

**ESSAYS ON THE  
LANGUAGES OF  
THE BIBLE AND  
BIBLE-TRANSLATIONS**

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Essays on the Languages of the Bible and Bible-Translations by Robert Needham Cust

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**LANGUAGES OF THE BIBLE.**



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AND

BIBLE-TRANSLATIONS.

BY

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## PREFACE.

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A few months ago I published *Three Lists of Bible-Translations Actually Accomplished* (Elliot Stock, 1890). By itself this book would be to some dry reading, consisting as it does merely of names and statistics: to others it would reveal the marvellous story of the Grace of God poured down in such fulness on this generation. Unquestionably it represents only a skeleton, which I propose in a series of Essays to clothe with a little flesh: this book is the first instalment. I may not live to carry out my plan to its final completeness: so I publish portions as they are ready.

First comes the consideration of the Languages, in which the inspired Books were written, and of the particular vehicle of human ideas honoured by the use of the Lord of Glory during his earthly Pilgrimage. I approach the subject quite simply, and fearlessly, as a Linguist, and not as a dogmatic Theologian: if wrong in my views, I shall be glad to be set right by those who are conversant with linguistic problems ancient and modern. I doubt whether the early Fathers, who lived several centuries after the Christian Era, and were divided from the Jewish world of ideas by an abyss of prejudice, and a narrow view of things in general, were in as good a position to form a judgment as the men of this generation. Their utterances also must not be taken literally. When Jerome writes, "*Sermone Græco, quo omnis Oriens loquitur,*" he meant no more than the expression of a modern writer, "All the world knows French." Jerome could have known very little of the