

The New Revision.

How the types fly and the editions come out! What prodigies of printing and telegraphing, one paper printing the entire New Testament in a single issue, and having it all telegraphed from New York to Chicago in twelve hours. What eagerness! What planning! What pretending! What lying (!), who knows, to get a copy before the time? Who shall say there is no interest in the word of God—that nobody cares for the Bible? Was there ever such interest for any other book? Is much of it selfish—curious? No doubt. And yet, here is the fact. God's word is carried to and fro; flies on the wings of the lightning, literally. All the powers of modern skill and science are taxed to multiply it. The minds of the people who speak the language of the most advanced and powerful nations of the earth are filled with an entirely unparalleled eagerness to see and read. And is there no providence in this? And shall little good come of it? God's truth will be read as never before. And it "shall not return void." The enemies—those who hoped to find great and damaging changes—will be surprised to see how insignificant are even the most substantial changes which the advancing scholarship and research of the last two hundred and fifty years warrant; how entirely untouched they leave every substantial truth of evangelical Christianity; while the friends of the Bible will rejoice in the perfection in many matters of minor detail reached by this revision which has never been reached before. But what is the difference? It will be asked. What in particular are the changes, and what of their significance? In general it may be answered that the minor changes are many, the substantial very few. The former exceeding the general expectation; the latter falling short of it.

Take the first chapter of Matthew. We naturally look at this first. It gives good illustration, too, of general facts. We find the changes in this chapter, of all kinds, to be fifty-seven. A large number, surely. More than two to a verse. Enough, if the significance correspond at all to the greatness of the number, to have made it "another gospel." And yet a person quite familiar with Scripture might read the entire chapter in the new version and at the end be hardly conscious that it had been changed at all. Thirty-nine of the fifty-seven changes are in the form and spelling of proper names—changes made to make them correspond with the forms of the same names as used more generally elsewhere in Scripture, e. g., "Rachab" changed to "Rahab." Eight of the remaining eighteen are slight changes in particles, as "into" to "to," "while" to "when." Five of the remaining ten give a little different translation of the original, as (V. 18) "espoused" changed to "betrothed;" "being raised" (V. 24) to "arose," etc. Two of the remaining five are omissions; two words in each case, viz., "the king" (V. 6) after the second "David," and "her first-born" before "son" in the twenty-fifth verse; the latter being really about the only significant change in the entire chapter. Two other changes are insertions: (1), of "the" before Christ in verse 17, and (2), "it is," and "that" in verse 20, the last clause of the verse reading "for it is he that shall save" instead of "for he shall save." The remaining change is simply in the position of the word "is" in the last part of the twenty-third verse; the clause, "which, being interpreted, is," being changed to, "which is, being interpreted"—a change easily subject to criticisms as trivial or over nice, and yet happily illustrating a class of changes which are real improvements that are likely to be found throughout the work. Changes which, like the delicate touches of the painter to his picture, would never be thought of except by professional artist and seldom if ever noticed by the common observer, and yet add a real completeness and perfection to it.—Pacific.

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