A DICTIONARY OF THE PROPER NAMES OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES, BEING AN ACCURATE AND LITERAL TRANSLATION FROM THE ORIGINAL TONGUES

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Trieste

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By

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PREFACE

SOME years since, the présent writer, in pursuing his studies in the Bible, reached a portion which consisted largely of Proper Names, and at once he was confronted with the fact, that a considerable and, to him, important portion of the Bible was untranslated.

Fully persuaded that "whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning," and that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine" (Rom. 15:4 — 2 Tim. 3:16); and hence that there could be no idle word in God's Book; he set about preparing an accurate, alphabetical list of all the Proper Names of the Old and New Testaments, with a view to securing the best possible renderings of the same.

Fortunately, there was ready access to the works of Cruden, Long, Oliver, Young, Wilkinson, Charnock, McClintock & Strong, Smith's Bible Dictionary, Abbott's Dictionary, Imperial Bible Dictionary, Encyclopedia Biblica, and, before the list was complete, Strong's Concordance, Tregelles, F. W. Grant, and others.

At the end of about three years, the writer had obtained a meaning for nearly every proper name in the Bible, and, on the recommendation of friends, began preparations for publishing the results of his labors, for the benefit of others similarly interested.

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His plan was to arrange the names alphabetically, as spelled in our common English Bibles, attaching the meanings he had found, in the order in which he considered them to have weight, *i.e.*, in the order in which he considered their sources to be authoritative.

At the end of this part of his work, ere he went to press with his new Onomasticon, it occurred to him to experiment a little with some of the meanings he had secured, in order to see how they would work in the elucidation of some of those passages which had first suggested the need of his researches.

The result was as perplexing as it was curious; in some cases no less than twelve different, not to say *opposite*, meanings were given to the same name, *by the same writer*. But which, if any one of them, was the English equivalent of the Hebrew or Greek name under consideration?

That was the important question, to determine which, a few of these names were subjected to rigid, etymological analysis; during which, two discoveries were made, viz.:

1. That not one of these Onomasticographers could be depended upon throughout his whole list of names.

2. That "every Scripture was God-inspired . . . that the man of God may be perfect, fully fitted to every good work." (2 Tim. 3: 16, 17 — literal rendering.)

A new start was made; *all* meanings were discarded, and each name was traced to its own roots in the original tongue, and the meaning derived according to the etymological rules and usage of the language in which it was written.

In the present work all current authorities have been used or consulted, such as Robinson's Gesenius, Fuerst's Hebrew Lexicon, Davidson's Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon, Davies' Hebrew Lexicon, and now that it is completed, the learned and laborious Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon, by Brown, Driver & Briggs; as well as Tregelles and some others for portions.

For the New Testament names, the Greek Lexicons of Liddell & Scott, and Parkhurst, have been mainly relied upon.

The one controlling idea in the preparation of this work has been to provide the English-speaking reader with an exact, literal equivalent of the original Hebrew, Chaldee (Aramaic), or Greek name; and this the reader may expect to find.

In each and every case the author has compared his rendering with the rendering given by the Onomasticographers above mentioned, and where he differs from them he is quite prepared to give a satisfactory reason for the difference, to any one competent to form a judgment.

Where such different rendering is possible or plausible, he has not failed to give it a place with his own.

In addition to this, he has carefully noted each meaning as related to its context, since the passage in which a name occurs will often throw light upon the particular shade of meaning to be given to it.

As an illustration of how the present writer finds it necessary to differ from men of unquestioned scholarship, the name " Abijam " may be instanced: —

One of the ablest of modern Hebraists, in his Manual of Hebrew, gives the meaning " great sailor," from

a b i, meaning "father of" (being *ab* in the construct
state, and *ab* means "father"), and *y a m*, meaning
"sea," *i.e.*, "father of the sea."

Now the scholarship of the author of the Manual
is above question, as a Hebraist he had few equals,
and he knew perfectly well that the *literal* force of
those two words was "father of the sea," and that
they would, etymologically, admit of no other mean-
ing whatever (if we allow the single exception of
"my father *is* the sea," there is nothing in the words
themselves to exclude such a meaning), but at once
the learned professor allows himself to be swayed by
the apparent strangeness of the name, and tapers it
down to "great sailor," losing sight of the original
words entirely.

Of what use is the most eminent scholarship, if,
with all its ability to give us bread, it give us but a
stone?

By far the best work on Proper Names known to
the writer is that by Mr. Alfred Jones, published by
Bagster & Sons.

It treats only the names in the Old Testament, and
not a few of those are omitted, for some reason, but
the plan, as well as the typographical execution of
the work, are excellent, although the result is fre-
quently disappointing, and in more ways than one,
particularly in the author's arriving at the proper
literal meaning, by his analysis, and then, for reasons
other than etymological, leaving a meaning for the
name which loses sight of the origin entirely, as for
example: —

"'Omar' = 'uppermost,' from the Hithpael of the

root *a m a r;* it is generally understood of 'he that speaks,' hence Gesenius says, 'eloquent,' 'talkative.' "

Now the verb *a m a r* is a very common one, and is invariably rendered "to say, to utter"; in the Hithpael it is twice used in the sense of 'boasting self,' as in Ps. 94:4, but to call Omar a Hithpael is a mere blunder; it is an orthographic variation of Kal participle active, and means "saying," or "sayer," but not a trace of this meaning in "uppermost." Another example from this otherwise excellent work may suffice: —

"'Bealoth' = 'city corporations,' *i.e.,* 'rulers,' 'civitates,' or perhaps 'daughters of the city,' plural of *b a a l a h* = 'mistress' fem of *B a a l* — 'lord,' 'possessor,'" *i.e.,* the plural of 'mistress' is 'city corporations'(!).

Here again the plain, literal meaning (and a meaning which the learned author himself sees plainly enough) is discarded, and we are left with "city corporations," although there is not a trace of either 'city' or 'corporations' in the word discussed. And this so often: and yet it is not his scholarship which is at fault, scholarship is rarely, if ever, at fault in the rendering of Proper Names in the Bible, but rather what this excellent author says himself very fittingly, quoting from Mr. Bryant, under the article "Chaldeans": —

"So far does whim get the better of judgment (in deriving the meanings of proper names), that even the written word is not safe."

In the present work, the meanings are, in general, given in the language of the Authorized Version, but