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REMARKS

ON

THE PRINCIPLES

ADOPTED BY

BISHOP LOWTH

IN

CORRECTING THE TEXT OF THE HEBREW BIBLE.

BY

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OF MAWNAN.



“ Jamjam docti litterarum sacrarum interpretes agnoscere incipiunt,
“ ab utraque parte esse peccatum, et ab iis, qui sinceritatem cod. Heb.
“ nimis magnis laudibus extollebant, et ab illis, qui nimium deprime-
“ bant; caute esse versandum in crisi, et non statim de corruptione esse
“ conquerendum, priusquam idiotismorum Hebraicorum rationes probe
“ cognoverimus.” BAVERI CRITICA SACRA.

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REMARKS, &c.



WE are principally indebted to Bishop Lowth for the revival of Hebrew literature in this country. He first marked and illustrated the distinguishing characteristics of Hebrew poetry; and rekindled a taste for the cultivation of the Hebrew language. He also first suggested and effectually promoted Dr. Kennicott's collation of Hebrew manuscripts. From the high character which he justly acquired by his learned and elegant illustrations of the Hebrew Scriptures, we may naturally suppose that those who followed him in translating the books of the Old Testament were much influenced by his example. It is therefore of particular importance to ascertain whether the principles which he applied to the correction of the Hebrew text were sound and judicious; whether the alterations which he either made himself, or suggested to others, in the authorized version of the Scriptures, are supported by such weighty reasons, or such ample authority, as may be justly required to warrant the correction of the sacred text. I propose to state the principles by which he was guided, in his own words; and, after quoting the sentiments of some emi-

nent Hebrew critics respecting the emendation
 of the Masoretic text, to examine some of
 Bishop Lowth's proposed alterations in the Book
 of Psalms, and in the prophet Isaiah. After ob-
 serving that we labour under much disadvan-
 tage from the comparatively modern date of the
 Hebrew MSS., he adds, " On the other hand,
 " we have a great advantage in regard to the
 " Hebrew text, which the Greek and Latin au-
 " thors generally want, and which in some de-
 " gree makes up for the defect of age in the
 " present Hebrew MSS. : that is, from the se-
 " veral ancient versions of the Old Testament
 " in different languages made in much earlier
 " times, and from MSS. in all probability much
 " more correct and perfect than any now ex-
 " tant. These versions, for the most part being
 " evidently intended for exact literal renderings
 " of the Hebrew text, may be considered in
 " some respect as representatives of the MSS.
 " from which they were taken : and when the
 " version gives us a sense better in itself, and
 " more agreeable to the context, than the He-
 " brew text offers, and at the same time an-
 " swerable to a word or words similar to those
 " of the Hebrew text, and only differing from
 " it by the change of one or more similar letters,
 " or by the different position of the same letters,
 " or by some other inconsiderable variation ;
 " we have good reason to believe, that the simi-
 " lar Hebrew words answering to the version

“ were indeed the very reading that stood in
 “ the MS. from which the translation was made.
 “ To add strength to this way of reasoning, it
 “ is to be observed, that the MSS. now extant
 “ frequently confirm such supposed reading of
 “ those MSS. from which the ancient versions
 “ were taken, in opposition to the authority of
 “ the present printed Hebrew text; and make
 “ the collection of variations now preparing for
 “ the public of the highest importance; as they
 “ give a new evidence to the fidelity of the an-
 “ cient versions, and set them upon a footing
 “ of authority which they never could obtain
 “ before. They were looked upon as the work
 “ of wild and licentious interpreters, who often
 “ departed from the text which they undertook
 “ to render, without any good reason, and only
 “ followed their own fancy and caprice. The
 “ present Hebrew MSS. so often justify the
 “ versions in such passages, that we cannot but
 “ conclude, that in many others likewise the
 “ difference of the version from the present ori-
 “ ginal is not to be imputed to the licentious-
 “ ness of the translator, but to the carelessness
 “ of the Hebrew copyist; and this affords a
 “ great and reasonable ground for correcting
 “ the Hebrew text on the authority of the an-
 “ cient versions ^a.” Now that the Hebrew text
 appears to have suffered in many respects from
 frequent transcription, and that much may be

^a Lowth's Isaiah, Prel. Diss. first edit. p. lxiii.

said in favour of many readings which *appear* to have been those from which the ancient versions were made, must be admitted by every one who is moderately acquainted with the subject. But these readings cannot in reason be placed on the same footing as the readings of the Hebrew MSS. and editions. Whatever may have been the *intention* of the ancient translators, the Septuagint version, (from which many of the proposed amendments of the Hebrew text are taken,) as we have it at present, cannot by any means be considered as conveying the *exact literal sense* of the Hebrew original. This will be evident to any one who will take the trouble to compare this version with the Hebrew, especially in the poetical and prophetic books. Words, especially prepositions, are often supplied, to render the sense clear and explicit; and an ignorance of the meaning of particular words, and of the scope of particular passages, is not unfrequently manifested. And with regard to the Greek version frequently conveying a better sense than the present Hebrew text, we must bear in mind that the difficulty arising from the peculiar idioms of an obsolete language, far removed in many respects from those both of the classical and of the modern European languages, and the frequent occurrence of *ἄπαξ λεγόμενα*, words which are found but once in the whole Hebrew Bible, and which often receive no light from the cognate

languages, tend to throw an obscurity on passages which may have been perfectly clear and intelligible in the remote period in which the Hebrew scriptures were composed. And it should also be stated, that there is much reason to suspect that words of familiar use have not unfrequently found their way from the margin of the Hebrew Bibles into the text of some MSS. in the place of such as are unusual or obscure. It appears likewise from the fragments of Origen's Hexapla, that in many passages in which modern critics have proposed emendations on the supposed authority of the ancient versions, the reading of the Masoretic text is the same as that from which Origen corrected the Septuagint. That the collection of variations which was preparing by Dr. Kennicott at the time when Dr. Lowth wrote his Preliminary Dissertation, gives "a new evidence of the fidelity of the ancient versions, and sets them upon a footing of authority which they never obtained before," is a position which I am disposed strongly to question. The inference which I am led to draw from comparing the various readings collected by Kennicott and De Rossi, with the fragments of Origen's Hexapla, is, that, considering the close resemblance which some of the letters bear to each other, and the extreme care required in transcribing the Hebrew text, it has been preserved for the last 1600 years in a state much more free from

errors than either Bishop Lowth or Dr. Kennicott were inclined to suppose : and this opinion has been held by some of the best Hebrew scholars both in this country and on the continent. The learned and judicious Dathe, in the preface to his Latin version of the Psalms, after having stated that the Masoretic text of the Hebrew Bible, like other ancient writings, requires occasional correction from MSS., thus continues : “ Sed me illa libertate minime esse
 “ abusum ut crisi temeraria et intempestiva lec-
 “ tionem vulgarem repudiarem, apparebit ex locis
 “ bene multis, in quibus eam contra conjecturas
 “ recentiores, utut speciosas, defendi ; cui per-
 “ suasum esset, non minori verecundia tractan-
 “ dos esse libros divinos quam profanos, in qui-
 “ bus critici minime concedendum esse judicent,
 “ immo vehementer improbent eam licentiam,
 “ qua lectionibus durioribus, quæ videntur, *sine*
 “ *auctoritate aut testimoniis antiquorum codi-*
 “ *cum faciliores ex ingenio tantum critici ortæ*
 “ *substituuntur* ^{b.}” Baver expresses the same sentiment in still stronger language : “ Maxima
 “ pars emendationum criticarum quas viri docti
 “ attulerunt, aut finxerunt, a criticis modestio-
 “ ribus, et linguæ Hebraicæ analogiæ peritiori-
 “ bus jam jure reprobetur, et ut non necessaria et
 “ varia repudiatur ^{c.}” To these authorities we may add that of Professor Jahn : “ Data opera

^b Dathii Præfatio in Psalmos, p. v.

^c Baver de Integritate et Corruptione Textus.

“ conjecturas quærere, aut levibus momentis
 “ lectionem mutare, et mutationem in textum
 “ inferre, pruritus atque scabiem corrigendi
 “ compellunt cordati critici qui statuunt con-
 “ jecturas non esse tentandas, *nisi quando ne-*
 “ *cessitas urget, aut permagna verisimilitudo*
 “ *suadet, atque tum quoque non in textum reci-*
 “ *piendas, sed in notas conjiciendas esse cen-*
 “ *sent d.*”

Amongst the “ Opuscula ad Crisim et Inter-
 “ pretationem Veteris Testamenti spectantia”
 of Dathe, published after the death of that emi-
 nent critic by Rosenmuller, is, “ Dissertatio in
 “ Aquilæ Reliquias,” in which he states the re-
 sult of his comparison of the fragments of Aquila
 with the Hebrew text in these words: “ Ex
 “ locis hactenus a nobis de Aquilæ fragmentis
 “ adductis apparet, *eum in suo codice easdem*
 “ *fere, quam nos, habuisse textus Hebraici lec-*
 “ *tiones.* Qui perpetuus fere consensus cum
 “ codice tantæ antiquitatis non sine insigni
 “ animi voluptate observari potest. Nam ad re-
 “ fellendas eorum criminationes, qui textum
 “ Hebraicum hodiernum magnæ corruptionis,
 “ depravationis accusant, argumentum haud in-
 “ fimum suppeditat e.” In this dissertation the
 learned author enumerates, to use his own
 words, 1. “ Loca, in quibus Aquila lectionem
 “ vulgarem sequitur, et ad verbum vertit.” 2.

d Jahn, *Introductio in Libros sacros Veteris Fæderis.*

e Dathii *Opuscula*, &c. Lipsiæ, 1796.

“Loca, in quibus Aquila etymologias sectatur ;” that is, in which, in translating a Hebrew word, he has regard rather to the etymology of the word, than its sense in the passage which he translated. 3. “Loca, in quibus Aquila cum “nostra lectione consentit, contra reliquos interpretes.” 4. “Loca, in quibus Aquila aliter “legit.” This examination is confined to the book of Hosea. Omitting the second head, as perhaps not decidedly shewing the readings of the Hebrew text which Aquila followed, it may be remarked, that under the first head are twenty-eight passages ; under the third, twenty-four ; and under the fourth, eight ; making at least fifty-two passages which accord with the Masoretic text, and eight only which differ from it. Under the sanction of these high authorities in this department of sacred criticism, I think myself warranted in submitting the following cautions, as necessary to be observed in correcting the text of the Hebrew scriptures.

1st. No *actual* alteration of the Hebrew text ought to be made from conjecture alone. Of all the numberless conjectural amendments which have been proposed by various critics, very few indeed have been either supported by authorities subsequently consulted, or approved by the general consent of competent critics. Sometimes, indeed, very plausible reasons may be alleged in favour of conjectural emendations ; but, even in such cases, the utmost which ought

to be done, is, either to suggest them in notes, or to place them in the margin of the Hebrew Bible for future consideration, or for support by new authorities. By far the greater part of Houbigant's conjectural amendments have long since been considered as entitled to little or no regard : and of the many ingenious amendments suggested by Dr. Kennicott, for reconciling the parallel passages of the books of Samuel and Chronicles, few comparatively have been supported by any of the very numerous MSS. and editions of the Hebrew text which were afterwards collated. But to proceed :—I would submit, in the second place, that no correction, derived *solely* from the ancient versions, should be received into the Hebrew text. Too much stress has often been laid on the *supposed* readings of the text from which the ancient versions were made. Any one who examines them with attention will find that they are very unequally executed. Sometimes the translators, like Aquila and Pagninus, adhere servilely to the literal sense of the words which they translate. Sometimes they paraphrase the text : sometimes they insert words not contained in the Hebrew, but necessary to render the passage grammatical, or intelligible in the language in which the version is made. Sometimes again they either found in the Hebrew different words from those of the Masoretic text, or they mis-

took one letter for another ; which, from the close resemblance^f between some of them, they might very easily have done. Sometimes they totally misunderstood the original, and produced a version conveying quite a different sense.

“ Quod ad versiones quidem antiquas attinet,” says Eichhorn, “ cum eæ jam solutiores decurrant, jam verborum sint tenaciores, nec interpretes antiqui scriptam sibi alibi legem ubique tam sancte servaverint, ut nihil, ne particulam, ne suffixum quidem, textui sacro inter vertendum intruderint, cum potius de suo talia multa adderent, et in subita v. c. personarum et numeri permutatione, scriptoribus Hebræis valde familiari et frequenti suæ linguæ ingenium sequi deberent, et ad id genus alia multa ducerentur.” Eichhorn’s preface to the second part of Kocher’s *Nova Bibliotheca Hebræa*, quoted in “ Remarks on the Critical Principles, &c. Oxford, 1820.”

If we could ascertain *with certainty* what was the reading of the Hebrew text from which the ancient translators made their versions, we might admit their authority in correcting that text : but this can, at best, be only a matter of con-

^f In many of the Hebrew MSS., and in some of the early editions, the Hebrew letters ב and כ, ד and ר, ה and ח, ט and ת, bear a much closer resemblance to each other than in the modern printed text ; so as in some cases to require considerable practice before they can be distinguished.

jecture, and therefore does not amount to sufficient authority for altering the Hebrew text itself. 3dly. No actual alteration of the Hebrew text ought to be made without the authority of Hebrew MSS. or editions ; nor without noticing, in every instance, the authority on which such alteration rests. Indeed it would be best in all cases to suggest the proposed reading in the margin for the consideration of Hebrew critics, before it be actually inserted in the text ; or to insert it in open characters, or between brackets ; placing the rejected reading in the margin. These are some of the principal cautions which a proper regard for the sacred original renders expedient in correcting the Hebrew Bible ; and it may be expected, with equal reason, that if a translator of the Hebrew scriptures deviates in any instance from the Masoretic text, he ought invariably to apprise his readers of such deviation, and to state the authorities by which his emendation is supported.

We are now prepared to examine in detail the critical emendations proposed by Bishop Lowth ; and in the first place those which he suggested to Mr. Merrick, for his elegant poetical version of the Book of Psalms. This work was published A. D. 1768 ; consequently the suggestions were offered many years before the publication of Dr. Kennicott's collation, the first volume of which appeared A. D. 1776, and the

second in 1780. It will be sufficient for the present purpose, if I confine myself to a few brief remarks on all the corrections proposed by Bishop Lowth in the first ten Psalms. His first remark is on Psalm ii. 7, which, for facility of reference, I shall distinguish as No. 1.

אל-הק: “Dr. Lowth thinks את-הק, according to the Septuagint, the true reading:” אל is the reading of all the MSS. and editions. Aquila, Theodotion, and some MSS. and editions collated by De Rossi, read the words differently pointed, אל instead of אל: אל is used in the sense of את, as Secker observes, Psalm lxi. 27. Judg. vii. 25, &c. See also Gen. iii. 8. Jer. x. 2, &c. The reading therefore proposed by Bishop Lowth is unsupported by any authority.

No. 2. Psalm ii. 12. “Dr. Lowth thinks “ מדרך the true reading, agreeably to LXX. and “Syr.” It may be remarked, that the prefixes are often omitted in Hebrew, and supplied in the ancient versions. For the omission of the prefix מ, see Noldius de Particulis, in præp. מ No. 45; and Glassii Philologia Sacra. As דרך is the reading of all the MSS. and editions, it is probable that there is either an ellipsis of מ, or that דרך signifies, as Schræder translates it, *quoad viam* §.

No. 3. Psalm iv. 3. “The reading of LXX.

§ Schræderi Institut. ad Fund. Ling. Hebr.

“ and Vulg., ἕως πότε βαρυκάριοι; ἵνατι—עד-מה
 “ למה לב נבודי-לב is undoubtedly the true read-
 “ ing.” Dr. Lowth. The reading suggested is
 supported by no Hebrew MS. or edition. From
 the Extranghelo-Syriac MS. in the Ambrosian
 library at Milan, it appears that Aquila read the
 text as it stands. His version, given in a note,
 is, “ *usque quo gloriosi mei in ignominiam* ^h.”
 The Greek of Aquila is not quite so full in
 Montfaucon’s Hexapla, ἕως πότε οἱ ἐνδόξοι μου.

The common reading is preferred by Glas-
 sius, Jahn, Dathe, De Rossi, Berlin, Horsley,
 &c., and is also supported by Syr. Child. and
 Symmachus. Glassius considers that there is
 an *ellipsis verbi*; and adduces many similar in-
 stances. He translates *usquequo gloria mea in*
ignominiam: scil. [vertetur ⁱ.]

No. 4. Psalm iv. 4. “ I think Bishop Hare’s
 “ conjecture a very probable one; that it should
 “ be לי חסדר, as in Ps. xxxi. 22 : הפלה and
 “ הפלה are frequently confounded.” Dr. Lowth.
 This conjecture, though certainly ingenious, is
 not supported by any MS. or version; nor is it

^h The Psalms of this celebrated and valuable MS. were pre-
 pared for the press by Bugati, librarian of the Ambrosian
 library, and published in 1820, after his decease, with a Latin
 version and notes. It may be remarked that no facsimile
 has been given of this manuscript, either in De Rossi’s speci-
 men, or in Bugati’s editions. The printed character is widely
 different from that of the MS.: this is stated from my own
 examination of the MS.

ⁱ Dathe’s Glassii Philologia Sacra, I. 332.

necessary to the sense : חסיד signifies a pious, or religious man. The remark is just respecting הפלה and הפלא.

No. 5. Psal. vii. 5. Bishop Hare proposes משלמי, which Dr. Lowth approves, and LXX. Syr. Vulg. Ar. read משלמי, or משלמי. This alteration, though it makes a good sense, is supported by no MS. ; nor is it required by the context. For the unusual sense שלם in this passage, see Job xxii. 21.

No. 6. Ibid. Bishop Lowth refers to Houbigant, as proposing to read ואלהצה *et oppressi* for ואחלצה, and alleges the authority of Syr. and Chald. in support of this reading : and as transpositions of the letters occur so often in the collated MSS., it appears not a very improbable conjecture. But this reading has not the support of any MS. or edition ; and Bishop Horsley, in his Notes on the Psalms, observes, that חליצה is twice used for spoils stripped from the carcase of a slain enemy ; and hence infers that the verb חליץ may signify, not only to deliver, but to *strip, spoil, or plunder*. Castell's Syriac Lexicon, edit. Michaelis, gives *diripuit, surripuit, expilavit, spoliavit*, as the senses of the corresponding Syriac verb ܚܠܝܥ. Aquila also supports this interpretation by translating אחלצה, ἀνήρπασα ; and the scrupulous exactness of his version gives much weight to his authority.

No. 7. Psalm vii. 9. “ Here, too, Houbigant “ has happily restored from the Chaldee a word “ dropped in the Hebrew, which seems necessary to make out the construction and the “ sense, וכתמי גמל עלי.” Dr. Lowth. This is very plausible ; but the reading is supported by no MS. and by no version except Chaldee ; and the paraphrastic character of this version makes it probable that the verb was added to complete the sense. עלי is most likely a pleonasm ; and though the two members of the sense are of unequal lengths, this is by no means an unusual occurrence in the Psalms. See, for instance, Ps. viii. 2 and 10 :

יהוה אדנינו
מה אדיר שמך בכל-הארץ.

See also Psalm xi. 4. &c.

No. 8. Psalm ix. 17. עושה, LXX. This depends merely on a difference of punctuation : עשה, the common reading may be either the third person sing. præt., or the part. *benoni*. If the common reading be retained, the passage may be translated, “ *Jehovah is become manifest ! he has executed judgment.*” Vulg. Æth. Ar. support the punctuation proposed by Bishop Lowth. The sense is nearly the same, whichever reading be adopted.

No. 9. Psalm x. 4. “ I think Bishop Hare’s “ emendation probable.” Dr. Lowth. Bishop Hare proposes to read יהוה after ידרש ; but this is not supported by any MS. or version.

There is not unfrequently an ellipsis of אלהים in Hebrew, which appears to be the case in the present instance; and accordingly the word *God* is supplied in the authorized version. דרש is a verb particularly applied to seeking God in prayer. See 2 Chron. xv. 12, 13. xvii. 4. Job v. 8, &c.

No. 10. Psalm x. 8. “For חצרים, Houbigant reads by conjecture, transposing the letters, חרצים, in insidiis *fovearum, antro-rum*, which image is agreeable to what follows in the same and the next verse.” This is one of the very numerous conjectures of Houbigant, which has received no support from collations subsequently made. חצר signifies, according to Gibbs’s Gesenius^k, *a small place, a village*, near which places beasts of prey often lie in ambush: translate, “He couched in the coverts [near] the villages. *Sedet in insidiis pagorum.*” Dathe.

No. 11. Psalm x. 18. On this difficult verse Bishop Lowth only remarks, that “Houbigant’s suggestions seem as probable as any thing else that has been offered upon them.” These are all the amended readings proposed by Bishop Lowth in the first ten Psalms: and it will be observed on what slender authorities they for the most part rest, and how few of them receive

^k I cannot at present refer to the Cambridge translation of Gesenius’s Hebrew Lexicon.

the slightest support from the extensive subsequent collations of various readings by Kennicott and De Rossi. I may add, how few have been adopted by critics of any eminence, since the collations of Kennicott and De Rossi have been examined and duly estimated.

But it may be said, that these are the hasty remarks of the learned author, written at a time when he had no opportunity of consulting the versions of the Polyglott, or the best lexicons and concordances ; and that therefore it is not fair to submit them to the test of severe criticism. Admitting this to be the case, we will rest satisfied with having shewn from the passages adduced how little weight can be attached to these corrections, and will proceed to the examination of some of the critical amendments which he adopted, after ample time for mature consideration, in his learned and elaborate work, the new translation of Isaiah¹. In this branch of my subject, my observations have been in some degree anticipated in a pamphlet ascribed to a learned prelate of the Irish church, then Professor of Hebrew at Oxford, entitled, “ Remarks upon the critical principles, and the practical application of those principles, adopted by writers, who have at various periods re-

¹ “ Isaiah. A new translation ; with a preliminary Dissertation, and notes critical, philosophical, and explanatory. Lond. 1778.”

“ commended a new translation of the Bible as expedient and necessary : Oxford, 1820.” It was this pamphlet which first led me to doubt the soundness of Bishop Lowth’s principles for the critical amendment of the Hebrew text ; and further consideration and examination have confirmed me in the belief that such principles cannot safely be applied for the emendation of the sacred text. But as the remarks of the learned author are confined to three passages in Bishop Lowth’s translation of Isaiah, it will not, I trust, be deemed superfluous to extend the examination to a few more passages, and to arrange under different heads the critical amendments proposed by Bishop Lowth in the Hebrew text of the Psalms and of the prophet Isaiah, with the authorities by which they are respectively supported. This examination will be confined to the corrections proposed in the three first chapters of Isaiah.

No. 12. Isaiah i. 3. **ישראל**. “ LXX. Syr. “ Aqu. Theod. Vulg. read **וישראל**, adding the “ conjunction, which, being rendered as an ad- “ versative, sets the opposition in a stronger “ light.” Bishop Lowth. This reading is supported by no MS., nor by the Chaldee, though *autem* is erroneously inserted by Walton, in his translation of that version. ׀ is often omitted in Hebrew, in passages where the conjunction is supplied by the versions.

No. 13. Ibid. Bishop Lowth, with much plau-

sibility, endeavours to prove, on the authority of Syr. Aqu. Theod. Vulg., that אֲוֹרֵי has been lost out of the text after יִשְׂרָאֵל. I must refer the reader to the Bishop's note, which is too long for insertion. This is the first passage commented on in the "Remarks upon the Critical Principles, &c." referred to in a former page, and from that pamphlet I shall quote the observations of Kocher on Bishop Lowth's ingenious though fallacious reasoning.

After having stated the Bishop's position and reasoning upon it, he thus proceeds: "Nunc
 " videamus argumenta in partem alteram. Ac
 " primum quidem non unum hodie sed gemi-
 " num με LXX. habent, hoc modo: Ἰσραὴλ δέ
 " με οὐκ ἔγνω, καὶ ὁ λαὸς με οὐ συνῆκεν. Ergo
 " suo in codice bis LXX. אֲוֹרֵי legisse dixeris?
 " an *semel*? profecto ego *ne semel quidem*;
 " nam prius *per ellipsin* dictum existimantes
 " supplevere, ut nonnulli etiam recentiorum, re-
 " cepto interpretum more: in posteriori ne
 " cæcus quidem erraturus fuisse videatur, ut
 " verisimillimum sit, illos et עֲמִי legisse, et per
 " ὁ λαὸς μου vertisse^m; dein librariorum incuria
 " vitium irrepsisse, errore facili quod eadem
 " vocula με præcesserit; idque factum mature,
 " ob illa Hieronymi verba: 'pro quo soli LXX.
 " transtulerunt, *Israel autem me non cognovit,*

^m Two MSS., Ald. and Cyrill. Alex., read μου for με, which supports Baver's conjecture. See Holmes's Septuagint in loc.

“ *et populus me non intellexit.*’ Atque prius *me*
 “ Vulgatus quoque habet, eadem plane ratione
 “ et causa, sive suo usus judicio, sive LXX. ut
 “ solet, secutus. Quod autem ad Aquilam et
 “ Theodotionem attinet, ad notissimum אִוֹתֵי,
 “ si tamen, ut ponitur, affuit, sic eos hæere
 “ potuisse censeam, ut pro evidente proboque
 “ accusativo incongruentem genitivum adhibere
 “ maluerint? quare non dubito, quin suum *μὸν*
 “ non ad Ἰσραῆλ, sed sequens *λαὸς* addiderint,
 “ quo et pertinet, et manifeste in *Bosii* Bibliis
 “ Græcis refertur. Confer Aldi editionem, et
 “ var. lect. Polygl. Lond. tomo VI. et in con-
 “ siderantiæ peccatum, opinor, intelliges præ-
 “ terea testem pro me appello Hieronymum,
 “ absque supplemento sic vertentem: ‘ Israel
 “ non cognovit, et populus meus non intellexit:’
 “ item Syrum appello, *codicumque fidem*. Ve-
 “ rum superest reliquis argumentis potentius
 “ verbum ידע *absolute usurpatum significantius*
 “ *simul et elegantius esse*, hoc modo: ‘ Israel ni-
 “ hil novit, populus meus nihil intelligit.’ En
 “ exempla apud nostrum Esaiam lvi. 10. item
 “ xliv. 17. Jobi viii. 9. et Psal. lxxxii. 5. לֹא
 “ ידעו ולא יבינו, *nihil norunt, nec quicquam*
 “ *intelligunt,*’ advertuntve; en eadem verba, ac
 “ in loco nostro, et utrumque *absolute* peræque
 “ usurpata. Hoc si attendissent veteresque et
 “ recentiores, inutili, opinor, censura abstinuis-
 “ sent. Nonne in ipso ominosum offendisse li-

“ mine, si tamen hic, ut autumo, Bp. Lowthus
 “ falsus est ⁿ ?”

This emendation of Bishop Lowth being supported by more arguments and authorities than the generality of his criticisms, it seemed necessary to give the remarks of Kocher at full length.

No. 14. Ibid. “ LXX. Syr. Vulg. reads רעמי:
 “ and so likewise sixteen MSS.” This reading is also supported by fourteen MSS., and perhaps another, collated by De Rossi, as well as by Aqu. Theod.^o, and is not unlikely to be the true reading : but there is so frequently an ellipsis of the conjunction ו, that, whichever reading be adopted, the sense is not affected.

No. 15. Ch. i. 4. “ משהיתים; five MSS.
 “ (one of them ancient) read משהתים without
 “ the first ו; in Hophal, *corrupted*, not *corrupt-*
 “ *ors*: see the same word in the same form,
 “ and in the same sense, Prov. xxv. 26.” This reading is also supported by LXX. Vulg. Ar.; but De Rossi does not mention any MS. which has the vowel points of the conjunction *hophal*. This correction improves the sense, though not absolutely required by the context.

ⁿ Kocheri Vindiciæ S. Textus Hebræi Esaiæ Vatis, adversus D. Roberti Lowthi, Ven. Episc. Lond. Criticam, quoted by the author of “ Remarks upon the Critical Principles, &c.”

^o De Rossi refers to Aqu. Theod. as supporting this reading; but neither Montfaucon’s Hexapla nor Holmes’s Septuagint adduce their authority.

No. 16. Ibid. נָזַר. "Thirty-two MSS. (five " ancient) and two editions read נִזְוַר; which " reading determines the word to be from the " root נָזַר, *to alienate*, not from נָזַר, *to sepa-* " *rate*; so Kimchi understands it. See also " Annott. in Noldium, 68." This reading is quite immaterial, as in the pointed Hebrew נִ, used as one of the *matres lectiones*, is inserted or omitted without any general rule, and without affecting the text. In the Masoretic text נִ has *cholem* over it, which restricts it to the sense of *alienating*.

No. 17. Ch. i. 7. זָרִים. "This reading, though " confirmed by all the ancient versions, gives us " no good sense; for *your land is devoured by* " *strangers; and is desolate, as if overthrown* " *by strangers*, is a mere tautology; or, what is " as bad, an identical comparison." Bishop Lowth refers to Schultens, Schindler, Kimchi, and Abendana, as giving to זָרִים the sense of זָרִים. But none of the MSS. have זָרִים; and he admits that the ancient versions confirm the common interpretation. Nor is there more tautology in the sentence than we often meet with in the poetry of this ancient and unpolished language. The country is represented as desolate, as if foreign armies, like a flight of locusts, had devoured its produce, and had levelled its fortresses, and destroyed its towns and cities.

No. 18. Ch. i. 13. אֵוֶן וְעִצְרָה. On the authority of LXX. alone, without any support of

the MSS. or the other versions, Bishop Lowth has changed און into צום.

No. 19. Ch. i. 15. ידינכם. Bishop Lowth supposes that LXX. Vulg. read כי ידינכם : but as כי is not found in any MS. nor in Syriac, nor is at all required, it is more likely to have been added in LXX. et Vulg. to complete the sense. It may be observed also that γὰρ is omitted in an ancient Vatican MS. of the eleventh century. See Holmes's Septuagint.

No. 30. Ch. i. 25. כנר. "Dr. Durell proposes " a transposition of letters בכר ; and so likewise Archbishop Secker." Some MSS. read בבור ; but as the reading proposed by Durell is supported by no MS. edition, or ancient version, it cannot on any sound principle be admitted into the text. The sense appears to be, " I will refine according to purity, or with purity, [so as to restore to purity] thy debased metal, and will [thus] remove all thy tin." All the tin with which thy silver was alloyed.

No. 21. Chap. i. 29. תבושו, in the second person, Vulg. Chald. two MSS. and one edition ; and in agreement with the rest of the sentence." "The object of this note," says the learned author of "Remarks upon the Critical Principles, &c." "is to substitute the reading of תבשו, ye shall be ashamed, for that of יבשו, they shall be ashamed, upon the authority of Vulg. Chald. and two MSS., one edition. But Kocher, on the other hand,

“ more correctly contends, that the *inter-*
 “ *mixture* of personal pronouns, applicable to
 “ one and the same individual or individuals, is
 “ so far from being unusual in Hebrew, that it
 “ is esteemed *an elegance*; and that in the very
 “ verse under consideration, the translators of
 “ different versions render the persons of the
 “ verbs contained in it variously, deviating from
 “ the strict letter of the text at pleasure^p.” Kocher
 states, that Chald. expresses all the verbs in
 this sentence in the *second* person; LXX. Syr.
 Ar. in the *third*; Vulg. has the first verbs in
 the *third* person, and the last in the *second*.
 Nor is Bishop Lowth correct in quoting the au-
 thority of Vulg., for this version “ adopts a ren-
 “ dering which makes directly against him,
 “ translating the disputed verb, not in the *se-*
 “ *cond* person, *ye*, as stated by him, but in the
 “ *third* person, *they*; as in the Hebrew, ‘*they*
 “ shall be ashamed.’ ‘*Confundentur enim ab*
 “ *idolis* ^q.’ In corroboration also of Kocher’s
 “ remark respecting the frequent and designed
 “ intermixture of persons in the Hebrew text, I
 “ shall refer to Gen. xlix. 24, 25, 26. Deut. xxxii.
 “ 15, 17. Micah ii. 3. Psalm xxii. 27; quoting
 “ only Deut. xxxii. 15. Here the intermixture
 “ of persons, evidently however applied to one
 “ and the same, is thus correctly expressed in
 “ English : but *Jeshurun* waxed fat, and kicked:

^p “ Remarks upon the Critical Principles, &c.” p. 81.

^q Ibid. p. 82.

“ *thou* art waxen fat, *thou* art grown thick, *thou* art covered with fatness : then *he* forsook God, which made *him*, and lightly esteemed the rock of his salvation ^r.” This peculiarity of the Hebrew idiom has not escaped the attention of Glassius. In his fiftieth Canon de Verbo, he says, “ Personæ verborum Hebræorum inter se non raro commutantur :” and he adduces this passage of Isaiah as one of the examples of the rule ^s.

No. 22. Chap. ii. 2. From the parallel passage, Micah iv. 1—4. Bishop Lowth proposes to correct the text in Isaiah. Thus, he says, הוּא may be supplied from Micah, if dropped in Isaiah : he proposes to read כָּל עַמִּים, instead of כָּל הַגּוֹיִם, and וְאֵל for the second אֵל. He observes also, that the words עַד רִחֵק are added in Micah, and are read in the Syriac version of this passage on Isaiah. But the learned prelate seems not to have been aware of the caution requisite in admitting various readings from the parallel passages. Writing before the publication of Dr. Kennicott’s great work, and probably made acquainted with the readings of the MSS. in a few select passages only, it is not to be expected that he should have known that the Jewish critics frequently altered the Hebrew

^r “ Remarks, &c.” p. 82, 83 ; where the different renderings of this passage by the ancient versions are also given.

^s Glassii Philologia Sacra ; an invaluable work for acquiring an accurate knowledge of the Hebrew language.

text by admitting readings from the parallel passages, and often where such readings have no reasonable claim to be admitted. The reader who wishes to be fully satisfied on this point may consult the parallel texts, which Dr. Kennicott has in many cases placed in juxtaposition. I shall confine myself to a few instances of this conjectural emendation from the parallel passages which occur on comparing this chapter of Isaiah with Micah iv. 1—4.

Isaiah ii. 3, for עמים, one MS. reads with Micah גוים, and, on the other hand, Micah iv. 1, for יהוה נכון two MSS. read with Isaiah נכון יהוה. Three MSS. concur with Isaiah in omitting הוא in Micah; and, as Bishop Lowth observes, הוא is placed in the margin of one MS. of Isaiah. Two MSS. read with Isaiah, כל הגוים for עמים, and Micah iv. 2, two MSS. read with Isaiah עמים for גוים. Two MSS. read with Isaiah ואל for אל, and Micah iv. 3, four MSS. Kennicott, and five De Rossi, read ישא for ישאו. Bearing in mind therefore this common practice of the Jewish critics, it will appear, that of the four readings adduced from the parallel passages of Micah, there is only one which there is the slightest reason to consider genuine, namely, ואל for אל; and the insertion or omission of the prefixed ו is so arbitrary, that it is of no consequence which reading be adopted.

No. 23. Ch. ii. 6. Bishop Lowth proposes to

insert **מקסם** before **מקדם**, and has adopted this reading in his translation, though it receives no support from any of the various readings, or the ancient versions. The expression is perhaps elliptical, though it is not easy to ascertain its exact sense. Glassius translates it, *quia pleni sunt præ Orienti*.

No. 24. Ibid. **יספיקו**. Bishop Lowth proposes a conjectural reading of Dr. Jebb, **יספידו**, which he thinks was also the reading of LXX. Vulg.; but this is very questionable, and the conjecture still remains without any authority for its support.

No. 25. Chap. ii. 10. After **ומהדר גאנו** Bishop Lowth adds, on the authority of LXX. Ar. and one MS., and of the parallel verses 19 and 21. **בקומו לערץ הארץ**. This reading receives no support from the collation subsequently made by De Rossi, nor from Chald., Syr., or Vulg. It may be remarked, that the intercalary verses are sometimes repeated, with a little change in the words. See Psalm xxiv. 8, 10, &c.

No. 26. Ch. ii. 11. “For **שפל ושח**, read “**שפלו שח**. Dr. Durell: which rectifies the “grammatical construction.” This ingenious emendation is supported by no authority, nor does the grammatical construction require it. When one substantive governs another, the verb in Hebrew sometimes corresponds with the second instead of the first; according to Glassius’s

Canon LIV. De Verbo. “*Quando duo substan-
 “ tiva, quorum unum regit alterum, conjungun-
 “ tur, tum verbum numero respondet quando-
 “ que posteriori, cum deberet priori.*” It should
 be observed that Chald. seems to have read
 שפלו ושח.

No. 27. Ch. ii. 18. יחלף. “Ancient vers.
 “ and an ancient MS. read יחלפו.” This read-
 ing is approved by De Rossi and some other
 critics. It is however supported by only one
 MS. besides the ancient versions, which in this
 case, from what has been already said, may be
 considered of questionable authority. חלף may
 agree with כליל, a construction not unusual:
 “*And [as for] the idols, the whole [of them] is
 “ passed away.*”

No. 28. Chap. ii. 20. “The word לו, for
 “ himself, is omitted by an ancient MS. and is
 “ unnecessary. It does not appear that any
 “ copy of LXX. has it, except MS. Pachom,
 “ and MS. I. D. 11. and they have εαυτοῖς;
 “ להם, plural.” The word is also omitted in one
 of De Rossi’s MSS. But besides MS. Pachom,
 εαυτοῖς is also inserted in eight other MSS. col-
 lated by Holmes, and seven of his MSS. have
 ἐποίησεν, instead of ἐποίησαν; having read עשה,
 instead of עשו. So Vulg., quæ fecerat sibi;
 and as לו, or להם, is the reading of all the
 other versions, it is not unlikely that the origi-
 nal reading was עשה לו, which agrees very

well with the context, and from a partial obliteration of the last letter, עשה might easily have become עשו. לך is a common pleonasm. Dathe translates, *quæ sibi fecerat, ut ea adoreret.*

No. 29. Ch. iii. 6. “ Before שמלה, *garment*, “ two MSS. (one ancient,) and Talm. Bab. have “ the word לאמר : and so LXX. Vulg. Syr. “ Chald. I place it with Houbigant after שמלה.” The Bishop is mistaken with regard to Vulg. “ *Apprehendet enim in patrem suum domesti-* “ *cum patris sui : vestimentum tibi est, &c.*” לאמר is often omitted in Hebrew poetry : De Rossi found it in none of his MSS., and it probably crept into the two MSS. referred to by Bishop Lowth from the margin. Similar interpolations to complete the sense are not unfrequent in the collated MSS.

No. 30. Ibid. “ Before תחת ירך a MS. adds “ תהיה ; another MS. adds in the same place תקח “ בירך, which latter reading seems to be a va- “ rious reading of the two preceding words, mak- “ ing a very good sense ; *take into thy hand our* “ *ruinous state.*” This reading is supported by none of De Rossi’s MSS., nor by any of the ancient versions ; nor is any alteration required. Bishop Lowth observes also, that twenty-one MSS. three editions, Talm. Bab. have יריך, plural. Some of De Rossi’s MSS. have also this reading ; but it is of little consequence which reading be adopted. The singular and plural

form of this noun are used nearly promiscuously. See the Psalms *passim*, &c.

No. 31. Ch. iii. 7. ישא. "LXX. Syr. Jerome " read וישא, adding the conjunction; which " seems necessary in this place." The reading proposed improves the sentence, but is supported by no MS. nor by Vulg. Chald.

32. Ch. iii. 8. עני. On the authority of Syr. alone, Bishop Lowth reads ענין: but it is probable that a collation of Syriac MSS., of which many valuable copies are preserved in our public libraries, would prove that in this passage the printed Syriac is incorrect. "Mendose Syrus in Polyglottis," says Michaelis, "ܥܢܢ [the cloud] pro ܥܢܝ [the eyes.]" De Rossi in loc. For עני more than ninety MSS. read *plene*, עיני; and in the margin of Vander Hooght's Bible is this note, "חסרי י, "the letter yod is deficient." עיני is probably the true reading.

No. 33. Chap. iii. 10. אמרו. On a conjectural insertion of the word אשרי after אמרו, Bishop Lowth has altered the English without any authority or countenance from either MSS. or ancient version. The translation of Syr. in Walton's Polyglott, is "*justum [Deum] vehementer exacerberunt;*" but here also, as in many other cases, it is probable that a collation of MSS. would lead to the correction of this ancient and valuable version. A slight change of a vowel point in ܐܡܪܘ would re-

store this version to a perfect consistency with the Masoretic text, "*dicite justi.*"

No. 34. Chap. iii. 13. עמים. Bishop Lowth, on the authority of LXX. (to which may be added that of Syr. Ar.) reads עמו. But no MS. supports the proposed amendment; and the affixed pronoun, though necessary in English, is often omitted in Hebrew. Chald. Vulg. also support the Masoretic text.

No. 35. Ch. iii. 14. Here also the Bishop reads הכרמי for הכרם, alleging the authority of LXX., Chald., and Jerome. But all the MSS. Vulg. Syr. read כרם. See also the preceding note.

No. 36. Chap. iii. 17. Bishop Lowth reads ושפל for ושפה on the authority of LXX. Syr. Chald.: but the Masoretic text requires no change. "In *pesikta*," says Buxtorf, in his Chaldee Lexicon, "legitur ad illud, ושפה Esai. iii. 16. Deus percussit eis (filias Jerusalem) ושפה בצרעת scabie lepræ, sicut scriptum est, ושפה, שאת או ספחת et alibi scriptum est שפחת : אדני : Lev. xiii. 2. (ספחת species lepræ est : sic *lepra affecit.*)"

No. 37. Ch. iii. 24. Bishop Lowth supposes that four words may have been lost out of the text, תהיה לך רעת מראה : but of these there is no trace to be found.

No. 38. Dr. Jubb proposes to read כהי for כי, from כהה, *ruges contrahere*. Dr. Durell's emendation from Syr. תַּחַת, instead of תַּחַת, merely

changing the vowel points, *for thy beauty shall be destroyed*, is much more entitled to consideration. Aquila read the text as it stands, with the exception perhaps of יפִי for יפִיךָ. He concurs with LXX. Vulg. Ar. in joining ver. 24 to the beginning of ver. 25. ὅτι ἀντὶ καλλοῦς σου ἐν μάχαιρα πεσοῦνται.

Having noticed all the principal amendments of the Hebrew text proposed by Bishop Lowth in the three first chapters of Isaiah, as well as in the ten first Psalms, I may now release my readers as well as myself from an examination, tedious indeed, yet necessary, with a view of ascertaining whether the learned and accomplished prelate has been as successful in his suggested corrections of the Hebrew text, as in other branches of sacred literature: and whether, on the other hand, he has not lent the sanction of his great name to principles of criticism which cannot, without the utmost danger, be applied to the amendment of the sacred text.

The new readings proposed by Bishop Lowth, omitting one or two which are wholly unimportant, amount to thirty-eight: eleven in the first ten Psalms, and twenty-seven in the three first chapters of Isaiah. They may be classed in the following manner:

I. Readings not required by the context, and unsupported by any authority either of MSS. or

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ancient versions, Nos. 1, 4, 9, 10, 17, 20, 22, 23, 26, 32, 33, 37, 38 : total, thirteen.

II. Readings not required by the context, supported by one or more ancient versions, but by no MSS. or editions, Nos. 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, 18, 19, 25, 31, 34, 35, 36 : total, fifteen.

III. Readings not required by the context, but supported by MSS. and ancient versions, Nos. 14, 16, 21, 27, 28, 29 : total, six.

IV. Readings preferable to the text, supported by MSS. and ancient versions, No. 15 : total, one.

Having already submitted to the reader the opinions of some eminent foreign critics on the present state of the Masoretic text, and on the principles which ought to be adhered to in correcting it, I shall conclude this short essay with the judicious observations, on the principles which ought to be observed in correcting the sacred text, of Dr. Campbell, in the preliminary dissertation prefixed to his New Translation of the Gospels.

“ I cannot help disapproving of any correction, where the expression as it stands in the text is not downright nonsense, merely on conjecture ; for, were such a method of correcting to be generally adopted, no bound could be set to the freedom which would be used with sacred writ. We should very soon see it a perfect Babel in language, as various in its style, in different editions, as are the

“ dialects of our different sects and parties.
 “ This is an extreme, which, if it should prevail,
 “ would be of much more pernicious consequence
 “ than the other extreme, of adhering implicitly
 “ and inflexibly to whatever we find in the com-
 “ mon edition. We know the worst of this
 “ error already ; and we can say with assurance,
 “ that though the common editions are not per-
 “ fect, there is no mistake in them of such a
 “ nature as materially to affect either the doc-
 “ trines to be believed, or the duties to be prac-
 “ tised, by a Christian. The worst consequences
 “ which the blunders of transcribers have occa-
 “ sioned are their hurting sometimes the per-
 “ spicuity, sometimes the credibility of holy
 “ writ, affording a handle to the objections of
 “ infidels, and thereby weakening the evidences
 “ of religion. But as to the extreme of correct-
 “ ing on mere conjecture, its tendency is mani-
 “ festly to throw every thing loose, to leave all
 “ at the mercy of system-builders and framers of
 “ hypotheses ; for who shall give law to the
 “ licentiousness of guessing ? It is not enough
 “ to answer that the classics have sometimes
 “ been corrected on conjecture. The cases are
 “ not parallel. A freedom may be taken with
 “ the latter with approbation, which cannot,
 “ with propriety, be taken with the former.
 “ Houbigant, a critic of eminence in Oriental
 “ literature, and a good translator, has, in my
 “ judgment, taken most unjustifiable liberties in

“ his conjectural emendations, and has been but
 “ too much followed by critics, commentators,
 “ or paraphrasts, amongst ourselves. I am far
 “ from thinking, that in some of his guesses he
 “ may not be right; it is, however, much more
 “ probable that, in the greater part of them, he
 “ is wrong. A mere conjecture may be men-
 “ tioned in a note, *but if, without the authority*
 “ *of copies, translations, or ancient ecclesiastical*
 “ *writers, it may be admitted into the text, there*
 “ *is an end of all reliance on the Scriptures,*
 “ *as the dictates of the Divine Spirit.* Manu-
 “ scripts, ancient translations, the readings of
 “ the most early commentators, are, like the
 “ witnesses in a judicial process, direct evidence
 “ in this matter. The reasonings of con-
 “ jecturers are but like the speeches of the plead-
 “ ers. To receive, on the credit of a sagacious
 “ conjecture, a reading not absolutely necessary
 “ to the construction, and quite unsupported
 “ by positive evidence, appears not less incon-
 “ gruous, than it would be in a trial to return a
 “ verdict, founded on the pleading of a plau-
 “ sible speaker, not only without proof, but in
 “ direct opposition to it ^t.”

There are favourable symptoms at pre-
 sent in this country of a more zealous and ex-
 tensive cultivation of the Hebrew language,
 and a more careful attention to its peculiar cha-

^t Campbell on the Gospels: preliminary Dissertations, p.
 646—9.

racteristics, than have hitherto prevailed. Besides the light which has been recently thrown on this language by the works of Schrœder, Dathe, Gesenius, and other eminent foreign critics, the recent foundation of several Hebrew scholarships in the University of Oxford, cannot fail to promote the cause of Hebrew literature in that seat of learning : whilst in the sister University the new translations of the Psalms and Proverbs, by Dr. French and Mr. Skinner, may be safely said to shew, at least, as thorough a knowledge of Hebrew construction and idiom as any English version of the holy Scriptures that has ever appeared.

Under these circumstances, it is particularly important at the present time, that in any attempts which may be made to correct the Hebrew text by the assistance of the very numerous MSS. and editions which have been hitherto collated, (and more might still be done in the way of collation,) the principles to be adopted should be consistent with the rules of sound criticism ; and, above all, with that respect and veneration for those sacred oracles which were penned under the guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and which alone are able to make us “ wise unto salvation.”

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