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**THE BIBLICAL RECORDER,**  
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own English New Testament; would give to our churches as many varying versions as they may have classical scholars; and thus would accept as true the taunt of Romanism, that Protestantism, when fully obeyed, makes it every man's duty to prepare and issue his own separate Bible. We do not so read the Bible's own lessons, and the examples of the apostles.

When the apostles went everywhere, whilst, from time to time, they were writing the New Testament, they everywhere found a Greek unimpaired version of the old Testament. Greek was then the literary language of the world—the tongue of fashion, commerce and philosophy—and this Septuagint version [was in the hands of educated Hebrews throughout the Roman dominions. It has faults far more grave and more numerous than can be alleged against our English version. Paul might have turned aside from his missionary tasks to prepare, not only a better, but what none else than an inspired apostle could have given, an infallible and perfect Greek version of the Old Testament. But how does he act? At times, he quotes in Greek the old Testament, with variations from and corrections of the Septuagint translation. At others he cites, without comment or correction, the rendering of that Septuagint, when it was not a close and exact version of the originally Hebrew. Was he the servant of a base expediency, in failing to devote himself to the production of a correct translation? So, as it seems to us, some of the principles by you presented would require us the call that faithful apostle. Luther, on the contrary, saw in this disposition of the New Testament writer to content himself with the general sense of a rendering of the Old Testament, which he might have made more close in its phrases, an express design of inspiration thus to anticipated and reprove the cavils that would insist so much on one set form of words.

Your remarks apparently proceed on the assumption that your brethren who decline sharing in your revision are guided by expediency, whilst your aim, on the contrary, is full, fearless obedience to the truth. In this you misapprehend the actual position of these brethren. When Paul determined to labor in foreign rather than in home missions, not building on another man's foundation, nor preaching Christ where he was already named, did he really do homage to a low expediency? You allow with us that his choice was just. Now, was this his preference of the most needy field as demanding the first labors, very unlike our own resolution, that the supply of the unevangelized heathen with the Cherokee, Burman, Karen and Chinese Bible, is an object of higher and earlier obligation, whilst we postpone to the fitting time the bettering of an English Bible, already by your own acknowledgement "good?" Are we justified in forsaking the versions for Rangoon and Hong Kong, and in breaking down the organization that does most to supply these versions, in order to concentrate our strength on the one or more projects, at various times submitted to us, for a new revision of the English Bible? But, assuming that your projects seek to serve the truth, are you unanimous and assured that the alleged amendments are really such? To some of us many of these suggested changes appear palpably erroneous. Are we to be denounced as enemies of the truth in withholding their rash endorsement and adoption by the churches? The advocate of a groundless and unjust change is really assailing the truth, so far as he forces a poorer rendering into the room of a better; and the opponent of such deterioration of the divine scales is, in fact, the defender of truth.

The alteration most sought by some esteemed brethren among you, was in the word describing the first ordinance of the Christian Church. We are not convinced that expediency or truth requires the change. Supposing that, as the effect of such new rendering when once it become current, it should come to be said that the submerging of a convert in water, and his emerging, are not truly and fully designated by the word baptism—that the last word has been so distorted and marred by superstitious usage of it, that it is no longer a fitting appellation for our own primitive form of the ordinance; should we not have sacrificed the truth, in the vain hope of advancing it? We believe that neither expediency nor truth demands the change of term; but that both unite in requiring the retention of the present word.

And as to other changes, going behind this one term, can we overlook the warning testimony of Carson, as to much over which modern criticism vaunts as being emendation? "Many real improvements [he has said] of our translation in particular passages have undoubtedly been made, but by far a greater number of pretended improvements are gross corruptions." Besides, it is in small matters they amend; in matters of the highest importance they persist and corrupt." So wrote Carson to the author of a celebrated article in the Edinburgh Review. Nominal emendations may be really, and have often been, violent wrestings of God's truth. You would avoid the admission of such amongst your changes. But must we not be earnest in demanding some greater safeguard than the allowed honesty of your intentions? Mere piety without learning, or mere learning without piety, would equally endanger us, and to both these need to be added, judgment, taste, and mastery of our own rich tongue. Do we recognize the presence of these in some of the rival versions to which you appeal as

with admiration? We find in the very pamphlet published in connection with the proceedings at your organization in 1850, favorable mention made (p. 27) of "the most godly and learned men," who, it is said, have been dissatisfied with the received version, and then amongst others, are recounted the names of "Scarlett, Wakefield and Dickinson." Now, Dickinson's work certainly incurred general reprobation, as being in every way inferior to the received version, and as exposing, by its absurdities of style, the Scriptures themselves to contempt. Scarlett's work was written in the interest of Universalism, to make it out that future punishment was not everlasting, but "Zionian," as he phrases it. Vidler was his pastor and aided Scarlett in the work. Of Vidler's incompetency and untrustworthiness, as a scholar and theologian, his controversy with Andrew Fuller affords abundant proof. Abounding in Greek and Hebrew criticism, his knowledge of the tongues was wondrously and intolerably superficial. Wakefield was a Unitarian, the subject of remark in another of Fuller's works, and his renderings of the New Testament eyed and favored that system constantly and relentlessly. Must we disinter the slain whom Fuller was thought to have routed and buried, to re-animated them as guides and patrons along our critical way? Taken in the mass, these three works at least would serve, in our view, to point a warning against the enterprise, rather than to furnish an argument for it. And of the Englishman, Bellamy, (not to be confounded with his American namesake, the disciple and friend of Edwards,) whose labors on the old Testament we have seen pleaded by some as a precedent and warrant for the present undertaking, a recent English work of much authority, Bagster's "Bible in Every Land" has spoken, pronouncing Bellamy's work to be "too extravagant" to "deserve mention." Now, if these be among the names which the laborers of your Society see fit to quote and honor, to what inferences are we not shut up, as it respects the soundness of judgment, and purity of doctrine, and perfection of language to be expected from a project heralded by such outsiders and forerunners?

But you say that so numerous are the errors of our present version, that "their attempted correction constitutes a considerable share of the duty of an intelligent minister in his weekly ministrations." We cannot judge as to the duties of any ministry of special intelligence; but, as to ordinary ministrations and their charges, neither pastor nor people have amongst us regarded it as any "considerable share" of the pulpit work to correct evermore the pulpit Bible. We have been rather content to acquiesce in the opinion of Carson, no lenient or incompetent critic, the that "no rule can be more general," or, on other words, admit fewer exceptions, than does the maxim that he who is perpetually amending the common version is but a novice in criticism.

But you allege that "the strongest and most effective arguments of infidelity and scepticism among the common people, are founded upon mistranslations of the words of inspiration."—Here, too, we must dissent. Some of us have looked much into the pleadings of infidelity, and the counterpleadings of those who have resisted and refuted in. Some few renderings might perhaps be more felicitous, to exclude here and there a sceptical cavil. But we believe that beyond all peradventure, the chief ground of scepticism is against facts and doctrines that no just translation can put out of the Bible, and that no sound theologian or evangelical disciple would wish put out thence. And we must also add the expression of our solemn and mournful conviction, that very much has been expended to scepticism by rash emendations and unreliable renderings, that served only to confirm to incredulity they vainly sought to propitiate and soothe. Bellamy pleaded, for the strange translation which he began of the Old Testament, the necessity of thus counteracting infidelity; and Bahrdt, in Germany, made the like allegation for his most reprehensible and irreverent version of the New Testament. It is possible, by awkward concessions, expiations and adjustments, to produce a result tending rather to make Christians sceptical than to convert sceptics into Christians.

As to the preliminary question, therefore, of the need of an amended version, and the bearings of expediency and truth on the present attempt, we are not in union with you.

II. But allowing that it were—which allowance we cannot make—needed at this time, we differ as to the best mode of securing just, scholarly, and orthodox results. You address your appeal to us for aid, as we suppose, merely because we are a Baptist church. You send no similar letters to Presbyterian, Congregationalist, Methodist, and Episcopal churches around us. Many of the arguments in your documents and oral addresses are to our churches as a denomination. Your officers are mainly Baptists. So far, your enterprise is denominational. Now, the history of our own and other evangelical churches, and the providence of God as helping that history, have given to our received version more than a denominational character. It has a national reputation and authority. It has struck its roots through the British and American classics of two entire centuries. It came from a time when neither the Latitudinarianism nor Pelagianism of some later periods in the English Establishment had as yet currency and sway. The Episcopal Church of England was then

evangelical, not to say Calvinistic in doctrine. The sending of delegates to the Presbyterian and Calvinistic Synod of Dort, done in that age, would not have been done in any later ear of the English Church. At the time of the preparation of King James's version, the Presbyterian, the Congregationalist, and the Baptist, then feeble and obscure, like Levi paying tithes to Abraham, were lost from view under the broad shadow and preponderating power of the Establishment. But, as those other bodies became known and powerful, they emerged into influence, not to reject and impugn, but to accept, as a general rule, and to quote and extol the received version. For many generations, their grateful endorsement and acceptance and eulogies of it have made it a ground of common union, and a point of mutual appeal. Any amendments now to be made would, we think, be considered and effective only as they should not be sectarian, using that term as Carson, a Baptist and a critic, used it, in the innocuous sense of denominational. You want, in reasoning with your neighbor who is of another Christian communion, a Bible not only that you will believe, but one that he can believe. To exercise the prophetic gifts of the Spirit profitably in the primitive Christian assembly, the speaker having the Spirit must find hearers also. There could be no hearers, if all were at the same time speakers. Paul declared, therefore, that the speaking should be of one at a time, and that others should keep silence. Nor were the men, thus for a time kept silent, to say that the Spirit of truth in them forbade a moment's pause. God was the God of order, and not of confusion. The spirit of the prophets was subject to the prophets; and was therefore to be exercised by them in an orderly and edifying manner. And so, it seems to us, that the spirit of truth, in wise and pious critics and translators, will seek utterance in the form of a good version of the Scriptures, by such methods of utterance as will secure a hearing and a helping in other evangelical bodies; and not by such methods as would minister only discord and disorder, and profitless and endless janglings. God is not a God of confusion in versions more than in prophesying.

A sectarian version of a work that has, by the common endorsement of all evangelical sects, become catholic and general, is little likely to obtain currency or confidence, even within our own denomination, much less beyond it. And by laying down, as your society is said by its friends and officers to have laid it down, that the rendering of the Greek word for baptism by another word is no longer held "an open question," but that in effect "immerse" must take the place of "baptize," does not your enterprise incur the very censure which your advocates cast upon King James for his instructions to translators? You limit the consciences and restrain the unfettered judgment of your revisors.

Again, in withholding from the Baptist churches, thus invoked for help, the statement of the particular Greek text of the New Testament, which you announce yourselves to have selected as the basis of your critical labors, is the course pursued warranted by usage or right? The Greek texts of the several critical editors widely differ as to accuracy, fulness, and orthodoxy. Griesbach was said to have one hundred and sixty thousand various readings. Scholz, consulting nearly double the number of MSS., could have little less probable than three hundred thousand. The intrinsic weight of these variations, as affecting the great doctrines of the Scripture, is not to be supposed to bear any proportion to their number. But if your advocates have spoken much of twenty thousand alleged errors in the English, are they entitled to make very summary and quiet disposal of three hundred thousand variances in the Greek text? And none of these several Greek texts can be considered to be now as perfect as the further collations at this time in slow progress will yet make them. If you refuse to give, like Scholz, twelve years to travel and toil in the work, is it on the ground that truth does not deserve such exactness, or that expediency does not allow the delay and cost? Equal reserve—a gross darkness that may be felt—rests upon the exact plan to be pursued in renderings and revisions. If different laborers are to translate, at several remote points, different books of the New Testament, who is to give to their independent and divergent labors harmony and final union? If a central committee in our city oversee this last task, have we not a right to inquire their names and scholarship?

And, in giving not the names even of the translators whom you employ, is it regard to truth or to expediency that dictates this remarkable and mysterious reserve? In the preparation of the received version, the names of the learned and orthodox men to be employed were published. The Jews, in their offerings to the tabernacle, knew as skillful workmen the Bezaleel and Aholiab who were to frame from their gifts the furniture of the sanctuary. When Solomon called from Tyre the highly endowed Hiram to build the temple, do we read that he introduced the architect to the tribes without a name, and wearing a mask? Why repair the noble edifice of our Scriptures in so covert a manner? You inform us that contracts have been made with some scholars, and about to be made with others, and you ask funds in their aid and support. Should we not know the men whom we thus endorse and sustain? When Paul sent brethren to gather and bear the contributions of the churches, he presented them as men well-

known and trustworthy, "the messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ." If funds in *alm-giving* need known and approved distributors, do not the funds asked for *Scripture translation* deserve also as much publicity and reliability, in the case of the men who are by these funds to be sustained in work for the churches? Have we not a right to know whether three who are to interpret for us God's Word dwell in the tents and speak the dialect of Ashdod, or whether they belong to the tribes and use the tongue of Zion? Surely Baptists have not been wont to ask this implicit credence in the anonymous and unknown, nor, when it has been asked, have they been prompt to render it. But shall nothing be done to remove errors, it may be asked? We think that, in the unfinished collation of manuscripts; in the slow evolution of a yet more accurate text; in the currency which individual labors, in the translation of separate books of Scripture, gain in proportion to their intrinsic merits, there is an advance in the right direction far more safe and eventually more speedy, than might be gained by imperfect and precipitate, and unsuccessful endeavors on the part of rival denominations.

III. But in yet greater distrust must we hold the alliances which you have accepted in the work of revision. A religious body, most numerous at the West, the adherents of the Rev. Alexander Campbell, are associated with you. With that body, in its doctrines, ministry, and membership, our own churches have long held no fellowship. The movement began by denouncing all creeds as one chief cause of perennial disunion. But the body called, from their founder, Campbellites, or the Disciples, have, in various descriptions of their tents, given what may be called virtually a creed, though disclaimed as binding the consciences of their members. We find in these statements much that is obscure, and vague, and painfully unsatisfactory as to great truths. On some minor points, as the weekly communion, and its being occasionally dispensed by a private member, they seem to lay stress. But the main peculiarity of the system we have not been able to distinguish from baptismal regeneration, which is, as we believe, one of the most baneful of religious delusions, wronging the Holy Spirit, corrupting the first germs of the Christian church, and dislocating the entire gospel, by teaching men to expect in Sacraments that Kingdom of God which begins within their own spirits. The new body, on its appearance, made promises most high and large of restoring "THE ORIGINAL GOSPEL AND ORDER OF THINGS" that had for centuries been overwhelmed, and was proclaimed to be "reformation of the Nineteenth Century." In an article, evidently by a member, and apparently by a leader in the Connection, contributed to "Hayward's Book of Religions," and quoted in "Howe's Historical Collections of Virginia," it is said that they regard "TRINITARIANISM and UNITARIANISM . . . as extremes begotten by each other," and "cautiously avoid them as EQUIVOCANT from . . . the doctrine and facts . . . of the Christian institution." The founder, the Rev. Alexander Campbell, in his "Connected View," &c. speaking of the Millennium, when all stripes shall cease among Christians, asks, "Will all be converted to any one sect? Will all become Unitarians, TRINITARIANS, Arians, or Socinians?" And he answers himself, "I presume no person of common intelligence will say Yes." In an article written by the Rev. James Shannon, of their body, then President of their Institution, Bacon College, at Harrodsburg, Ky., and contributed by him for the "Historical Sketches of Kentucky," by Lewis Collins, it is stated that in that State they united with the "CHRISTIAN CONNECTION," so called, the followers of Borton W. Stone, as being "ON THE SAME FOUNDATION," and as "PREACHING THE SAME GOSPEL;" and that Stone "repudiated the orthodox views on the subject of the TRINITY, SONSHIP, AND ATONEMENT," but disclaimed Unitarianism. The union took place between the two bodies in 1831 and 1832, and in describing it, the biographer of Stone, as quoted by President Shannon, declares: "We solemnly pledged ourselves to one another before God, to abandon all speculations, especially on the TRINITY, and kindred subjects," contenting themselves with the Scriptural phrases. This exclusive use of the terms of Scripture may seem plausible. But it was by some similar rule intended to exclude all discussion, and by the abolition of creeds, that Socinianism inaugurated its triumphs in the pulpits of Geneva, once tenanted by Calvin and his associate reformers. Now, this "Christian Connection" have become avowedly Arian. "With very few exceptions," says one of their number, "they are not Trinitarians averring that they can neither find the word nor the doctrine in the Bible." The Unitarians of New England now fraternize with them, it is believed, in the support of their Theological School. In the history of the churches, Arianism has ever prepared the way for Socinianism, and the intermediate steps have been passed by a community generally in the course of a generation, and often the whole change has been perfected in the same

known and trustworthy, "the messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ." If funds in *alm-giving* need known and approved distributors, do not the funds asked for *Scripture translation* deserve also as much publicity and reliability, in the case of the men who are by these funds to be sustained in work for the churches? Have we not a right to know whether three who are to interpret for us God's Word dwell in the tents and speak the dialect of Ashdod, or whether they belong to the tribes and use the tongue of Zion? Surely Baptists have not been wont to ask this implicit credence in the anonymous and unknown, nor, when it has been asked, have they been prompt to render it. But shall nothing be done to remove errors, it may be asked? We think that, in the unfinished collation of manuscripts; in the slow evolution of a yet more accurate text; in the currency which individual labors, in the translation of separate books of Scripture, gain in proportion to their intrinsic merits, there is an advance in the right direction far more safe and eventually more speedy, than might be gained by imperfect and precipitate, and unsuccessful endeavors on the part of rival denominations.

individual; and the stealthy growth or entire triumph of such heresies has generally been marked by a denunciation of creeds. These swept away, under the plea of the union of Christians, there has been an absorption of all errors.

The article of President Shannon was prepared for a volume first appearing in 1848, some four years since. Then the union in Kentucky was so entire between the disciples of Campbell and Stone, that Mr. Shannon groups and describes them under the one heading, "Historical Sketch of the CHRISTIAN Church," as distinguished from the Baptists, whose history in the volume precedes, and from the Cumberland Presbyterians, whose article follows theirs, and from the other denominations in the State. In Rupp's work, published four years earlier, (1844,) it is claimed for the Campbellites of Disciples of Christ, that "with regard to the Divine Being, and the manifestations of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, by which he is revealed, the Disciples hold no sentiments incongruous with those of the parties who call themselves evangelical." But there seems certainly incongruity, if in a volume appearing only some few years later, they are described as "PREACHING THE SAME GOSPEL" with B. W. Stone, who "REPUUDIATED THE ORTHODOX VIEWS OF THE SUBJECT OF THE TRINITY, SONSHIP, AND ATONEMENT;" and the same with that body founded by Stone—the "Christian Connection"—represented, by one of their own preachers, in the same work of Rupp, four years before the appearance of President Shannon's article, as averring that they found neither the word nor the doctrine of the TRINITY in the Bible.

We would hope that there may be Trinitarians, and many of them, in the Campbellite connection; but its language and platforms seem to us to repel them and to invite the adherents of grave and fatal error. Many of its ministry and membership are commonly regarded as Arian, not holding the Saviour's equality of Godhead with the Father, nor regarding the Holy Ghost as a distinct Person.

We, and our fathers before us, are, and have been, Trinitarians. The doctrine is enwrapped about our prayers and plans for the conversion of this world, and all our personal hopes of salvation in the world to come. We may not, dare not hold it in abeyance, or leave it in doubt.—Looking forward to the millennial evangelization, we believe that the faith which will then have subdued the world will be biblical, and, because biblical, therefore Trinitarian. If it be a want of "common intelligence," as Mr. Campbell charges, to cherish such a hope, we, and our churches generally, do so want "common intelligence." The statement that Trinitarianism and Unitarianism are two extremes, equidistant from the doctrines of the gospel, seems to us as unhappy as would be the assertion that freedom and despotism were two extremes, equidistant from liberty, or that the Bible and the Koran occupied the two outermost points, between which the revelation of Heaven lay, parted by an equal interval from both.

Our views as to the nature of the faith requisite for discipleship, again, do not probably coincide with those of most Campbellites. What we term by historical faith, not affecting the heart or controlling the life, and existing in many of our hearers whom we do not regard as converted, they seem to consider as identical with evangelical faith, and as entitling to the admission of church ordinances. On the operations of the Divine Spirit, we find much to perplex and wound in the statements of Mr. Campbell. "A faith wrought in the heart" is, in his view, "the quintessence of mysticism." "All the converting power of the Holy Spirit is exhibited in the divine Record." This leads him to regard, if we can understand his words, the ordinary dependence of evangelical communions on the direct influences of the Holy Ghost, as enthusiastic. He speaks of "the enthusiasm of preacher and hearer." This is the disgrace of this age. Next to the superstition of the dark ages, is the enthusiasm of the present time. No wonder that the enthusiasts and sceptics scoff at our religion. Such an army of Lilliputians in reason, and giants in noise, verbosity, declamation, and shouting, NEVER STOOD FORTH THE ADVOCATES OF CHRISTIANITY IN ANY AGE OR COUNTRY, AS THE PREACHING CORPS OF THESE UNITED STATES. THE CAUSE is the popularity of the prayer for "baptism in fire." Fire, fire, holy fire, the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost, is the text, the sermon, the song, and the prayer. Now, although as Baptists we may regard the phrase of baptism in fire as a misapplied one in such petitions, yet, as to the prayers themselves for the Holy Ghost, in his influences as the enlightener, renewer and sanctifier, have they not been the resource and hope of the pious, in all ages of the Christian church? Do we accept, as a description of the Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopal, and Congregationalist pulpits of the United States in 1835, such language, as just to the mighty and holy men then filling them and since gone home, or as duly reverent to that great Agent, the third Person in the adorable Godhead, habitually and earnestly, and not in vain, invoked by them?

\* Charleston, 1848, p. 195.  
† Bethany, Va., 1835, p. 121.  
‡ The same gentleman, it is believed, who, on the last Annual Report of the A. B. Union, (for 1851) appears as one of their Commensurate or Vexatious. Is this the Committee to pronounce on the validity of the versions to be issued?  
§ Cincinnati, 1848, pp. 114-121.  
|| Rupp's Hist. of Relig. Denom., first edition, p. 160.