



## ACRA.

The Gospels of Matthew and John, in the Acra language, by the Rev. W. A. Hanson. Printed, 184—.

Mr Hanson was a native of the Gold Coast, and, after being ordained by the Bishop of London, went out as Government Chaplain to Cape Coast Castle.—Rep. Bib. Soc. 1843, p. 116.—Ibid. 1804, p. 124.

## GREBO.

The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and John, in the Grebo language, and also some other portions of the Scriptures; by the mission of the American Board, Cape Palmas. Printed.—Miss. Her. vol. xxxv. p. 350.

The book of Genesis, and the Gospel of Luke, in the Grebo language, by the Rev. J. Payne, of the American Episcopal Board of Missions. Printed.—Rep. Bib. Soc. 1850, p. 129.—Ibid. 1851, p. 110.

## BASSA.

The Gospels of Matthew and John, and the Acts of the Apostles, in the Bassa language, by William G. Crocker, of the American Baptist Board, Liberia. Printed, 184—.

Romans and Corinthians were nearly ready for the press.—Rep. Amer. Bapt. Board, 1840, p. 15.—Ibid. 1845, p. 29.—Ibid. 1846, p. 42.

## BULLOM.

The Four Gospels, and the three Epistles of John, in Bullom, translated by G. R. Nylander, of the Church Missionary Society.

Matthew was printed with the English text in parallel columns.—Miss. Reg. vol. iv. p. 194; vol. v. p. 389.

## TIMMANEE.

The Gospels of Matthew and Luke, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistle to the Romans, in the Timmanee language, by C. F. Schlenker (and, perhaps, other missionaries), of the Church Society.—Proceed. Ch. Miss. Soc. 1844, p. 33.—Ibid. 1853, p. 33.

## SUSOO.

The New Testament (a considerable part of), translated into Susoo, by John G. Wilhelm, and Jonathan S. Klein, of the Church Missionary Society.—Miss. Reg. vol. v. p. 389; vol. vi. p. 234.—Proceed. Ch. Miss. Soc. 1821, p. 73.





## MANDINGO.

The Four Gospels, in the Mandingo language, by R. M. Macbrair, of the Wesleyan Missionary Society.

Matthew, printed.—Rep. Bib. Soc. 1838, p. 91.—Ibid. 1839, App. p. 110.

## NORTH AMERICA.

## GREENLAND.

The books of Genesis, Exodus, and Leviticus, in the Greenland language, by Paul Egede, one of the Danish missionaries in Greenland.—P. Egede, *Nachrichten von Gronland*, pp. 146, 166, 180, 196.

The Pentateuch, in the Greenland language, by Bishop Fabricius, and the Rev. Mr. Wolff, chaplain of the citadel of Copenhagen, both of whom had been missionaries in Greenland.—Rep. Bib. Soc. 1823, p. 45.

Some passages of the Old Testament, in the Greenland language, by John Beck, MS.—*Fortsetzung, Brud. Hist.* tom. i. p. 328. Other parts of the Old Testament were translated by Jasper Brodersen, another of the missionaries.—Ibid. tom. ii. p. 47.

Isaiah, in the Greenland language, by Bishop Fabricius.—*Morav. Period. Accounts*, vol. xii. p. 66.

The Psalms, in the Greenland language, by Valentine Muller, one of the Moravian missionaries. Printed, 184.—Ibid. vol. xvi. pp. 40, 456.

A version of Genesis, the Psalms, and Isaiah was made by the Moravian missionaries many years ago, but it is so defective as to be of very little use, and is altogether unfit for printing. Within the last few years a version of the same books has made its appearance in print, for the use of the Danish mission; but all competent judges of the language, both Europeans and Greenlanders, agree in pronouncing it equally incorrect and useless as the other.—*Morav. Per. Acc.* vol. xv. p. 99.

The Old Testament, in the Greenland language, translating by Pastor Kragh, formerly a Danish missionary in Greenland.—Rep. Bib. Soc. 1834, p. 54.

The New Testament, in the Greenland language, by Paul Egede.

The New Testament, in the Greenland language, by Otto Fabricius, one of the Danish missionaries. Copenhagen, 1799.

Both these translations were printed, but they are so imperfect that they are not understood by the people.—MS. Accounts in the author's possession. By another account, they were not distinct versions: Fabricius merely published a new and much improved edition of Egede's translation.—*Edin. Encyclop.* vol. x. p. 502.

Harmony of the Four Gospels, in the Greenland language, by the Moravian missionaries.—*Morav. Period. Accounts*, vol. vii. p. 23.





The New Testament, in the Greenland language, by John Beck, one of the Moravian missionaries, MS.

The New Testament, in the Greenland language, by John C. Kleinschmidt, one of the Moravian missionaries. London, 1822.—Morav. Period. Accounts, vol. vii. p. 25; vol. viii. p. 81.—Rep. Bib. Soc. 1822, App. p. 125.

## ESQUIMAUX.

The Old Testament (a large part of), in Esquimaux, chiefly by the Moravian missionaries, Labrador.

The Pentateuch, Psalms, Proverbs, Isaiah, and other prophets, in Esquimaux, by the same. Printed.

Harmony of the Four Gospels, in Esquimaux, by the same. Printed.

The New Testament, in Esquimaux, by J. L. Morhardt, one of the Moravian missionaries. London, 182.—Morav. Per. Acc. vol. v. p. 23; vol. x. p. 60; vol. xvii. p. 102.—Rep. Bib. Soc. 1849, p. 164.

## CREE.

The Gospel of Matthew, in the Cree language, by one of the missionaries of the Church Society.—Proceed. Ch. Miss. Soc. 1851, p. 229.

The Gospel of John, in the Cree language.

This was printed in the Syllabic alphabet, formed for the Cree language, by the Rev. James Evans, one of the Methodist missionaries in the Hudson's Bay Company's territory.—Church Miss. Intelligencer, 1853, p. 68.

## ABENAKUIS.

The Gospel of Mark, in the Abenakis language, by P. P. Osunkhirhine, a native preacher at St Francis, in Lower Canada. Montreal, 184.—Rep. Amer. Board For. Miss. 1845, p. 205.

## MOHEGAN.

The New Testament, in the Indian language, by John Eliot. Cambridge, New England, 4to, 1661.

The Old Testament, in the Indian language, by John Eliot. Cambridge, New England, 4to, 1663.—Holmes' American Annals, vol. i. pp. 318, 327.

In 1680, a second edition of the New Testament was published; and in 1685, a second edition of the Old Testament. In preparing them for the press, Eliot received valuable assistance from Mr John Cotton, of Plymouth, who had paid much attention to the Indian language. "It is a thought," says Francis, "full of melancholy interest, that the people for whom the Indian Bible was designed may be considered as no longer on the roll of living men, and that probably not an individual in the wide world can now read it." "The Indian Bible has become





one of those rare books which the antiquarian deems it a triumph to possess. The copies, in private or public libraries, are very few. It has acquired the venerable appearance of an ancient and sealed book; and when we turn over its pages, those long and hard words seem like the mysterious hieroglyphics in some time-hallowed temple of old Egypt. It has failed to answer the pious purpose for which the translator laboured in preparing it. But it has answered another purpose, which was, perhaps, never in his mind, or, if it were, was doubtless regarded as an inferior consideration. In connexion with his Indian grammar, it has afforded important aid as a valuable document in the study of comparative philology. Though the language in which it is printed is no longer read, yet this book is prized as one of the means of gaining an insight into the structure and character of 'unwritten dialects of barbarous nations,' a subject which has of late years attracted the attention of learned men, and the study of which, it is believed, will furnish new facts to modify the hitherto received principles of Universal grammar.

On this account, scholars of the highest name in modern times have had reason to thank Eliot for labours which the Indians are not left to thank him for. While the cause of religion missed in a great degree the benefit designed for it, the science of language acknowledges a contribution to its stores."—Francis' *Life of John Eliot*, in *Spark's Library of American Biography*, vol. v. pp. 228, 231, 234, 237.

The Book of Psalms, and the Gospel of John, in English and Indian, by Experience Mayhew. Boston, 1709.—Mayhew's *Indian Converts*, p. 307.

The New Testament, in the Mohegan language, with many parts of the Old Testament, by John Sergeant, sen., missionary at Stockbridge. MS.—Hopkins' *Memoirs of the Housatunnuk Indians*, p. 156.

The Mohegan language, we are informed by Dr Jonathan Edwards, who, by living at Stockbridge while his venerable father was missionary at that place, acquired it in his early years, is spoken by all the Indians throughout New England. Every tribe, indeed, has a different dialect, but the language is radically the same. Mr Eliot's translation of the Bible was into a dialect of this language. The Mohegan, indeed, appears to be spoken much more extensively than any other language in North America. The languages of the Delawares in Pennsylvania, of the Penobscots on the borders of Nova Scotia, of the Indians of St Francis in Canada, of the Shawanoes on the Ohio, and of the Chippeways to the westward of Lake Huron, are all radically the same with the Mohegan. This is likewise said to be the case with the language of the Ottawas, the Nantikoks, the Munsys, the Menomonees, the Messisangas, the Sankies, the Ottagamies, the Killistnoes, the Nipegons, the Algonkins, the Winnebagoes, &c.—Edwards' *Observations on the Language of the Muhhekaneew Indians*, p. 5.

#### DELAWARE.

Harmony of the Four Gospels, in the Delaware language, by David Zeisberger, one of the Moravian missionaries. MS.—Period. Accounts, vol. viii. p. 34.

The Gospel of Matthew, in the Delaware language, translating by C. F. Denke, one of the Moravian missionaries among the Indians.

The Gospel of John, in the Delaware language, by C. F. Denke.





The Epistles of John, in the Delaware language, by C. F. Denke. New York, 1818.—Report of the American Bible Society, 1818, p. 18.—New York Christian Herald, vol. v. p. 352.

The Moravian missionaries in North America translated various passages of the Holy Scriptures both into the Mohegan and Delaware languages; but whether they are still in existence we do not know, as in 1781, all the books and writings which they had compiled for the instruction of the Indian youth, are said to have been destroyed by the savages.—Loskiel's History, part ii. pp. 151, 182; part iii. pp. 80, 161.

#### MOHAWK.

The book of Genesis, in the Mohawk language.

We give this translation on the authority of Mr Bromley, the benevolent advocate of Indian civilization, who says he had it in his possession.—Bromley's Second Address on the Deplorable State of the Indians, 1814, p. 45.

The Gospel of Matthew, with many chapters, both from the Old and New Testaments, in the Mohawk language, by the Rev. Mr Freeman, Schenectady.

This translation was made about the beginning of the eighteenth century. Some passages of it were printed at New York.—Humphrey's Account of Soc. for Propagation of Gospel in For. Parts, pp. 286, 302.

The Gospel of Mark, in Mohawk and English, by Colonel Brandt, an Indian chief, 1787.—Rep. Bib. Soc. 1805, pp. 17, 56.—Holmes' Sermon before the Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Indians, p. 43.

The Gospel of John, in the Mohawk language, by Captain Norton, an Indian Chief. London, 1804.—Rep. Bib. Soc. 1805, p. 16.—Ibid. 1807, p. 41.

Captain Norton was a chief of the Six Nations, a well-known confederacy among the Indian tribes. He was a man of great natural acuteness, was acquainted with the English language from his infancy, and had been two years at his education in Scotland.—Owen's History of the Bible Society, vol. i. p. 126.

The Gospel of Luke, in Mohawk, 12mo. New York, 1827.

Isaiah, in Mohawk.—Rep. Am. and For. Bib. Soc. 1842, p. 9.

#### ONEIDA.

Mr Kirkland, missionary among the Oneidas, also made considerable progress in translating the Scriptures into the language of the Indians (Balfour's Sermon before the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, p. 61), but no part of this version, so far as we know, was ever printed.

#### SENECA.

The Gospel of Luke, in the Seneca language, translated by T. S. Harris, of the American Board for Foreign Missions, assisted by James Young, a Seneca young man, with the English on the opposite page. Printed, 18—.—Rep. Board For. Miss. 1830, p. 97.





The Gospels of Matthew and Mark, in the Seneca language; and also the History of Joseph, from the Book of Genesis.—Rep. Board For. Miss. 1853, p. 170.

## OTTAWA.

The Gospels of Matthew and John, in the Ottawa language, by J. Meeker of the American Baptist Board. Printed in 184.—Rep. Bapt. Board, 1842, p. 27.—Ibid. 1844, p. 39.

## OJIBWAY, OR CHIPPEWAY.

The book of Genesis and the Gospels of Matthew and John, in the Ojibway language. Printed.

Matthew was translated by Peter Jones, an Indian preacher; John was translated by his brother.—Meth. Miss. Not. vol. ix. p. 92.—Rep. Bib. Soc. 1832, p. 84.

The New Testament, in the Ojibway language, by Edwin James, surgeon in the United States army. Albany, 183—.

Part of the Old Testament, in the Ojibway language, by the same.

Mr James was surgeon and botanist to the expedition which visited the Rocky Mountains, under Major Long, in 1820, and wrote the narrative of that undertaking.

The Gospels of Mark and Luke, in the Ojibway language, by J. D. Cameron, of the American Baptist Board.—Rep. Bapt. Board, 1840, p. 5.

The book of Genesis and the Gospel of John, in the Ojibway language, by the Presbyterian mission on Grand Traverse Bay, Lake Huron.—Rep. Presb. Board For. Miss. 1844, p. 12.

The New Testament, in the Ojibway language, by the Mission of the American Board. Printed.—Rep. Board For. Miss. 1844, p. 224.

The Gospels, in the Ojibway language, by the Rev. Dr O'Meara.—Miss. Reg. 1850, p. 465.

The Ojibway, or Chippeway language, it is stated, is understood by fifteen distinct tribes, and indeed is the common language of the north-west and north, being used by the traders in their intercourse with the Indians more generally than any other. It is understood by the various tribes around Lake Superior, at the sources of the Mississippi, at Athabasca Lake, around Hudson's Bay, and probably, by a very little change, the clans which visit Bear Lake, the Coppermine River, and even the Icy Cape.—Miss. Her. vol. xxix. p. 76.

## SIOUX, OR DAKOTA.

Genesis, part of the Psalms, and nearly the whole of the New Testament, in the Dakota language, in two volumes, by the Missionaries of the American Board.—Rep. Board For. Miss. 1843, p. 173.



APPENDIX.

PUTAWATOMIE.

The Gospel of Matthew and the Acts of the Apostles, in the Putawatomie language, by the Mission of the American Baptist Board.—Rep. Bapt. Board, 1843, p. 21.—Rep. Amer. and For. Bib. Soc. 1845, p. 27.

PAWNEE.

The Gospel of Mark, in the Pawnee language, by the Mission of the American Board.—Rep. Board For. Miss. 1846, p. 197.

IOWA.

The Gospel of Matthew and the first eleven chapters of Genesis, and other portions of Scripture, in the Iowa language, by W. Hamilton.—Report Presbyterian Board for Foreign Missions, 1843, p. 6.

SHAWANOE.

The Gospels of Matthew and John, in the Shawanoe language, by the Mission of the American Baptist Board. Printed.—Rep. Bapt. Board, 1842, p. 27.—Ibid. 1846, p. 48.

CHEROKEE.

The New Testament, in the Cherokee language, translated from the original Greek, by David Brown, a Cherokee Indian.

This translation was completed in 1825. It was in the Cherokee character. It was probably an imperfect translation (Tracy's Hist. Board For. Miss. p. 167), but, all circumstances considered, it was a great curiosity. We are not aware that any part of it was ever printed.

The Gospels of Matthew, Luke, and John, the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles to Timothy, and the Epistles of James, Peter, and John, part of Revelation, and also portions of the Old Testament, in the Cherokee language, by Missionaries of the American Board. Printed 1829—1852.—Rep. Board For. Miss. 1848, p. 287.—Ibid. 1849, p. 212.—Ibid. 1850, p. 189.—Ibid. 1852, p. 149.

The New Testament, in the Cherokee language, by Evan Jones and Son, of the American Baptist Board.—Rep. Amer. and For. Bib. Soc. 1848, p. 23.

The book of Genesis, in the Cherokee language, by Jesse Bushyhead.—Rep. Amer. Bapt. Board, 1845, p. 23.

CREEK.

The Gospel of John, with extracts from Matthew and Mark, in the Creek language, by J. Lykins, of the American Baptist Board, assisted by John Davis, a native Creek preacher. Printed.—Rep. Amer. Bapt. Board, 1836, p. 9.





## CHOCTAW.

The New Testament, in the Choctaw language, by missionaries of the American Board for Foreign Missions. Printed, 1848.—Rep. Board For. Miss. 1849, p. 208.

Some books of the Old Testament were also translated and printed.—Rep. Board For. Miss. 1850, p. 185.—Ibid. 1852, p. 146.

## NEZ PERCÉS.

The Gospel of Matthew, in the Nez Percés language, by the Mission of the American Board for Foreign Missions. Printed in 184.—Rep. Board For. Miss. 1846, p. 196.

## MEXICAN.

The Proverbs of Solomon, and many other fragments of Holy Writ, in the Mexican language, by Louis Rodrigues.

The Epistles and Gospels, in the Mexican language, by one of the Order of St Mary, who died in 1679.—Le Long, tom. i. p. 448.

The Gospel of Luke, in the Mexican language. Printed in 183.—Rep. Bib. Soc. 1834, p. 91.

Lessons of the Day taken from the Gospels, in the Mexican language, a beautiful MS. in the possession of the British and Foreign Bible Society.—Rep. Bib. Soc. 1831, p. 127.

## MIXTECAN.

The Epistles and Gospels, in Mixtecan, the vulgar language of New Spain, by Benedict Ferdinand, who flourished about 1568.

The Epistles and Gospels, in the idiom which is spoken by the Western Indians, translated by Arnold a Bosaccio.—Le Long, tom i. p. 448.

## MISTECO AND TERASCO.

The Gospel of Luke, nearly completed, in the Misteco and Terasco languages.—Rep. Bib. Soc. 1832, p. 80.

## CARIBBEAN.

The Gospel of Matthew, in the Caribbean language, by Alexander Henderson, Baptist missionary, Belize. Edinburgh, 1847.—Rep. Bib. Soc. 1848, App. p. 58.

## MAYA.

The Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, in Maya, by John Kingdon, of the Baptist Missionary Society.

Maya is the language of the Indians in or near Honduras.—Rep. Bapt. Miss. Soc. 1850, p. 55.





## SOUTH AMERICA.

## CREOLE.

The New Testament, in Creole. Copenhagen, 1781.—Rep. Bib. Soc. 1811, App. p. 131.

Parts of the Bible, in Creole, by the Rev. Mr Volkerson. MS.—Rep. Bib. Soc. 1818, App. p. 244.

Harmony of the Four Gospels, in Creole, by John Bohner, one of the Moravian missionaries. Printed.—Holmes' Historical Sketches, p. 296.—Rizler Erzählungen, aus der Geschichte der Bruder Kirche, tom. iii. p. 76.

Besides the Harmony of the Gospels, Bohner translated into Creole some other passages of Scripture. All these versions, we suppose, were into the Creole dialect of the Danish West India islands, St Thomas, St Croix, and St Jan, which is a corruption of the Dutch and Low German, with a mixture of French, English, Spanish, and Danish words. The Creole dialect of other islands is different, according to the nation to which they belong.—Oldendorp Geschichte der Mission auf St Thomas, St Croix, St Jan, tom. i. p. 424.

Harmony of the Four Gospels, in Negro-English, by the Moravian missionaries.—Holmes' Sketches, p. 296.

The Gospel of Matthew, in the Negro dialect of Curazoa, by Mr Laufer. Printed.—Rep. Bib. Soc. 1846, App. p. 68.

The New Testament, in the Negro dialect of Surinam. Printed in 1829.—Rep. Bib. Soc. 1830, p. 80.

The Psalms, in the Negro dialect of Surinam.—Rep. Bib. Soc. 1849, p. 145.

Harmony of the Four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Apostolical Epistles, in the language of the Free Negroes on the river Sarameca, Surinam, by Rudolph Stoll and John Lewis Wietz, Moravian missionaries at Bambey.—Rizler Erzählungen, tom. iv. pp. 196, 202.—Fortsetzung, Brud. Hist. tom. iii. p. 79.

## ARAWACK.

Harmony of the Four Gospels, in Arawack, by — Schumann, one of the Moravian missionaries at Hope, on the river Corentyn, in South America. MS.

The New Testament, in Arawack, with the exception of the book of Revelation, by — Schumann. MS.—Rep. Bib. Soc. 1823, p. 131.

History of the Passion and Resurrection of Christ, in Arawack. Philadelphia, 1799.—Rep. Bib. Soc. 1822, p. 140.

The whole of the Apostolic Epistles, in the Arawack language, by Theodore Schultz, one of the Moravian missionaries.—Period. Acc. vol. xx. p. 231.





Most of the New Testament, in the Arawack language, MS., sent to the American and Foreign Bible Society.

The Acts of the Apostles, in the Arawack language. Printed from the preceding MS., 18.—Rep. Bib. Soc. 1850, p. 129.—Ibid. 1851, p. 110.

The Gospels of Matthew and John, in Arawack, by W. H. Brett, missionary on the Pomeroon River, from the Propagation Society. Printed.—Miss. Reg. 1850, p. 465.—Rep. Bib. Soc. 1851, App. p. 59.

## BRAZILIAN.

The Old and New Testaments, in the Brazilian language, translated by an English minister.—Le Long, tom. i. p. 448.

## QUICHUA.

The New Testament, in the Quichua language. MS.

This translation was made on account of the British and Foreign Bible Society; but whether the MS. was ever received by it appears doubtful. The Quichua, though called the ancient language of Peru, is still very extensively spoken by the aborigines.

The Psalms, in Quichua, by Dr Pazos Kanki.

Dr Pazos Kanki was professor of this language in the university of Cuzco, the ancient metropolis of the Incas or Peruvian kings, and the largest town in Peru, next to Lima.—Rep. Bib. Soc. 1824, p. 65.—Ibid. 1825, p. 55.—Ibid. 1826, p. 55, App. p. 91.—Ibid. 1830, p. 81.—Ibid. 1831, p. 63.

## AIMARA.

The Gospel of Luke, in Aimara and Spanish, by Dr Pazos Kanki. Printed 182—.

The New Testament is spoken of as translated.—Rep. Bib. Soc. 1827, p. 68.—Ibid. 1829, p. 72.—Ibid. 1832, p. 80.

## POLYNESIA.

## TAHITIAN.

The Old and New Testaments, in the Tahitian language. London, 1838.

This translation was the united work of Messrs John Davies and John Williams, but chiefly of Henry Nott, who not only translated a considerable portion of it himself, but revised the versions of his brethren. He was, in fact, considered as the translator of the Tahitian Bible. A new and revised edition was printed in London in 1847.—Rep. Miss. Soc. 1825, p. 153.—Ibid. 1838, p. 4.—Prout's Memoir of John Williams, pp. 210, 230.—Evan. Mag. 1844, p. 651.—Rep. Bib. Soc. 1848, p. 106.



RAROTONGA.

The Old and New Testaments, in the Rarotonga language, by John Williams, Charles Pitman, and Aaron Buzacott, of the London Missionary Society. London, 1851.—Rep. Bib. Soc. 1851, p. 110.—Ibid. 1852, p. 122.

This version is in the language of the Hervey Islands. The first edition of the New Testament was printed in 1836.

SAMOA.

The New Testament, in the Samoa language, by the missionaries of the London Society in the Navigators' Islands. Upolu, 1846.—Rep. Bib. Soc. 1848, p. 109.

In 1849, a new and revised edition of the Samoa New Testament, consisting of 15,000 copies, was printed in London by the British and Foreign Bible Society.

The Old Testament, in the Samoa language, translating by the missionaries of the London Society.—Rep. Bib. Soc. 1852, p. 121.

TONGA.

The New Testament, in the Tonga language, by the Wesleyan Methodist missionaries, in the Friendly Islands. Vavau, 184-.

The Old Testament, in the Tonga language, translating by the same.—Rep. Bib. Soc. 1853, App. p. 48.

The translation of the New Testament into Tonga was not originally a good idiomatic translation. It was full of English words and English idioms.—Miss. Not. vol. v. (N. S.) p. 65. It was revised for subsequent editions.

FIJI.

The New Testament, in the Fiji language, by the Wesleyan Methodist missionaries in the Fiji Islands, 184-.—Rep. Bib. Soc. 1850, p. 113.

This was chiefly the work of the Rev. John Hunt.—Miss. Not. vol. v. (N. S.) p. 158.

The Old Testament, in the Fiji language, translating by the Wesleyan Methodist missionaries.—Rep. Bib. Soc. 1852, p. 125.

HAWAIIAN.

The Old and New Testaments, in the Hawaiian language, by the missionaries of the American Board, in the Sandwich Islands. Honolulu, (N. T.) 1832, (O. T.) 1839.—Dibble's Hist. Sandwich Islands, p. 435.





## NEW ZEALAND.

The New Testament, in the language of New Zealand, by William Yates, and William Williams, of the Church Missionary Society.—Rep. Bib. Soc. 1835, App. p. 120.

The Old Testament, translating into the language of New Zealand, by R. Maunsell, of the Church Missionary Society.—Proceed. Ch. Miss. Soc. 1851, p. 215.

## NEW SOUTH WALES.

The Gospel of Luke, in the language of the natives of New South Wales, by L. E. Threlkeld, Government missionary at Lake Macquarrie.—Cal. Christ. Obser. vol. vi. p. 527.

The Gospels of Matthew, Luke, and John, and part of Genesis and Acts, in the language of the natives of New South Wales, by the missionaries of the Church Society, in the Wellington district.—Proceed. Ch. Miss. Soc. 1827, p. 87.—Ibid. 1839, p. 94.

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No V.

OF POLYGAMY.

THE question of polygamy, as regards converts from heathenism, has commonly been considered simple and easy. It has, for the most part, been taken for granted, that it is a plain and undoubted principle, that a heathen, on embracing Christianity, should be required, if he has a plurality of wives, to separate from all of them but one only, though which one it has not always been found easy to determine.

In considering this question, we think we cannot do better than lay before the reader some extracts from "*Thelypñthora*, a treatise on female ruin," which, though published anonymously, was well understood to be by the Rev. Martin Madan, of the Lock Hospital Chapel, London; and, though the work called forth great indignation at the time, in consequence of its object being to revive in this country the laws of the Mosaic economy in reference to cases of seduction, with a view to the protection and preservation from ruin of the female sex, yet its reasonings in regard to the lawfulness of polygamy—in other words, that intrinsically there is no moral evil in it—are, we apprehend, very clear and conclusive.

"The best and fairest, and indeed the only way," says he, "to get at the truth on this, as on every other occasion where religion is concerned, is to lay aside prejudice, from whatever quarter it may be derived, and to let the Bible speak for itself. Then we shall see that polygamy, notwithstanding the seventh commandment, was allowed by God himself, who, however others might mistake it, must infallibly know his own mind, be perfectly acquainted with his own will, and thoroughly understand his own law. If he did not intend to allow polygamy, but to prevent or condemn it, either by the seventh commandment, or by some other law, how is it possible that he should make laws for its *regulation*, any more than he should make laws for the regulation of *theft* or *murder*? How is it conceivable that he should give the least *countenance* to it, or so express his *approbation* as even to *work miracles* in support of it? For the making a woman *fruitful* who was naturally *barren*, must have been the effect of *supernatural* power. He *blessed*, and in a distinguished manner *owned*, the issue, and declared it legitimate to all intents and purposes. If this be not allowance, what is?

"As to the *first*, namely, his making laws for the regulation of polygamy, let us consider what is written, Exod. xxi. 10. *If he (i. e., the husband) take him another wife* (not, in so doing, he sins against the seventh com-





mandment, recorded in the *preceding* chapter, but), *her food, her raiment* (i. e., of the first wife), *and her duty of marriage, he shall not diminish.* Here God positively forbids a *neglect*, much more the *divorcing* or *putting away* the *first* wife, but charges no *sin* in taking the *second*.

"2dly, When Jacob married Rachel she was barren, and so continued for many years; but God did not leave this as a punishment upon her for marrying a man who had *another wife*. It is said, Gen. xxx. 22, that *God remembered Rachel; and God hearkened unto her, and opened her womb, and she conceived and bare a son, and said, God hath taken away my reproach.* Surely this passage of Scripture ought to afford a complete answer to those who bring the words of the marriage bond, as cited by Christ, Matt. xix. 5—*They twain shall be one flesh*—to prove polygamy sinful, and should lead us to construe them, as by this instance and many others the Lawgiver himself appears to have done; that is to say, where a woman, not betrothed to another man, unites herself in *personal knowledge* with the man of her choice, let that man's *situation* be what it may, *they twain shall be one flesh*. How, otherwise, do we find such a woman as Rachel united to Jacob, *who had a wife then living*, praying to God for a *blessing* on her intercourse with Jacob, and *God hearkening unto her, opening her womb*, removing her barrenness, and thus by miracle *taking away her reproach*? We also find the offspring legitimate, and inheritors of the land of Canaan; a plain proof that Joseph and Benjamin were no *bastards*, or born *out of lawful marriage*.<sup>1</sup> See a like palpable instance of God's miraculous blessing on polygamy in the case of Hannah, 1 Sam. i. and ii.<sup>2</sup> These instances serve also to prove that, in God's account, the *second* marriage is just as valid as the *first*, and as obligatory; and that our making it less so, is contradictory to the Divine wisdom.

"3dly, God blessed and owned the issue. How eminently this was the case with regard to Joseph, see Gen. xlix. 22–26; to Samuel, see 1 Sam. iii. 19. It was expressly commanded that a *bastard*, or son of a woman who was with child by *whoredom* (*ἐκ πορνείας*, LXX.), should *not enter into the congregation of the Lord, even to his tenth generation* (Deut. xxiii. 2). But we find Samuel, the offspring of polygamy, ministering to the Lord in the tabernacle at Shiloh even in his *very childhood, clothed with a linen ephod, before Eli the priest*. See this whole history, 1 Sam. i. and ii. Who, then, can doubt of Samuel's legitimacy, and consequently of God's *allowance* of, and *blessing* on, polygamy? If such second marriage was, in

<sup>1</sup> In fact, if polygamy was unlawful, Leah was the *only* wife of Jacob, and none but her children were *legitimate*. Bilhah and Zilpah, as well as Rachel, were merely *mistresses*, and their children, six in number, were *bastards*, the offspring of *adulterous* intercourse. Yet did God honour them *equally* as the sons of Leah, and made them the fathers of *seven* of the tribes of the children of Israel, and gave them a corresponding inheritance in the land of Canaan. Surely this is evidence enough that polygamy was then allowed by God, and that, consequently, it is not unlawful or sinful in its own nature.—W. B.

<sup>2</sup> It is not certain, however, that Hannah was Elkanah's *second* wife; but yet there are circumstances in the case which go to shew that his polygamy was not sinful.—See *Thelyphthora*, vol. ii. pp. 393, 399.—W. B.





God's account, null and void, as a sin against the *original* law of marriage, the *seventh* commandment, or *any other* law of God, no mark of legitimacy could have been found on the issue; for a null and void marriage is tantamount to *no* marriage at all; and if no marriage, no legitimacy of the issue can possibly be. Instead of such a blessing as Hannah obtained, we should have found her and her husband Elkanah charged with adultery, dragged forth, and *stoned to death*; for so was adultery to be punished. All this furnishes us with a conclusive proof, that the having more than one wife with which a man cohabited, was not adultery in the sight of God; or, in other words, that it never was reckoned by him any sin against the *seventh* commandment, the *original* marriage institution, or *any other law whatsoever*.

"4thly, But there is a passage (Deut. xxi. 15) which is express to the point, and amounts to a demonstration of God's *allowance* of polygamy. *If a man have two wives, one beloved and another hated, and they have borne him children, both the beloved and the hated; and if the first-born be hers that was hated, then it shall be, when he maketh his sons to inherit that which he hath, that he may not make the son of the beloved first-born before the son of the hated, which is, indeed, the first-born, by giving him a double portion of all that he hath; for he is the beginning of his strength, and the right of the first-born is his.* On the footing of this law, the marriage of both women is *equally* lawful. God calls them both *wives* (for so the word נשים must be rendered in this place, as the context plainly shews), and he cannot be mistaken; if he *calls* them so, they certainly *were* so. If the *second* wife bore the *first* son, that son was to inherit before a son born *afterwards* of the *first* wife. Here the issue is expressly deemed *legitimate*, and inheritable to the *double portion of the first-born*; which could not be if the *second* marriage were not deemed as lawful and valid as the *first*.

"5thly, To say that polygamy is sinful, is to make God the *author of sin*; for, not to forbid that which is evil, but even to countenance and promote it, is being so far the author of it, and accessory to it in the highest degree. And shall we dare to *say*, or even to *think*, that this is chargeable on Him who is of *purer eyes than to behold evil, and who cannot look on iniquity*? (Hab. i. 13.) God forbid.

"When he is upbraiding David, by the prophet Nathan, for his ingratitude toward his Almighty benefactor (2 Sam. xii.), he does it in the following terms:—ver. 8,—*I gave thee thy master's house, and THY MASTER'S WIVES unto thy bosom, and I gave thee the house of Israel and Judah, and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given thee such and such things.*

"Can we suppose God giving *more wives* than *one* into David's bosom, who already had *more than one*, if it was *sin* in David to *take* them? Can we imagine that God should thus *transgress* (as it were) *his own commandment* in *one* instance, and yet so severely *reprove* and *chastise* David for breaking it in *another*? Is it not rather plain, from the whole transaction, that David committed *mortal sin* in taking another living man's wife,





but not in taking the widows of the *deceased* Saul ; and this, therefore, though the law of God condemned the *first*, yet it did not condemn the *second*?

“*6thly*, When David took the wife of Uriah, he was severely reprimanded by the prophet Nathan ; but after Uriah’s death, *he takes the same woman*, though he had other *wives* before, and no fault is found with him ; nor is he charged with the least flaw or insincerity in his repentance on that account. The child which was the fruit of his intercourse with Bathsheba, during her husband Uriah’s life, *God struck to death* with his own hand (2 Sam. xii. 15). Solomon, *born of the same woman, begotten by the same man*, in a state of *polygamy*, is acknowledged by God himself as David’s lawful issue (1 Kings v. 5), and as such set upon his throne. The law which positively excluded *bastards*, or those born out of lawful wedlock, *from the congregation of the Lord, even unto the tenth generation* (Deut. xxiii. 2), is wholly inconsistent with Solomon being employed *to build God’s temple*—being *the mouth of the people to God in prayer*—and *offering sacrifices in the temple at its dedication*—unless David’s marriage with Bathsheba was a *lawful marriage*—Solomon, the *lawful issue* of that marriage—consequently *polygamy* no sin, either against the primary institution of marriage, or against the seventh commandment. But so far from Solomon being under any disqualification from the *law* above mentioned, he is *appointed* by God himself *to build the temple* (1 Kings viii. 19). *His prayer is heard—and the house is hallowed* (chap. ix. 3), and *filled with such glory, that the priests could not stand to minister* (chap. viii. 11). Solomon, therefore, as well as Samuel, stands as a demonstrable proof, that a child born under the circumstances of *polygamy* is no *bastard*—*God himself being the judge, whose judgment is according to truth*.

“A more striking instance of God’s *thoughts* on the total difference between *polygamy* and *adultery*, does not meet us anywhere with more force and clearness in any part of the sacred history, than in the account which is given us of David and Bathsheba, and their issue.

“When David took Bathsheba, she was another man’s wife ; the child which he begat upon her in that situation was begotten in *adultery*—and *the thing which David had done displeased the Lord* (2 Sam. xi. 27). And what was the consequence ? We are told, 2 Sam. xii. 1, *the Lord sent Nathan the prophet unto David*. Nathan opened his commission with a most beautiful parable descriptive of David’s crime ; this parable the prophet applies to the conviction of the delinquent, sets it home upon his conscience, brings him to repentance, and the poor penitent finds mercy—his life is spared, ver. 13. Yet God will vindicate the honour of his moral government, and that in the most awful manner—the murder of Uriah is to be visited upon David and his house. *The sword shall never depart from thine house*, ver. 10. The *adultery* with Bathsheba was to be retaliated in the most aggravated manner. *Because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife, thus saith the Lord, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will*





take thy wives and give them unto thy neighbour before thine eyes; and he shall lie with thy wives in sight of the sun; for thou didst it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun. All this was shortly fulfilled in the rebellion and incest of Absalom, chap. xvi. 21, 22. And this was done in the way of judgment on David for taking and defiling the wife of Uriah, and was included in the curses threatened (Deut. xxviii. 30) to the despisers of God's laws.

"As to the issue of David's adulterous commerce with Bathsheba, it is written, 2 Sam. xii. 15, *The Lord struck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very sick.* What a dreadful scourge this was to David, who could not but read his crime in his punishment, the following verses declare—wherein we find David almost frantic with grief. However, *the child's sickness was unto death*, for, ver. 18, *on the seventh day the child died.*

"Now, let us take a view of David's act of polygamy, when, after Uriah's death, he added Bathsheba to his other wives (ver. 24, 25). *And David comforted Bathsheba his wife, and went in unto her and lay with her, and she bare a son, and he called his name (שלמה) Selomoh (that maketh peace and reconciliation, or recompence), and the Lord loved him.* Again we find Nathan, who had been sent on the former occasion, sent also on this, but with a very different message. *And he (the Lord) sent by the hand of Nathan the prophet, and he called his name JEDIDIAH (Dilectus Domini—Beloved of the Lord), because of the Lord,—i. e., because of the favour God had towards him (ver. 24).*

"Let any read onward through the whole history of Solomon; let them consider the instances of God's peculiar favour towards him already mentioned, and the many others that are to be found in the account we have of him; let them compare God's dealings with the *unhappy* issue of David's *adultery*, and this *happy* offspring of his *polygamy*, and if the *allowance* and *approbation* of the latter, doth not as clearly appear as the *condemnation* and *punishment* of the former, surely all distinction and difference must be at an end, and the Scripture itself lose the force of its own evidence.

"*Truly*, I have mentioned the law being explained by the prophets. These were extraordinary messengers which God raised up and sent forth under a special commission, not only to foretel things to come, but to preach to the people, to hold forth the law, to point out their defections from it, and to call them to repentance, under the severest terms of God's displeasure unless they obeyed. Their commission, in these respects, we find recorded in Isa. lviii. 1, *Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet: Shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.* This commission was to be faithfully executed at the peril of the prophet's own destruction, as appears from the solemn charge given to Ezekiel, chap. iii. 18, *When I say to the wicked, Thou shalt surely die, and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked to save his life, the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine hand.*





"These prophets executed their commissions very unfaithfully towards God and the people, as well as most dangerously for themselves, if polygamy was a *sin* against God's law, for it was the common practice of the whole nation,' from the prince on the throne to the lowest of the people; and yet neither Isaiah, Jeremiah, nor any one of the prophets, bore the least testimony against it. They reproved them sharply and plainly for *defiling their neighbours' wives*, as Jer. v. 8; xxix. 23, in which fifth chapter we not only find the prophet bearing testimony against *adultery*, but against *whoredom* and *fornication* (ver. 7), for that they assembled themselves *by troops in the harlots' houses*. Not a word against *polygamy*. How is it possible, in any reason, to think that this, if a sin, should never be mentioned as such by God, by Moses, or any one of the prophets?"

"*Lastly*, In the Old Testament, polygamy was not only *allowed* in all cases, but in some *commanded*. Here, for example, is the law (Deut xxv. 5-10), *If brethren dwell together, and one of them die and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger; her husband's brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of an husband's brother unto her. And it shall be that the first-born which she beareth shall succeed in the name of his brother which is dead, that his name be not put out of Israel, &c.*

"This law must certainly be looked upon as an *exception* from the general law (Lev. xviii. 16), and the reason of it appears in the law itself, viz., 'To preserve inheritances in the families to which they belonged.' . . . As there was no law against polygamy, there was nothing to exempt a *married* man from the obligation of marrying his brother's widow. . . . For, let us suppose that not only the surviving brother, but all the near kinsmen, to whom the marriage of the widow and the redemption of the inheritance belonged, were *married* men—if that exempted them from the obligation of this law—as they could not *redeem the inheritance* unless they *married the widow* (Ruth iv. 5)—the end of this important law must in many cases be defeated—the widow be tempted to marry a stranger—to put herself and the inheritance into his hands—and the whole reason assigned for the law itself, that of *raising up seed to the deceased*, to preserve the inheritance in his family, that *his name be not put out of Israel*—fall to the ground. For which weighty reasons, as there was evidently no law against polygamy, there could be no exemption of a man from the positive duty of this law *because he was married*. As we say, *Ubi cadit ratio, ibi idem jus*. . . .

"It is observable that this law, though not reduced to writing or

1 Josephus calls it *παρτορι*, which answers to what we mean by the word *national*.

2 Mr Madan proceeds (vol. i. pp. 134-142) to notice Malachi ii. 14, 15, which some consider as a denunciation of polygamy, but he shews, we think, very successfully, that the prophet has there no reference to that subject, but that he is expostulating with the Jews after their return from Babylon, on account of their "putting away" their Jewish wives, and "marrying the daughters of a strange god" (ver. 11)—i. e., heathen wives, a practice which appears to have prevailed among them to a very lamentable extent, notwithstanding it was so clearly forbidden by the law of Moses. See Ezra ix. x.; Neh. xiii. 23-31.





published till the time of Moses, yet existed among the patriarchs, as we learn from Gen. xxxviii. 8."—*Thelyphthora*, vol. i. pp. 108, 131, 260, 267; vol. ii. p. 244, 402.

Though we apprehend these arguments are perfectly conclusive, yet we shall here notice a few other particulars. In Deut. xvii. 17 we find the following law relative to the king whom the people of Israel might set over them:—"Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away." This surely cannot be understood to mean that he was to restrict himself to one wife: it would be a strange and unaccountable way of expressing that idea. The plain meaning of it is, that he was not to have many wives, but it evidently allowed him to take more than one.

In correspondence with this, we find the following statement in 2 Chron. xxiv. 2, 3, relative to Joash, King of Judah:—"And Joash did that which was right in the sight of the Lord all the days of Jehoiada the priest. And Jehoiada took for him two wives, and he begat sons and daughters." In reading this, it is natural and reasonable to conclude that, in marrying two wives, "Joash did that which was right in the sight of the Lord," the two statements stand in such close connexion with each other.

There is a whole book of Scripture taken up with the history of Queen Esther. And who was she? If polygamy was unlawful, she was a strumpet with whom Ahasuerus lived in adulterous intercourse; for he had no adequate and lawful reason for putting away Vashti; and, indeed, though she was put away, she was probably not divorced, but was still kept in common with many others in "the house of the women." To many this will probably be a new view of Esther's character; but, unless they admit the lawfulness of polygamy, we do not see how they can escape from it.

The subject of polygamy underwent considerable discussion, a number of years ago, in the *Calcutta Christian Observer*. An able writer in that work, after establishing by the same, or similar considerations as those now adduced, the intrinsic lawfulness of polygamy, and stating that, though Christianity does not openly condemn it, yet it silently discourages, and will, wherever it prevails, ultimately abolish the practice, thus proceeds:—

"The previous lawfulness of polygamy, abstractedly considered, and the course actually adopted by the Almighty for its ultimate subversion, suggest a *second* remark, that when a heathen man has been legally married—i. e., according to the laws of his own country and religion—to more than one wife, whether any distinction of grade or class of wife, concubine, &c., be observed or not, it does not appear that anything in the character of polygamy itself, or in the institution of Christianity, demands the putting away of any one or more of such women. They are his wives; he has promised them duty of marriage, support, and protection. He has no right to diminish aught of their just claims. The merciful provision of the law of Moses, in kindred cases, comes in support of my position. Exodus xxi. 10, commands, even of a purchased slave, whom her master has betrothed





to himself, that, 'if he take unto himself another wife, her food, her raiment, and her duty of marriage, shall he not diminish.' And, to apply the case to India: what may be the precise law of the case, I am not sufficiently informed; but, assuredly, there would be great cruelty and hardship in a man who becomes a Christian, having several wives, dismissing all but one, who, even admitting that they *may* be legally put away, are, by the usages of the country, precluded from marrying another; and who, even if the husband continue to *support* them (the difficulty of doing which will certainly be much increased when the household is divided), are publicly disgraced and exposed, in deplorable moral ignorance, weakness, and strength of passion, to very strong temptations to pursue evil courses. Again, if there are children, whose shall they be?—the father's or the mother's? From one parent or the other, they are certainly, in this case, to be separated. Whose control, instruction, and affectionate intercourse shall they continue to enjoy? Shall they be held legitimate, or otherwise? If there are several wives, which shall be retained? The first, it may be replied; but by what law is she more a wife than the second or the third? To these difficulties, add the strong temptation held out to an insincere profession of Christianity, for the mere purpose of getting rid of a wife or wives no longer beloved, or whom the husband is weary of supporting; and it appears to me that a formidable mass of difficulties is raised against the position combated, quite sufficient to prove it absolutely untenable. Under the plea of a previous unlawfulness, supported by no just reasoning, and inculcated by no inspired Scripture, helpless women, legally united to men sacredly engaged to love, support, and protect them, are to be ejected from home, from the honours and comforts of wedlock and maternity—exposed to fearful temptations, cruel privation and self-denial, ignominy and solitariness—suffering a disruption of all the sweet ties of domestic intercourse and affection; the education of children is to be neglected, their filial attachments blighted, and a reward held out to the purest acts of injustice, of selfish cruelty, and impious hypocrisy, on the part of husbands and fathers.

"Let no Christian, *after* he has been admitted into the Christian Church, add unto his wives, or support the practice of polygamy, however usual in his nation and country. But if already a polygamist, let him live as the ancient patriarchs did, in holy and faithful fulfilment of all the duties of marriage, alike with all his wives legally such; let him not for a moment allow himself to entertain the monstrous and unnatural purpose of injuring those he loved, and swore to love for ever,—who have lain in his bosom, become the mothers of his children, the partners of his joys and sorrows,—by putting them away for no original or after-fault of *theirs*, upon *his* becoming a Christian. If they, indeed, should desert him, he is absolved by the same rules that apply to the case of a single heathen wife or husband voluntarily departing from a partner who has become a Christian, for then the act is *theirs*, not *his*. 'A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases.' But short of this, no legitimate ground appears to be left for



supporting the position I have thus endeavoured to prove unscriptural and untenable."

"All the Calcutta missionaries, I believe, are firm in the persuasion, not only that polygamy is highly inexpedient generally, but that it is, as such, a practice which the genius and tendency of Christianity are to abolish; not, however, by hastily and prematurely cutting off the allowance of it, and, in so doing, committing the greatest injustice against many helpless women, and violating the pure, benevolent, and peaceable spirit of Christ's religion; but by gradually elevating the human character among its neophytes, spiritualizing and refining its professors, and silently throwing into disuse that which, like slavery, for instance, is so ill adapted, in many respects, to an advanced and cultivated society, and to maturity of devotion and domestic enjoyment. The missionaries are of opinion, that the very *allowance* which God, through Moses, made for the Jews in their infant state as a people is, by parity of reason, to be made now for polygamists, who from heathens become Christians; and they believe, moreover, that, by 'the original law of marriage,' it must be as 'unlawful to abandon one wife as another, save for the cause of fornication.'"—*Cal. Christ. Obser.* vol. iv. pp. 91, 371, 400.

We have already admitted that the question is one of some difficulty; but no one, we think, can read these statements without feeling that the difficulties are not all on one side. If there are difficulties attending the toleration of polygamy in converts to Christianity, there are also difficulties of no light kind attending its abrogation; and while the evils arising out of its toleration must ever stop with the first generation, the evils arising out of its abrogation,—the degradation and misery of the cast-off wives, and the neglect of their children,—may prove not only, for the present, a source of corruption to society, but that corruption may go down to posterity from generation to generation. Those who would not tolerate polygamy, in the individual cases which arise of the conversion of heathens or Mahommedans to Christianity, would, of course, even at present abrogate it at once throughout the whole world, if they had the power. Now, in that case, how immense would be the amount of evil which would arise out of the casting off of millions of helpless women, and of still larger numbers of neglected children! How vastly greater would be the mischief than if the original practice had been borne with for a single generation, if, after that, it would cease and give place to a more healthy state of society!

We do not know whether the advocates of the abolition of polygamy are prepared to allow of the marriage of those unfortunate cast-off women to other men, or if they would consider their case as coming under that declaration of our Lord, "But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery; and *whosoever shall marry her that is divorced, commiteth adultery.*" Would they feel themselves at perfect liberty (as, on their principles, we think they should) to proclaim the bans, and to perform the marriage ceremony, in such a case as we have supposed? Would they have no mis-





givings, *on the score of morality*, to be themselves married to such a person—no fears lest they should both be justly held to be adulterers? We suspect there are few anti-polygamists who are prepared for this—a circumstance which shews that, however confidently they may denounce the practice, they are not perfectly sure as to the soundness of their own principles.

Though we think it is undeniable that, in the patriarchal age, and under the Mosaic economy, polygamy was allowed, yet it is no less clear that, in the Church of Christ, no such practice is to be allowed, unless it be in the case of converts from heathenism, whose special case we have been considering. The genius and spirit of Christianity is wholly opposed to such a practice, and, so far as its power is felt, will strike at the root of it. But we have more than this. "The words of Christ, in Matt. xix. 9," says Dr Paley, "may be construed by an easy implication to prohibit polygamy; for if 'Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery,' he who marrieth another, without putting away the first, is no less guilty of adultery, because the adultery does not consist in the repudiation of the first wife, but the entering into a second marriage during the legal existence and obligation of the first."—*Paley's Works*, vol. iv. p. 210.—Edit. London, 1825. In 1 Cor. vii. 2, the apostle Paul says, "Let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband." "This," it has been well remarked, "is absolutely decisive against polygamy, and places the husband and the wife entirely on the same ground, and as much forbids him to take another woman, as it does her to cohabit with another man."





## No. VI.

HINTS RELATIVE TO THE FORMATION OF AN ALPHABET FOR  
LANGUAGES HITHERTO UNWRITTEN.

MISSIONARIES to rude and uncivilized tribes, whose language was never before written, have not only to acquire their barbarous dialect, but to settle its orthography, and to reduce it to writing. This is an arduous and most important task. By the formation of a proper alphabet, and its judicious application in the spelling of words, the acquisition of the language will be prodigiously facilitated, not only to future missionaries, but to adults among the natives who may be disposed to learn to read, and to their children in all succeeding generations. On the contrary, by ignorance or negligence in this respect, missionaries may not only increase the task of acquiring the language to their fellow-labourers, but invest it with such difficulties, that few adults shall have the courage and the perseverance to learn to read, while their children, to the end of time, shall feel that a burden which by a wise arrangement might have proved a pleasure. Of this we have a striking example in the English language. In consequence of the imperfection of our alphabet, the deficiency of some letters, and the superfluity of others, the indistinctness of some, and the similarity of others; and, above all, the absurd application of them in the spelling of words, the difficulty of acquiring it is prodigiously increased; and, notwithstanding the many advantages which we possess in respect of education, it is, in fact, but imperfectly acquired by the great mass of the population, as is evident from the vast variety of pronunciation which exists in the different districts of the country, and that not among the populace only, but even among persons of good education. We can scarcely conceive a more easy task than to learn to pronounce a language possessed of an alphabet constructed on philosophical principles, and accurately applied to the orthography of the words. We scarcely know, on the other hand, a more perplexing task, than to acquire a language, the spelling of which, instead of being a guide to the pronunciation, seems only intended to mislead a speaker. A few hours may enable a person of ordinary capacity to *read* any of the languages of Europe, constructed according to the one plan; years are scarcely sufficient to enable a foreigner to *pronounce* English or French with perfect accuracy, constructed as they are according to the other.

It is therefore with much regret we have observed, that the most of





missionaries, in reducing to writing languages hitherto unwritten, have simply adopted the English alphabet, without any alteration or improvement, except, perhaps, introducing a few points, to mark some peculiarity in the sound of particular letters. Considering the many and great disadvantages which must result from the introduction of an imperfect alphabet, and an inaccurate orthography, into newly written languages, we trust we shall be excused in making a few observations on this important subject.

To constitute a perfect alphabet, there should be neither a deficiency nor a superfluity of letters : in other words, there should be a character for every simple or elementary sound, and to this sound it should be invariably restricted ; but there must not be more than one character to express the same sound.

With respect to the form of letters, it may be observed, 1. They should be *distinct* one from another, so as to avoid the hazard of being confounded together. 2. They should be *simple*, so as to be formed with ease and expedition. 3. They should be *regular*, so as readily to coalesce together in words and lines. 4. They should be *neat*, and, if possible, *elegant*, so as to appear agreeable to the eye.

But as languages are intended not merely to be printed but written; the characters of the alphabet should possess these qualities when written, as well as when printed. And, to prevent the unnecessary multiplication of letters, they should, if possible, retain the same form in both cases, excepting so far as is necessary to connect them together in writing. This, in fact, is the grand difficulty in the formation of alphabetical characters. To construct letters which as *printed* shall be distinct, simple, regular, and elegant, is an easy task ; but many of these must be rejected, as they cannot be formed with expedition, nor be easily connected together in writing. Most of the capitals in the English alphabet are fine specimens of such characters, yet they are exceedingly liable to this objection.

As to capital letters, there is no necessity for having distinct characters for them. They may all be formed simply by enlarging the ordinary letters, as is already done with C, O, S, V, W, X. This will greatly simplify the alphabet.

Against many of these principles, the English alphabet frequently and grievously offends. Examples of this it may not be improper to give, in order to illustrate the grounds on which the following alphabet is constructed :—

1. *Deficiency* of letters. In the English alphabet there are only twenty-six characters, but most writers on the subject agree that there is a greater number of elementary sounds. Some of the letters have consequently more than one sound ; a and e, in fact, have two sounds ; while i has no fewer than three.

2. *Superfluity* of letters. In the English alphabet there is not only a deficiency, but a superfluity of letters. The letter c is totally unnecessary as presently used, as its hard sound is expressed by k, and its soft by s ;





Q has simply the sound of k; and x is nothing else than a compound of ks, and in some instances of gz.

3. *Confusion of letters.* Some characters not only possess more than one sound, but the same sound is expressed by different characters, or by diphthongs. Thus we have there, *bear, hare, hair, gaol; be, bee, read, ceiling, people, machine, panegyric.*

4. *Indistinctness of letters.* The four characters, b, d, p, q, have so considerable a resemblance to each other, that a child can scarcely fail at first to confound them together. It would, therefore, be well to reject one or two of these letters, and also because the written form is different from the printed. I have substituted x for r, which is not a very distinct character. I have employed the capital Y as more distinct than the single y; and I have used the capital U, for the broad sound of u.

In arranging the letters, I have placed those together which have the greatest resemblance to each other, as a child will sooner learn to distinguish them when they stand side by side, than if they are at a distance from one another.

Though the change which I have made in the sound of some of the letters of the English alphabet may at first seem awkward, it is an inconvenience which will soon be got over. Thus, in Greek, the letters H, P, X, have a very different power from the same characters in English, yet, after a very little practice in reading Greek, we insensibly to ourselves forget their peculiar sound in English.

Dr Franklin proposed to distinguish the long and the short sound of certain vowels by the repetition of the character when it was long, but I have not thought it necessary to make any distinction between them. If any shall wish to distinguish them, it may be easily done, by means of such distinctive marks as · or - above or below the letters.

The following alphabet is adapted to the sounds of the English language merely by way of example. Some dialects may not possess so many elementary sounds; in such cases, those letters which have the greatest resemblance, or which are least simple, may be discarded. Should any language require a still greater number of letters, the circle, the straight line and combinations of the two together, will be found to furnish the most elegant and convenient characters. If, however, missionaries are careful in distinguishing the sounds which are purely elementary, it is probable the letters I have given will be more than sufficient for most of the dialects for which it may be necessary to construct an alphabet. Ledwick made only fourteen vowels and twenty-nine consonants, in all the languages with which he was acquainted.<sup>1</sup> According to Volney, there are only nineteen or twenty vowels, and thirty-two consonants, in all the languages of Europe, and even some of those which he enumerates, are obviously not simple but compound sounds,<sup>2</sup> so that in any single language we are not likely to require more than thirty or thirty-five characters.

<sup>1</sup> Philosophical Transactions, vol. xvi. pp. 128, 130.

<sup>2</sup> Volney, l'Alphabet Européen appliqué aux Langues Asiatiques, p. xlii. tab. pp. 33, 108.





Having made these observations, I shall now submit to the reader an alphabet constructed on these principles.

VOWELS.		
a	as <i>α</i>	in hall.
ā	<i>α</i>	hate.
e	<i>ε</i>	bed.
ē	<i>ε</i> or <i>ee</i> .	be, beer.
i	<i>i</i>	fin.
ī	<i>i</i>	fine.
ī	<i>i</i> or <i>y</i> .	idea, reply.
o	<i>o</i>	note.
ū	<i>u</i> , <i>oo</i> .	full, fool.
u	<i>u</i>	cur.

CONSONANTS.		
p	<i>p</i>	pad.
b	<i>b</i>	bad.
d	<i>d</i>	dark.
t	<i>t</i>	tap.
j	<i>j</i>	jar.
k	<i>k</i>	kalendar.
g	<i>g</i>	gall.
f	<i>f</i>	fat.
h	<i>h</i>	happy.
l	<i>l</i>	lamb.
s	<i>s</i>	salt.
n	<i>n</i>	nap.
m	<i>m</i>	man.
v	<i>v</i>	vast.
w	<i>w</i>	want.
x	<i>r</i>	ran.
y	<i>y</i>	yam.
z	<i>z</i>	zenith.*

Though we have proposed this alphabet chiefly for languages which have not hitherto been written, yet we cannot but suggest to missionaries among tribes whose dialect, though already written, is read to a very limited extent, whether, on account of the great importance of a good alphabet, they might not with propriety attempt to introduce a new set of letters. In history we find many examples of a change in the alphabetical characters, even of nations considerably advanced in civilization. The Hebrews anciently used the Samaritan character, but after the Babylonish captivity, they substituted in its place the Chaldean. In England and France, and

\* Missionaries who have occasion to form alphabets for languages hitherto unwritten, would do well to acquaint themselves with the Phonetic system.





several other countries of Europe, the Black letter has given place to the Roman character. In Germany, a similar change has taken place to some extent in more recent times. In Ireland, the Irish has in a considerable degree yielded to the Roman. Changes of the same kind appear to have been made in some of the Oriental languages, at least it is probably in this way we are to account for the extensive use of the Arabic and Nagri characters. In most of the cases now mentioned, the greater distinctness and beauty of the new character, it is probable, materially facilitated the change. Were missionaries to prefix to every work they publish, a copy of the new alphabet, with the power of the characters expressed in the old letters, it is likely that such individuals as were able to make use of books, would soon acquire it so as to read it with more facility than they previously did their own indistinct, imperfect letters. In countries where the number of readers is small, and where the missionaries are engaged in carrying on the education of children on an extensive scale, a new alphabet, we apprehend, might be introduced without much difficulty. But even though it should be necessary for some time to print editions of the principal works in the old, as well as in the new character, the advantages of the latter in facilitating the general diffusion of education, in all succeeding generations, would more than counterbalance this temporary expense, and would ultimately prove an immense saving of money, of time, and of labour.

THE END.





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