, poverty and crime. Whoever, then, pleads that they are needful for the public good, must be prepared to maintain that their effects are so too. He must be prepared to show, that the patrons and customers of these establishments are more healthy, intelligent, pious and happy than the rest of the community; and that their society is more desirable to a wise man than any other, before he can show that they are for the promotion of the 'public good.' Let us judge the tree by its fruit. Would those respectable men, who make this plea, be willing to say, they love the society and influence of these places more than any other; and love to have their sons frequent them more than other places?—If not, we must suspect their sincerity. We all know that good moral and religious instruction directly promotes the public good, and we love to have the rising generation enjoy its influence.

Look at the inconsistency of the old license law, in another view. It makes dram-shops more prominent and respectable, and in a certain sense, gives them the sanction of the State's authority. Were any man who chose, allowed to open a grog shop, it would be considered a low business. Men would engage in it, who would go so far beyond the present authorized retailers, that decent people would draw back. A race of harlots would spring up, who would take the spell-bound victims of intemperance, where the present vice leaves them. Social dram drinking would be divested of its present mock dignity, and naturally be surrounded by degrading associations. Now, the man of the toddy-stick, is acting under the authority of the State, as legally authorized to retail liquid death, as the magistrate is to punish a thief, or the sheriff to execute a warrant.

What are the effects of giving to the system this dignity? To blind the community to its real nature, and the extent of its abominations.—The more discerning may not be deceived, if they know how easy it is in many places, for a man who wishes to live by the miseries of others, to obtain a certificate of good moral character, when it is notorious that he is so devoid of moral principle, as to seek riches in violating the spirit of the very law which authorizes him to sell liquors. The poor abused wife, goes to him in vain,

the complaint that the jug of rum sold to her intemperate husband, was the cause of unpeppable suffering to her, and her little ones, for she is met by the reply, 'he was sober when I sold it to him.' The father, remonstrates in vain with his son, that the tavern is a low and dangerous place, for he is told that it was established by the guardians of the people, for their good. The traveller unsuspectingly intrusts himself to the influence of a house established by the guardians of an enlightened and virtuous people. "But he knoweth not that the dead are there, and that its guests are in the depths of hell!"

Again, the tendency of the license system has been, in the towns and small villages in the country, to make every tavern and victualling house, a dramshop. This has been the case uniformly, throughout the State, till very recently, and is still, with the exception of some few places, where temperance principles have very fully prevailed. It is very easy to see how this comes about, even where a large majority are friends of temperance. Should an individual possess moral courage enough to open a temperance tavern, a clamor is immediately raised against him, and what cannot be effected by reason and fair argument, is done by scandal and falsehood; his house, and his own character are assailed, and the result is, he becomes tired of a course, which subjects him to so much abuse, and leaves it, while another, who is willing to accommodate all, very willingly takes his place. By uniting a dram shop and tavern, he may make it a profitable business, especially, if to make a trio of fortunate circumstances, as frequently happens, he himself is a chief customer. Country tavern-keepers have often asserted, that the sale of liquors to their town customers, was their chief source of profit.

The evil working of this system would shock every one, were it not so familiar to us. Taverns are places of public resort, are attractive to the young, and ought to be, at least, as pure as any places in the land. There is no shadow of reason, why a tavern should be also a house for liquor selling. The traveller, certainly, does not need it, for of all others a man on a journey, should avoid intoxicating drinks. And it would seem as if travellers have had endured long enough the vexation of drunken hostlers, sleepy waiters, stupid and fretful land-lords, noisy bar-rooms, and sleepless nights. Every tavern-keeper ought to be prohibited, under the severest penalties, from selling ardent spirit, or having it drunk in his house, whatever may be the system of licensing in other respects. If we must have dram-selling, let it be an exclusive business, and let those who follow it, enjoy the full honor and profit, and that alone.

The state of things above described has been the direct result of the license policy of the State. That policy has forced us, in many places, to endure the nuisance of these mis-called taverns, and to patronize them, whether we would or no. And it has doubtless forced many to continue the selling of spirits, who would gladly leave it, did not the rule of licensing assume, that the selling of spirit is one part of taverning.

It would be an endless task to point out all the inconsistencies of the old law, but we will mention one more. By its operation, the State was legalizing a system, the direct tendency of which was, to produce crime; and then punishing that crime. We have so long been accustomed to the cruelties and absurdities of laying temptations before men to become intoxicated, and then punishing them for the crimes they commit, that we do not view the case in its true light. It is also easier to see the faults and follies of another age or country, than of our own, for the latter are much like our fashions, which please us, however grotesque they may appear to others. So when the effects of the old system shall be cleared away, posterity will be astonished that it should ever have existed.

Let us look at its effects for a moment. A poor intemperate man goes to a retailer, who carries in his pocket his credentials, which contain the special sanction of the State's authority, and purchases a quantity of intoxicating liquor. He drinks it, quarrels with his family, or neighbor, and commits violence or murder. He is punished without any regard to the cause of his crime. No one would say he ought to escape, punishment on the plea of intoxication. Nor is it contended, that the law should prohibit any one from drinking. Had he procured the fatal draught, from one who was not acting under the State's authority, the case would have been different.—But here, the retailer was specially authorized to do the very thing which caused the crime.—The State lays a direct temptation before the wretched man to become intoxicated, and then punishes him for those crimes which are the natural result. Can this be wise legislation? Can it be just? Would parental government, conducted on such principles, and producing such effects, be justified?

We should remember that the drunkard, however degraded, still has rights. And weak as his moral powers may have become by indulgence, he has claims upon our sympathy and protection. We profess a religion which is full of mercy to men,—a religion which teaches us to have compassion on those who are out of the way. Have we no pity for the drunkard? Can we not cease to lay temptations before him? Shall we, from love of gain, continue to tempt him to violate the laws of God and man? Suppose a foreign tyrant should invade our free and happy State, and establish the circus, and lotteries, and theatres, and licentious houses among us, for the purpose of raising revenues from them; what would be our feelings? Should we not be roused to virtuous indignation, to see the morals of our youth thus exposed to corruption?

The late law over whose grave some among us are weeping, is of precisely the same nature; except that it was enacted by freemen. Let us rejoice that it has at length taken its place among the things that were. The snare is broken, and we are escaped.

RELIGIOUS ENJOYMENT.

There is a great diversity among professors of religion, in respect to religious enjoyment.—Some seem to delight themselves in the Almighty, and joy in the God of their salvation, while others go all their days bowed down like a bulrush. Doubtless much is to be attributed to natural temperament, early education, present associations, and the proportion of grace bestowed.—Even true christians differ very widely in their religious experience; one can see men but as trees walking, while another can say, "I know that my redeemer liveth." But admitting this diversity, we fear there are some who have no enjoyment in religion, because they have no religion to make them happy. It will be well to make this a subject of careful inquiry before it be too late. To those who are destitute of spiritual enjoyment, we would propose the following inquiries:—

Have you substantial gospel reasons for believing that you have passed from death unto life? If you have never had the stony heart removed, and a new heart given you, there is nothing within to qualify you for christian joy.—There is no foundation for intercourse with God. It is likely that God would confer his grace upon you, and leave you without any evidence of the gracious change? Could the deaf hear, the dumb speak, the blind see, and the dead be raised up, without knowing it? What are your feelings, your desires, your thoughts, your amusements, your daily walk and conversation? Is there nothing in these on which you can fix as an evidence of piety? No wonder that he should be unhappy who is in constant doubt whether God is his friend or enemy, and whether Hell or Heaven is to be his eternal portion. If you are not a christian you cannot enjoy Christ, and if it be possible that you are a christian and have no evidence, you ought not to give "sleep to your eyes, nor slumber to your eye-lids, till you have found in your heart a place for the Lord and a habitation for the mighty God of Jacob."

But we would inquire again, are you diligent in the use of the means of grace? There is such a thing as serving God from a sense of duty, even when we do not relish it as a privilege. If you cannot say, "Thy word is sweeter than honey and the honey comb," do you read it from a conviction of duty? If you cannot at the time delight in secret communion with God, do you habitually retire from the world, because God has commanded it, and made it a means of grace? The body may be so benumbed with cold, that the first approach to the fire seems to increase the evil, and the whole frame shivers as if it would go to pieces. So it may be with our hearts. Our only alternative in such cases is to remain under the influence of the Sun of Righteousness till our frozen souls are melted into contrition, tenderness, and love. "I waited patiently for the Lord, and he inclined unto me and heard my cry."

"Though unbelief suggest,
"Why should we longer wait?"
He bids us never give him rest,
But be importunate."

One more inquiry. What are you doing for others? Is yours a selfish or a communicative religion? Does it begin at home, or does it stay at home? Are you satisfied to secure heaven yourself, while those around you are going in the broad road to death? "Go work in my vineyard," is the command of Christ. "Freely ye have received, freely give." "He that watereth shall be watered also himself," is the divine promise. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the widow and fatherless in their affliction, and keep ourselves unspotted from the world." We have heard of some who complained that they did not enjoy the comforts of religion, who could never spare any thing to relieve the fatherless or widow, who never gave their tithes to send the gospel to the heathen. We verily believe such are too penurious to be either good or happy. We pity them now, but we would pity them more if they pretended to spiritual joy while they could witness human wretchedness, and like the Levite and the Priest pass over to the other side.

"That man may breathe, but never lives,
Who much receives, but nothing gives,
Whom none can love, whom none can thank,
Creation's blot, creation's blank."

Would you know true joy? Go about doing good like the Saviour. Keep your graces in constant exercise and they will be ever bright.—Faith and love, and humility and gratitude, are not mere words, destitute of significance; they are gems in the believer's crown of righteousness, which will shine brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. You may even then see periods of dejection, but they will be short in duration, and salutary in their influence upon your hearts. And when the clouds of adversity or the shadows of death gather round you, it will be your happiness to look back on a life spent in usefulness, not as the ground of confidence or of boasting, but as the best evidence of an interest in Christ. And whatever may have been your joys or your sorrows here, you shall enter then into "the joy of your Lord."—Ch. Intel.

WHITFIELD'S MANNER OF PREACHING.

Too little importance, however has been attached to Whitfield's manner of preaching.—This is not his fault. He made no secret of his attention to delivery. He commended the

study of oratory to the American colleges, and provided for it at Bethesda, and rebuked the neglect of it at Oxford. He was not ashamed to quote Sheridan's lectures, in remonstrating with Durell. "Sorry am I to find so true, what a celebrated orator takes the liberty of saying in the University of Oxford, if I mistake not, that the state of public education in general, in the Church of England, is such that there never was perhaps, a religious sect on earth whose hearts were so little engaged in the act of worship, as the members of that Church. To be pleased we must feel, and we are pleased with feeling.—The Presbyterians are moved; the Methodists are moved—they go to their meetings and tabernacles with delight. The very Quakers are moved; whilst much the greater part of the Church of England are either banished from it through disgust, or reluctantly attended the services as a disagreeable duty." Thus far Mr. Sheridan. Whitfield even quotes Betterton the player, and affirms that the stage would soon be deserted, if the actors spoke like preachers.—Mr. Betterton's answer to a worthy prelate is deserving of lasting regard.

When asked "how it came to pass that the clergy, who spoke of things real, affected the people so little, and the players, who spoke of things barely imaginary, affected them so much," he said, "My Lord, I can assign but one reason; we players speak of things barely imaginary as though they were real, and too many of the clergy speak of things real as though they were imaginary." Thus it was in his, and all know it is, that even on our most important occasions the worthy gentlemen concerned in our public churches generally find themselves more obliged to musicians than to preachers; and hence it is, no doubt, that upon our most solemn anniversaries, after long previous notice has been given, and when some even of our lords spiritual do preach, perhaps not two lords temporal come to hear them."—(Letter to Durell).

Whitfield's own maxim was, to "preach as Appelles painted for eternity."—He was first struck with this maxim at the table of Archbishop Boulter, in Ireland, where the great Dr. Delany said to him, "I wish when I go up into pulpit to look upon it as the last time I shall ever preach, or the last time the people may hear." He never forgot this. He often said, "Would ministers preach for eternity they would then act the part of true Christian orators, and not only calmly and coolly inform the understanding, but by persuasive pathetic address, endeavor to move the affections and warm the heart. To act otherwise, bespeaks sad ignorance of human nature, and such an inexcusable indolence and indifference in the preacher, as must constrain the hearers, whether they will or not, that the preacher, let him be who he will, only deals in the false; commerce of unfeigned truth."—Phillip's Life and Times of Whitfield.

REPENT OR PERISH.

It is painful, my friends, to address you in this language; but when I deliver God's message, I must deliver it plainly; I must to the utmost of my power, apply it to your consciences, in all its unbending, unaccommodating strictness; turn in which way we please, it will say nothing but this,—repent or perish. And what, after all, is this so very irksome, or disagreeable, in a religious life, that you should wish to defer its commencement? If you must begin some time, why not begin to-day? Will you reply; I know not how to begin? God's voice, if you listen to it, will inform you. It tells us, that there is a veil upon our hearts; a veil, which prevents us from discerning the path of duty; and it also tells us, that when our hearts turn to the Lord, that veil shall be taken away. Turn then to God. Go to him, as his servants, for direction, and he will teach you what you must do. If I mistake not, many of you are like Agrippa, and for a long time have been almost persuaded to be christians; but you hesitate, you linger, you dread to make the first step. Perhaps when you are just on the point of yielding to conviction, the question, what will the world, what will my companions say, occurs to you and causes you to fear. You fear to be thought serious; you dread the remarks, the ridicule, which it would draw upon you, and therefore do violence to your convictions, or lock them up in your own breast, till they die away. In this manner thousands gradually and insensibly harden their hearts, till the truth ceases to affect them. Let such remember, that the fear of man bringeth a snare that Jesus Christ has said, Whosoever is ashamed of me, of him will I be ashamed at the last day. If you cannot bear the reproach of men how will you bear his condemning sentence; and the everlasting shame and contempt which will follow it? It will then be known that you had serious thoughts, but that you banished them through fear of men; and sinners themselves will despise you as a coward, who did not dare do what he knew to be right. Dare then to do your duty, to obey your conscience and your God, to be religious; for you cannot be a christian in disguise. You must come out, and be separate, or God will not receive you. Take then, at once, some decided step, and let it be known what you mean to be; and you will find that this, and all the other objects of your fear, are mere shadows, and will feel ashamed that they should ever have influenced you for a moment. If your heart still lingers, press it with the command of God; press it with the dreadful consequence of offending and provoking him to forsake you; press it with the terrors of the last day, and all the awful realities of eternity. Above all press it with the consideration, that if you ever turn to God, it must be to-day; that your soul, your salvation, your everlasting hap