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S.S. LESSON AND YOUTH PROGRAM FOR MARCH 26

Report on New Curriculum --- Page 7

FIRST THINGS FIRST

We must beware of adding anything to the power of the Word of God and to the work of the Holy Spirit using that Word as His means, as the essentials in the salvation process. Other things may be helpful, perhaps. But essentials, no. We speak the truth in love, but love is no substitute for the truth. We minister in a context of concern, but concern is no substitute for the ministry of the Word.

We must beware of the danger here suggested because it represents the ever-recurring tendency to seek to introduce works into a program of faith under a new disguise. Whenever you stress the importance of what a witness does as well as what he says, you run the risk of elevating behavior to the level of testimony. And just as my good behavior — while necessary in a life of faith — is no substitute for faith, so also my behavior, in the communication of the Gospel, is no substitute for the Word which creates faith.

ACROSS the EDITOR'S DESK

In this issue (p. 7) appears the first of four articles which will have to do with the new Christian Education curriculum now in the process of preparation for use in our Church. The articles will concentrate on the "foundation" papers which have been distributed to tell the Church about the theological and educational principles the new curriculum will follow. We urge you to read the entire series carefully. If you want additional sets of the series, they will be available from the Weaverville office.

In our opinion, the Rev. Wick Broomall's outlines on the trial and crucifixion of Jesus Christ in this week's Sunday School lesson are the most thorough we have ever read. You cannot go through one of his lessons in a hurry. But for real help in Bible study we challenge you to try just one of them with your Bible open. Several times he refers to "teacher" and "class." But the lessons are equally valuable for Christians studying alone.

An RNS story tells of a Roman Catholic priest who was among the first to reach that jet airliner which crashed in Belgium killing, among others, the entire American ice skating team. Father Joseph Cuyt, according to the story, reported: "I immediately snatched the holy oil and jumped into my car and made for the scene. I arrived just before the Fire Brigade. The blaze raged and I couldn't get near the plane. So I stopped at the edge of the road and I gave general absolution." — As we think on that interpretation of Christianity we cannot help wondering if that priest honestly believes he made it possible for souls on that plane to gain Paradise?

We were very much pleased, recently, to notice that the official Year Book of the Men of the Church of one of the larger presbyteries lists for 1961 a project: "To promote the Presbyterian Survey and the Presbyterian Journal in every home." Some very fine leaders in that presbytery, no doubt.

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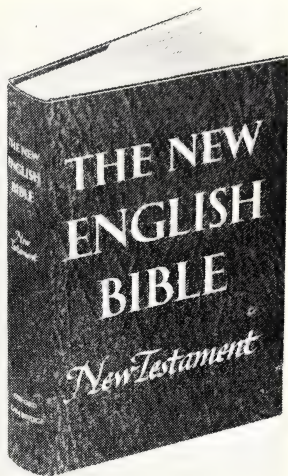
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Another 'Popular' Version

THE NEW ENGLISH BIBLE, The New Testament
Oxford Press, Cambridge Press, 1961, 447 pp. \$4.95.

WILLIAM C. ROBINSON, Th.D.



British biblical scholars with the help of literary authorities have here rendered the New Testament into the English of the day. Indeed, so modern is this translation that Dr. Luther Weigle of the Revised Standard Version (RSV) classifies this New English Bible (NEB) not with the King James Version (KJV) nor with the American (Standard) Version (ASV), but with such popular renditions as those by Moffatt, Goodspeed and Phillips. Perhaps, Weigle fears that the beauty and dignity of the KJV will continue to be appropriate for Christian worship, that the ASV will be used for the exact rendering of the critical text, that this NEB will serve those who wish modern speech — and what will his RSV do then?

As a presentation of Greek in current English this translation will prove invaluable for the preacher and interesting for the popular study of the Word. Some of the phrases which catch the eye are:

"You can take it from me," Gal. 5:3.

"At my wit's end," Gal. 4:2.

"Things are at their worst," Eph. 6:13.

"Shovel," Matt. 3:12. "Guardian angels," Matt. 18:16.

"Whose debt ran into millions," 18:24. "So unteachable," 19:8.

"When, therefore, a teacher of the law has become a learner in the kingdom of Heaven," 13:52. "You did not learn this from mortal man," 16:17.

"Sit in state with you," Mark 10:33. "Horror and dismay . . . my heart is ready to break with grief," 14:32.

"No bullying; no blackmail; make do with your pay," Lk. 3:14.

"His heart went out to him," Lk. 16:20.

"In their greed for money they will trade on your credulity with sheer fabrications." II Peter 2:3.

"Do not cling to me," Jn. 20:17.

"Very selves," Rom. 12:1. "Be not conceited," 12:3.

"Faithful to his one wife," I Tim. 3:2.

"Men will love nothing but money and self," II Tim. 3:2.

"In him the complete being of God came to dwell," Col. 1:19.

"The ABC," Heb. 5:12.

"Jesus Christ who reigns in glory," James 2:1.

"AND WHAT IS FAITH? Faith gives substance to our hopes, and makes us certain of realities we do not see." Heb. 11:1.

In their introduction, our British cousins assure us that they are offer-

ing a translation not a paraphrase, but later they permit the line between translation and commentary to become very thin, and evidence this in sundry places. The three Greek negatives in John 1:13 are translated into two in the NEB. The Greek which means **the Lord** becomes **our Master** with marginal reading, **Its Owner**, in Mark 11:3, a clear case of commentary rather than translation. I Cor. 2:4, "it carried conviction by spiritual power," is certainly a paraphrase. The **perfect**

All English Versions Reviewed In New Book

THE ENGLISH BIBLE — A HISTORY OF TRANSLATIONS, by F. F. Bruce, Oxford University Press, 1961, 230 pp. \$3.75.

The ever increasing interest today for a better understanding of the English Bible has caused the distinguished professor of Biblical Criticism, University of Manchester, England to probe deeply into the history and origin of various translations which have sought to present God's Word in the language of the common man.

This is a comprehensive study of the various translations of the Bible in the English language. In his book, **THE ENGLISH BIBLE**, Dr. Bruce leads his readers from the earliest beginnings of our English Bible down through the appearance of successive translations, each of which has met the need of its particular period. Fascinating bits of information about Tyndale's

translation, the Elizabethan Bible and the Douay version, for instance, are included.

One cannot read this history without being impressed with the honesty, sincerity and scrupulous integrity of the author to present this fascinating story which combines divine guidance with human tenacity and devotion of both the translators and the printers.

This history brings together a wealth of facts and information which have previously been available only in separate studies of a specialized nature.

Laymen as well as Ministers will welcome this very comprehensive study and it is further hoped that it will serve as a means of preparation for **THE NEW ENGLISH BIBLE** itself.

—Paul F. Warren, D.D.
Asheville, N. C.

used of Christ's being raised from the dead in contrast with the *aorist* in the other clauses is ignored in I Cor. 15:4. "Whose worship is spiritual" in Phil. 3:3 is a dodge between two readings, the preferable one meaning: who worship by the Spirit of God.

In this rendering into current English, the great theological words of the Christian faith drop out. Redeem becomes liberate, set free, or buy free. Predestinate in Paul becomes destine or decree. It is retained in First Peter of Jesus. Saints are dedicated ones. First Corinthians fifteen is headed life after death, rather than the resurrection of the dead. Mystery becomes hidden purpose. Inspiration is changed to inspired and in the passage II Tim. 3:16, the great Greek adjective *theopneustos* is further weakened by being shifted from the predicate which it occupies in the Greek into the modifying and qualifying position in the NEB. Here the KJV is a fairer rendering of the Greek.

The great Reformation doctrine is impoverished by the omission of the word *impute* from the NEB and its place taken by the weaker *count*. Moreover, justification is "in virtue of their faith," Rom. 3:30, rather than simply of or by faith grasping of Christ and His righteousness. Indeed the righteousness of God is at times rendered "God's way of righting wrong," Rom. 1:17; 3:22. Perhaps the most flagrant disregard of the Greek terminology is the rendering *orge* (wrath) not as wrath but only as retribution and the translation of *hilasterion* and its cognates not as propitiation but only as expiation or as remedy. Thus the NEB depersonalizes the living God in accord with the thinking of Dr. C. H. Dodd, but out of harmony with the Greek and Hebrew originals as Dr. Leon Morris has ably shown in his **THE APOSTOLIC PREACHING OF THE CROSS**. The Lord's personal action in punishing the wicked can scarcely be penned in more forcible language than that used in Ezek. 7:8-9 and in II Thess. 1:7-9.

The New Testament is the testimony to and the covenant of our Lord Jesus Christ. What says the NEB of Him Whom angels worship? In general it follows the low Christology of the RSV. In the Voice from heaven the Father addresses His Beloved as Thou, Ananias in Acts uses Thy speaking to the exalted Lord, and the praises of Heaven heard in the Revelation so

worship Christ. Then, forgetting that earth ought to reflect heaven, confessors, disciples, suppliants are all made to address him as man, *you*. Even in the judgment scenes in Matthew chapters seven and twenty-five, these translators speak of Jesus as *you*. We suggest that when these same scholars kneel before the KING on His great white throne they will use pronouns appropriate to Deity, Thou, Thine, Thee.

The use of *you* for Jesus in the conversion of Paul is also peculiarly objectionable since the whole context and the words of the Lord in the great *ego eimi* language of the living God make it clear that the exalted Lord is the subject who identifies Himself as Jesus the persecuted. "I, even I myself, (the Lord of Glory), am Jesus of Nazareth whom you are persecuting." Paul used the appropriate language that a Hebrew of the Hebrews would use as he was confronted by the LORD of his fathers in a theophany: "Who art Thou, LORD?"

At times the regular word for worship is rendered in a lower English term when addressed to Jesus than when addressed to an angel in Revelation. The adjective *mere* is gratuitously introduced into the text in John 10:33 and attached to man as used of Jesus. The Centurion is made to say in Mark and Matthew 27:54 "a son of God," though in the mockery in the preceding context the same phrase is rendered "the Son of God" and "God's Son," as it is also rendered in Matt. 14:33 "the Son of God." This is a clear case of the translators forgetting their true function and becoming commentators. Because they do not think that a Roman officer of the first century could have said the Son of God does not prove that Matthew would not have so declared. Indeed, in the first Gospel the only persons whose faith Jesus commended were another Roman centurion and a Greek woman. Grammatically, E. C. Colwell, supported by B. Metzgar, C. Moule, Debrunner and the English translator of his great Greek Grammar, Funk, shows that when a predicate nominative precedes the verb it is definite by position.

It is a pleasure to note that the first chapter of Hebrews is a distinct improvement on the rendering of the same in the RSV. In the RSV, Jesus is "a Son" who "reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of His nature." In the NEB He is "the Son"

... "The Son who is the effulgence of God's splendor and the stamp of God's very being," and in 1:9 as in 1:8 He is addressed as, "O God." Likewise the NEB is better than the 1946 RSV, but not as good as the 1881 and 1901, in its treatment of the best attested rendering of John 1:18. The three oldest manuscripts give "the only God who dwells in the bosom of the Father," or "God only-begotten." This occurs in the margin of 1881, 1901, as the second marginal reading in NEB, and was entirely omitted in RSV, 1946. The NEB ascribes John 3:16 to Jesus, the RSV denies it to Him by closing the quotation with 3:15.

The NEB has the correct textual evidence under Matthew 1:16, whereas the RSV 1952 had an erroneous statement reflecting on the Virgin Birth of Christ taken from the misstatement of the witnesses in Throckmorton's **GOSPEL PARALLELS**. On the other hand, the NEB follows Moffatt and the RSV in mistranslating the Greek verb in Luke 1:34 so as to make Mary say, what the woman at Sychar did say in John 4:17, "I have no husband." Not only does this not translate truly the Greek verb, but it is a statement that a betrothed Jewess of the first century could not have made. She did have a legal husband, Joseph. F. C. Grant in his **INTRODUCTION TO NEW TESTAMENT THOUGHT** suggested that the Virgin Birth could be eliminated from Luke by the omission of some six Greek words, four in 1:34. Now such an overt excursion would not be permitted, but both the RSV and the NEB have taken the edge off of the testimony of this verse by their erroneous rendering of the Greek verb.

Our conclusion? The greatest value that we see in these new translations of the Bible is in the re-enforcement they give to the testimony of our Church that the Old Testament in Hebrew and the New in Greek are the ultimate sources of appeal and as such should become the tools of our ministry. Preach the Word, God's Word. Use every translation to help you attain thereto... but rest in no rendering until you have checked it with the original.

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It is never safe to trust God's business to the man who neglects his own