

**HINTS FOR AN IMPROVED
TRANSLATION OF
THE NEW TESTAMENT**

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Hints for an improved translation of the New Testament by James Scholefield

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JAMES SCHOLEFIELD

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FOR
AN IMPROVED TRANSLATION
OF THE
NEW TESTAMENT.

BY THE
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TO
THE BISHOPS,
PRIESTS AND DEACONS,
AND
CANDIDATES FOR HOLY ORDERS,
IN THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND,

THE FOLLOWING PAGES,
WITH ALL HUMILITY,
ARE MORE ESPECIALLY DEDICATED

BY
THE AUTHOR.

P R E F A C E
T O T H E F I R S T E D I T I O N .

It is possible that this little work may be met with an objection *in limine*, quite independent of the manner in which it is executed,—viz. that to call the public attention to the consideration of any supposed improvements in the authorised version of our Bibles is needlessly to unsettle men's minds, and shake their confidence in a book which is familiarised with their daily occupations and habits of thinking, and towards which therefore it is desirable that they should entertain no other feelings than those of a reposing conviction of its practical perfection.

I do not under-rate this objection. But my answer to it is, that in proportion to the importance of having the sacred text settled is the importance also of having it settled on a true and safe foundation. And there may probably be readers among the ordinary ranks of those who go every day to *draw water out of these wells of salvation*, who may sometimes encounter a degree of perplexity in weighing and comparing together some of the more difficult passages as they stand in our translation. And there may possibly also be some among the preachers of the word, who, as they meditate upon it in preparing to divide it to others, may find it difficult to reconcile the associations of thought, which have grown up with them from their infancy, with the more matured views which

open upon their minds in carrying their inquiries higher, up to the fountain of the sacred original. And with regard to both these classes it is important to bear in mind this distinction, that whatever obscurity is found in God's word arising from the mysterious nature of its sublime revelations, is a fit exercise for patience and humility and child-like prayer for the teaching of that Holy Spirit by whose inspiration it was given; but if it possess any adventitious difficulty, resulting from a defective translation, then it is at the same time an act of charity and of duty to clear away that difficulty as much as possible, and present it to the English reader with the greatest attainable advantage.

Nor let it for a moment be supposed, that such an attempt implies a shadow of reproach upon the original Translators. For myself, I would rather blot out from the catalogue of my country's worthies the names of Bacon and Newton, than those of the venerable men, who were raised up by the providence of God, and endowed by his Spirit, to achieve for England her greatest blessing in the authorised translation of the Scriptures. If in the following pages, the professed object of which is to express opinions on minor points differing from theirs, I have dropped any expressions in speaking of them which even an unkind criticism can charge with any thing like flippancy or a want of the most grateful veneration for them, I would gladly, if it were possible, wash out with my tears the obnoxious passages, and rather leave their glorious work soiled with its few human blemishes, than attempt

to beautify it at the expense of their well-earned renown. But I have thought that, in entire consistency with the honest sincerity of this feeling, something might be attempted towards carrying a little nearer to perfection a work which is already so near to it.

If I succeed, however, in conciliating the Reader towards the undertaking of such a project at all, there will be many things in the execution of it, which may seem perhaps less entitled to his indulgence. Some of the annotations may appear not to be original enough, and others to be too original; I mean, too far removed from received modes of explaining the difficulties of this holy Book. Some may be thought not sufficiently important to warrant the attempt at disturbing what is already established in possession of the text: on some occasions I may have expressed an opinion without bringing argument or authority enough to support it, and on others I may have been too diffuse.—I will not detain the reader with any lengthened explanations on these and other points, but will merely state, that the corrections here proposed are in general the result of my own study of the sacred volume, though I have on many occasions been led to examine what others had written on a difficult passage, and perhaps partially to adopt it, even without express acknowledgment; that I have never proposed a translation for the sake of its novelty, but from an honest conviction of its truth, that conviction varying in its strength according to the terms in which it is expressed; that while some of the following remarks are confessedly