

1611 King James Bible Introduction

To the most high and mightie Prince, James by the grace of God King of Great Britaine, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c. The translators of The Bible, wish Grace, Mercie, and Peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord.



Great and manifold were the blessings (most dread Sovereigne) which Almighty GOD, the Father of all Mercies, bestowed upon us the people of ENGLAND, when first he sent your Majesties Royall person to rule and raigne over us. For whereas it was the expectation of many, who wished not well unto our ZION, that upon the setting of that bright Occidentall Starre Queene ELIZABETH of most happy memory, some thicke and palpable cloudes of darkenesse would so have overshadowed this land, that men should have bene in doubt which way they were to walke, and that it should hardly be knowen, who was to direct the unsetled State: the appearance of your MAJESTIE, as of the Sunne in his strength, instantly dispelled those supposed and surmised mists, and gave unto all that were well affected, exceeding cause of comfort; especially when we beheld the government established in your HIGHNESSE, and your hopefull Seed, by an undoubted Title, and this also accompanied with Peace and tranquillitie, at home and abroad.

But amongst all our Joyes, there was no one that more filled our hearts, then the blessed continuance of the Preaching of GODS sacred word amongst us, which is that inestimable treasure, which excelleth all the riches of the earth, because the fruit thereof extendeth it selfe, not onely to the time spent in this transitory world, but directeth and disposeth men unto that Eternall happinesse which is above in Heaven.

Then, not to suffer this to fall to the ground, but rather to take it up, and to continue it in that state, wherein the famous predecessour of your HIGHNESSE did leave it; Nay, to goe forward with the confidence and resolution of a man in maintaining the trueth of CHRIST, and propagating it farre and neere, is that which hath so bound and firmly knit the hearts of all your MAJESTIES loyall and Religious people unto you, that your very Name is precious among them, their eye doeth behold you with comfort, and they blesse you in their hearts, as that sanctified person, who under GOD, is the immediate authour of their true happinesse. And this their contentment doeth not diminish or decay, but every day increaseth and taketh strength, when they observe that the zeale of your Majestie towards the house of GOD, doth not slacke or goe backward, but is more and more kindled, manifesting it selfe abroad in the furthest parts of Christendome, by writing in defence of the Trueth, (which hath given such a blow unto that man of Sinne, as will not be healed) and every day at home, by Religious and learned discourse, by frequenting the house of GOD, by hearing the word preached, by cherishing the teachers therof, by caring for the Church as a most tender and loving nourcing Father.

There are infinite arguments of this right Christian and Religious affection in your MAJESTIE: but none is more forcible to declare it to others, then the vehement and perpetuated desire of the accomplishing and publishing of this Worke, which now with all humilitie we present unto your MAJESTIE. For when your Highnesse had once out of deepe judgment apprehended, how convenient it was, That out of the Originall sacred tongues, together with comparing of the labours, both in our owne and other forreigne Languages, of many worthy men who went before us, there should be one more exact Translation of the holy Scriptures into the English tongue; your MAJESTIE did never desist, to urge and to excite those to whom it was commended, that the worke might be hastened, and that the businesse might be expedited in so decent a maner, as a matter of such importance might justly require.

And now at last, by the Mercy of GOD, and the continuance of our Labours, it being brought unto such a conclusion, as that we have great hope that the Church of England shall reape good fruit thereby; we hold it our duety to offer it to your MAJESTIE, not onely as to our King and Sovereaigne, but as to the principall moover and Author of the Worke. Humbly craving of your most Sacred Majestie, that since things of this quality have ever bene subject to the censures of ill meaning and discontented persons, it may receive approbation and Patronage from so learned and judicious a Prince as your Highnesse is, whose allowance and acceptance of our Labours, shall more honour us and incourage us, then all the calumniations and hard interpretations of other men shall dismay us. So that, if on the one side we shall be traduced by Popish persons at home or abroad, who therefore will maligne us, because we are poore Instruments to make GODS holy Trueth to be yet more and more knowen unto the people, whom they desire still to keepe in ignorance and darknesse: or if on the other side, we shall be maligned by self-conceited brethren, who runne their owne wayes, and give liking unto nothing but what is framed by themselves, and hammered on their Anvile; we may rest secure, supported within by the trueth and innocencie of a good conscience, having walked the wayes of simplicitie and integritie, as before the Lord; And sustained without, by the powerfull Protection of your Majesties grace and favour, which will ever give countenance to honest and Christian endeavours, against bitter censures, and uncharitable imputations.

The LORD of Heaven and earth blesse your Majestie with many and happy dayes, that as his Heavenly hand hath enriched your Highnesse with many singular, and extraordinary Graces; so you may be the wonder of the world in this later age, for happinesse and true felicitie, to the honour of that Great GOD, and the good of his Church, through JESUS CHRIST our Lord and onely Saviour.



THE TRANSLATORS

TO THE READER.



Zeale to promote the common good, whether it be by devising any thing our selves, or revising that which hath bene laboured by others, deserveth certainly much respect and esteeme, but yet findeth but cold intertainment in the world. It is welcommed with suspicion in stead of love, and with emulation in stead of thanks: and if there be any hole left for cavill to enter, (and cavill, if it doe not finde a hole, will make one) it is sure to bee misconstrued, and in danger to be condemned. This will easily be granted by as many as know story, or have any experience. For, was there ever any thing projected, that savoured any way of newnesse or renewing, but the same endured many a storme of gaine-saying, or opposition? A man would thinke that Civilitie, holesome Lawes, learning and eloquence, Synods, and Church-maintenance, (that we speake of no more things of this kinde) should be as safe as a Sanctuary, and ll out of shot, as they say, that no man would lift up the heele, no, nor dogge moove his tongue against the motioners of them. For by the first, we are distinguished from bruit-beasts led with sensualitie: By the second, we are bridled and restrained from outrageous behaviour, and from doing of injuries, whether by fraud or by violence: By the third, we are enabled to informe and reforme others, by the light and feeling that we have attained unto our selves: Briefly, by the fourth being brought together to a parle face to face, we sooner compose our differences then by writings, which are endlesse: And lastly, that the Church be sufficiently provided for, is so agreeable to good reason and conscience, that those mothers are holden to be lesse cruell, that kill their children assoone as they are borne, then those noursing fathers and mothers (wheresoever they be) that withdraw from them who hang upon their breasts (and upon whose breasts againe themselves do hang to receive the Spirituall and sincere milke of the word) livelyhood and support fit for their estates. Thus it is apparent, that these things which we speake of, are of most necessary use, and therefore, that none, either without absurditie can speake against them, or without note of wickednesse can spurne against them.

Yet for all that, the learned know that certaine worthy men have bene brought to untimely death for none other fault, but for seeking to reduce their Country-men to good order and discipline: and that in some Common-weales it was made a capitall crime, once to motion the making of a new Law for the abrogating of an old, though the same were most pernicious: And that certaine, which would be counted pillars of the State, and paternes of Vertue and Prudence, could not be brought for a long time to give way to good Letters and refined speech, but bare themselves as averse from them, as from rocks or boxes of poison: And fourthly, that hee was no babe, but a great clearke, that gave foorth (and in writing to remaine to posteritie) in passion peradventure, but yet he gave foorth, that hee had not seene any profit to come by any Synode, or meeting of the Clergie, but rather the contrary: And lastly, against Church-maintenance and allowance, in such sort, as the Embassadors and messengers of the great King of Kings should be furnished, it is not unknowen what a fiction or fable (so it is esteemed, and for no better by the reporter himselfe, though superstitious) was devised; Namely, that at such time as the professours and teachers of Christianitie in the Church of Rome, then a true Church, were liberally endowed, a voyce forsooth was heard from heaven, saying; Now is poison poured down into the Church, &c. Thus not only as oft as we speake, as one saith, but also as oft as we do any thing of note or consequence, we subject our selves to every ones censure, and happy is he that is least tossed upon tongues; for utterly to escape the snatch of them it is impossible. If any man conceit, that this is the lot and portion of the meaner sort onely, and that Princes are priviledged by their high estate, he is deceived. As the sword devoureth aswell one as the other, as it is in Samuel; nay as the great Commander charged his souldiers in a certaine battell, to strike at no part of the enemy, but at the face; And as the King of Syria commanded his chiefe Captaines to fight neither with small nor great, save onely against the King of Israel: so it is too true, that Envie striketh most spitefully at the fairest, and at the chiefest. David was a worthy Prince, and no man to be compared to him for his first deedes, and yet for as worthy an acte as ever he did (even for bringing backe the Arke of God in solemnitie) he was scorned and scoffed at by his owne wife. Solomon was greater then David, though not in vertue, yet in power: and by his power and wisdome he built a Temple to the LORD, such a one was the glory of the land of Israel, and the wonder of the whole world. But was that his magnificence liked of by all? We doubt of it. Otherwise, why doe they lay it in his sonnes dish, and call unto him for ll easing of the burden, Make, say they, the grievous servitude of thy father, and his sore yoke, lighter. Belike he had charged them with some levies, and troubled them with some cariages; Hereupon they raise up a tragedie, and wish in their heart the Temple had never bene built. So hard a thing it is to please all, even when we please God best, and doe seeke to approve our selves to every ones conscience.

If wee will descend to later times, wee shall finde many the like examples of such kind, or rather unkind acceptance. The first Romane Emperour did never doe a more pleasing deed to the learned, nor more profitable to posteritie, for conserving the record of times in true supputation; then when he corrected the Calender, and ordered the yeere according to the course of the Sunne: and yet this was imputed to him for noveltie, and arrogancie, and procured to him great obloquie. So the first Christened Emperour (at the leastwise that openly professed the faith himselfe, and allowed others to doe the like) for strengthening the Empire at his great charges, and providing for the Church, as he did, got for his labour the name Pupillus, as who would say, a wastefull Prince, that had neede of a Guardian, or overseer. So the best Christened Emperour, for the love that he bare unto peace, thereby to enrich both himselfe and his subjects, and because he did not

seeke warre but find it, was judged to be no man at armes, (though in deed he excelled in feates of chivalrie, and shewed so much when he was provoked) and condemned for giving himselfe to his ease, and to his pleasure. To be short, the most learned Emperour of former times, (at the least, the greatest politician) what thanks had he for cutting off the superfluties of the lawes, and digesting them into some order and method? This, that he hath been blotted by some to bee an Epitomist, that is, one that extinguished worthy whole volumes, to bring his abridgements into request. This is the measure that hath been rendred to excellent Princes in former times, even, Cum benè facerent, malè audire, For their good deedes to be evill spoken of. Neither is there any likelihood, that envie and malignitie died, and were buried with the ancient. No, no, the reproofe of Moses taketh hold of most ages; You are risen up in your fathers stead, an increase of sinfull men. What is that that hath been done? that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the Sunne, saith the wiseman: and S. Steven, As your fathers did, so doe you. This, and more to this purpose, His Majestie that now reigneth (and long, and long may he reigne, and his offspring for ever, Himselfe and children, and childrens children alwayes) knew full well, according to the singular wisdom given unto him by God, and the rare learning and experience that he hath attained unto; namely that whosoever attempteth any thing for the publike (specially if it pertaine to Religion, and to the opening and clearing of the word of God) the same setteth himselfe upon a stage to be glouted upon by every evil eye, yea, he casteth himselfe headlong upon pikes, to be gored by every sharpe tongue. For he that medleth with mens Religion in any part, medleth with their custome, nay, with their freehold; and though they finde no content in that which they have, yet they cannot abide to heare of altering. Notwithstanding his Royall heart was not daunted or discouraged for this or that colour, but stood resolute, as a statue immoveable, and an anvile not easie to be beaten into plates, as one sayth; he knew who had chosen him to be a Souldier, or rather a Captaine, and being assured that the course which he intended made much for the glory of God, & the building up of his Church, he would not suffer it to be broken off for whatsoever speaches or practises. It doth certainly belong unto Kings, yea, it doth specially belong unto them, to have care of Religion, yea, to know it aright, yea, to professe it zealously, yea to promote it to the uttermost of their power. This is their glory before all nations which meane well, and this will bring unto them a farre most excellent weight of glory in the day of the Lord Jesus. For the Scripture saith not in vaine, Them that honor me, I will honor, neither was it a vaine word that Eusebius delivered long agoe, that pietie towards God was the weapon, and the onely weapon that both preserved Constantines person, and avenged him of his enemies.

But now what pietie without trueth? what trueth (what saving trueth) without the word of God? what word of God (whereof we may be sure) without the Scripture? The Scriptures we are commanded to search. Joh. 5.39. Esa. 8.20. They are commended that searched & studied them. Act. 17.11. and 8.28, 29. They are reproved that were unskilful in them, or slow to beleve them. Mat. 22.29. Luk. 24.25. They can make us wise unto salvation. 2. Tim. 3.15. If we be ignorant, they will instruct us; if out of the way, they will bring us home; if out of order, they will reforme us, if in heavines, comfort us; if dull, quicken us; if colde, inflame us. Tolle, lege; Tolle, lege, Take up and read, take up and read the Scriptures, (for unto them was the direction) it was said unto S. Augustine by a supernaturall voyce. Whatsoever is in the Scriptures, beleve me, saith the same S. Augustine, is high and divine; there is verily trueth, and a doctrine most fit for the refreshing and renewing of mens mindes, and truely so tempered, that every one may draw from thence that which is sufficient for him, if hee come to draw with a devout and pious minde, as true Religion requireth. Thus S. Augustine. And S. Jerome: Ana scripturas, & amabit te sapientia

&c. Love the Scriptures, and wisdom will love thee. And S. Cyrill against Julian; Even boyes that are bred up in the Scriptures, become most religious, &c. But what mention wee three or foure uses of the Scripture, whereas whatsoever is to be beleevd or practised, or hoped for, is contained in them? or three or foure sentences of the Fathers, since whosoever is worthy of the name of a Father, from Christs time downward, hath likewise written not onely of the riches, but also of the perfection of the Scripture? I adore the fulnesse of the Scripture, saith Tertullian against Hermogenes. And againe, to Apelles an Heretike of the like stampe, he saith; I doe not admit that which thou bringest in (or concludest) of thine owne (head or store, de tuo) without Scripture. So Saint Justin Martyr before him; Wee must know by all meanes, saith hee, that it is not lawfull (or possible) to learne (any thing) of God or of right pietie, save onely out of the Prophets, who teach us by divine inspiration. So Saint Basill after Tertullian, It is a manifest falling away from the Faith, and a fault of presumption, either to reject any of those things that are written, or to bring in (upon the head of them,) any of those things that are not written. Wee omit to cite to the same effect, S. Cyrill B. of Jerusalem in his 4. Cataches. Saint Jerome against Heludius, Saint Augustine in his 3. booke against the letters of Petilian, and in very many other places of his workes. Also we forebeare to descend to latter Fathers, because wee will not wearie the reader. The Scriptures then being acknowledged to bee so full and so perfect, how can wee excuse our selves of negligence, if we doe not studie them, of curiositie, if we be not content with them? Men talke much of , how many sweete and goodly things it had hanging on it; of the Philosophers stone, that it turneth copper into gold; of Cornu-copia, that it had all things necessary for foode in it; of Panaces the herbe, that it was good for all diseases; of Catholicon the drugge, that is in stead of all purges; of Vulcans armour, that is was an armour of prooffe against all thrusts, and all blowes, &c. Well, that which they falsly or vainely attributed to these things for bodily good, wee may justly and with full measure ascribe unto the Scripture, for spirituall. It is not onely an armour, but also a whole armorie of weapons, both offensive, and defensive; whereby we may save our selves and put the enemie to flight. It is not an herbe, but a tree, or rather a whole paradise of trees of life, which bring foorth fruit every moneth, and the fruit thereof is for meate, and the leaves for medicine. It is not a pot of Manna, or a cruse of oyle, which were for memorie only, or for a meales meate or two, but as it were a showre of heavenly bread sufficient for a whole host, be it never so great; and as it were a whole cellar full of oyle vessels; whereby all our necessities may be provided for, and our debts discharged. In a word, it is a Panary of wholesome foode, against fenowed traditions; a Physions-shop (Saint Basill calleth it) of preservatives against poisoned heresies; a Pandect of profitable lawes, against rebellious spirits; a treasure of most costly jewels, against beggarly rudiments; Finally a fountaine of most pure water springing up unto everlasting life. And what marvaile? The originall thereof being from heaven, not from earth; the authour being God, not man; the enditer, the holy spirit, not the wit of the Apostles or Prophets; the Pen-men such as were sanctified from the wombe, and endewed with a principall portion of Gods spirit; the matter, veritie, pietie, puritie, uprightnesse; the forme, Gods word, Gods testimonie, Gods oracles, the word of trueth, the word of salvation, &c. the effects, light of understanding, stablenesse of persuasion, repentance from dead workes, newnesse of life, holinesse, peace, joy in the holy Ghost; lastly, the end and reward of the studie thereof, fellowship with the Saints, participation of the heavenly nature, fruition of an inheritance immortall, undefiled, and that never shall fade away: Happie is the man that delighteth in the Scripture, and thrise happie that meditateth in it day and night.

But how shall men meditate in that, which they cannot understand? How shall they understand that which is kept close in an unknown tongue? as it is written, Except I know the power of the voyce, I shall be to him that speaketh, a Barbarian, and he that speaketh, shall be a Barbarian to me. The Apostle excepteth no tongue, not Hebrew the ancientest, not Greeke the most copious, not Latine the finest. Nature taught a naturall man to confesse, that all of us in those tongues which wee doe not understand, are plainly deafe; wee may turne the deafe eare unto them. The Scythian counted the Athenian, whom he did not understand, barbarous: so the Romane did the Syrian, and the Jew, (even S. Jerome himselfe calleth the Hebrew tongue barbarous, belike because it was strange to so many) so the Emperour of Constantinople calleth the Latine tongue, barbarous, though Pope Nicolas do storme at it: so the Jewes long before Christ, called all other nations, Lognazim, which is little better then barbarous. Therefore as one complaineth, that alwayes in the Senate of Rome, there was one or other that called for an interpreter: so lest the Church be driven to the like exigent, it is necessary to have translations in a readinesse. Translation it is that openeth the window, to let in the light; that breaketh the shell, that we may eat the kernel; that putteth aside the curtaine, that we may looke into the most Holy place; that remooveth the cover of the well, that wee may come by the water, even as Jacob rolled away the stone from the mouth of the well, by which meanes the flockes of Laban were watered. Indeede without translation into the vulgar tongue, the unlearned are but like children at Jacobs well (which was deepe) without a bucket or some thing to draw with: or as that person mentioned by Esau, to whom when a sealed booke was delivered, with this motion, Reade this, I pray thee, hee was faine to make this answer, I cannot, for it is sealed.

While God would be knowen onely in Jacob, and have his Name great in Israel, and in none other place, while the dew lay on Gideons fleece onely, and all the earth besides was drie; then for one and the same people, which spake all of them the language of Canaan, that is, Hebrew, one and the same originall in Hebrew was sufficient. But when the fulnesse of time drew neere, that the Sunne of righteousness, the Sonne of God should come into the world, whom God ordeined to be a reconciliation through faith in his blood, not of the Jew onely, but also of the Greeke, yea, of all them that were scattered abroad; then loe, it pleased the Lord to stirre up the spirit of a Greeke Prince (Greeke for descent and language) even of Ptolome Philadelph King of Egypt, to procure the translating of the Booke of God out of Hebrew into Greeke. This is the translation of the Seventie Interpreters, commonly so called, which prepared the way for our Saviour among the Gentiles by written preaching, as Saint John Baptist did among the Jewes by vocall. For the Grecians being desirous of learning, were not wont to suffer bookes of worth to lye moulding in Kings Libraries, but had many of their servants, ready scribes, to copie them out, and so they were dispersed and made common. Againe, the Greeke tongue was wellknown and made familiar to most inhabitants in Asia, by reason of the conquest that there the Grecians had made, as also by the Colonies, which thither they had sent. For the same causes also it was well understood in many places of Europe, yea, and of Affrike too. Therefore the word of God being set forth in Greeke, becommeth hereby like a candle set upon a candlesticke, which giveth light to all that are in the house, or like a proclamation sounded forth in the market place, which most men presently take knowledge of; and therefore that language was fittest to containe the Scriptures, both for the first Preachers of the Gospel to appeale unto for witnesse, and for the learners also of those times to make search and triall by. It is certaine, that the Translation was not so sound and so perfect, but that it needed in many places correction; and who had bene so sufficient for this worke as the Apostles or Apostolike men? Yet it seemed good to the holy

Ghost and to them, to take that which they found, (the same being for the greatest part true and sufficient) rather than by making a new, in that new world and greene age of the Church, to expose themselves to many exceptions and cavillations, as though they made a Translation to serve their owne turne, and therefore bearing witness to themselves, their witness not to be regarded. This may be supposed to be some cause, why the Translation of the Seventie was allowed to passe for currant. Notwithstanding, though it was commended generally, yet it did not fully content the learned, no not of the Jewes. For not long after Christ, Aquila fell in hand with a new Translation, and after him Theodotion, and after him Symmachus: yea, there was a fift and a sixt edition the Authours wherof were not knowen. These with the Seventie made up the Hexapla, and were worthily and to great purpose compiled together by Origen. Howbeit the Edition of the Seventie went away with the credit, and therefore not onely was placed in the midst by Origen (for the worth and excellencie thereof above the rest, as Epiphanius gathereth) but also was used by the Greeke fathers for the ground and foundation of their Commentaries. Yea, Epiphanius above named doeth attribute so much unto it, that he holdeth the Authours thereof not onely for Interpreters, but also for Prophets in some respect: and Justinian the Emperour enjoying the Jewes his subjects to use specially the Translation of the Seventie, rendreth this reason thereof, because they were as it were enlightened with propheticall grace. Yet for all that, as the Egyptians are said of the Prophet to be men and not God, and their horses flesh and not spirit: so it is evident, (and Saint Jerome affirmeth as much) that the Seventie were Interpreters, they were not Prophets; they did many things well, as learned men; but yet as men they stumbled and fell, one while through oversight, another while through ignorance, yea, sometimes they may be noted to adde to the Originall, and sometimes to take from it; which made the Apostles to leave them many times, when they left the Hebrew, and to deliver the sence thereof according to the trueth of the word, as the spirit gave them utterance. This may suffice touching the Greeke Translations of the old Testament.

There were also within a few hundreth yeeres after CHRIST, translations many into the Latine tongue: for this tongue also was very fit to convey the Law and the Gospel by, because in those times very many Countreys of the West, yea of the South, East and North, spake or understood Latine, being made Provinces to the Romanes. But now the Latine Translations were too many to be all good, for they were infinite (*Latini Interpretes nullo modo numerari possunt*, saith S. Augustine.) Againe they were not out of the Hebrew fountaine (wee speake of the Latine Translations of the Old Testament) but out of the Greeke streame, therefore the Greeke being not altogether cleare, the Latine derived from it must needs be muddie. This moved S. Jerome a most learned father, and the best linguist without controversie, of his age, or of any that went before him, to undertake the translating of the Old Testament, out of the very fountains themselves; which hee performed with that evidence of great learning, judgement, industrie and faithfulness, that he hath for ever bound the Church unto him, in a debt of speciall remembrance and thankfulness.

Now though the Church were thus furnished with Greeke and Latine Translations, even before the faith of CHRIST was generally embraced in the Empire: (for the learned know that even in S. Jeroms time, the Consul of Rome and his wife were both Ethnicks, and about the same time the greatest part of the Senate also) yet for all that the godly-learned were not content to have the Scriptures in the Language which themselves understood, Greeke and Latine, (as the good Lepers were not content to fare well themselves, but acquainted their neighbours with the store

that God had sent, that they also might provide for themselves) but also for the behoofe and edifying of the unlearned which hungred and thirsted after Righteousnesse, and had soules to be saved as well as they, they provided Translations into the vulgar for their Countrey men, insomuch that most nations under heaven did shortly after their conversion, heare CHRIST speaking unto them in their mother tongue, not by the voyce of their Minister onely, but also by the written word translated. If any doubt hereof, he may be satisfied by examples enough, if enough will serve the turne. First S. Jerome saith, *Multarum gentiu linguis Scriptura antè translata, docet falsa esse quæ addita sunt, &c.i.* The Scripture being translated before in the languages of many Nations, doth shew that those things that were added (by Lucian or Hesychius) are false. So S. Jerome in that place. The same Jerome elsewhere affirmeth that he, the time was, had set forth the translation of the Seventy, *suæ linguæ hominibus.i.* for his countrey men of Dalmatia. Which words not only Erasmus doth understand to purport, that S. Jerome translated the Scripture into the Dalmatian tongue, but also Sixtus Senensis, and Alphonsus à Castro (that we speake of no more) men not to be excepted against by them of Rome, doe ingenuously confesse as much. So, S. Chrysostome that lived in S. Hieromes time, giveth evidence with him: The doctrine of S. John (saith he) did not in such sort (as the Philosophers did) vanish away: but the Syrians, Egyptians, Indians, Persians. Ethiopians, and infinite other nations being barbarous people, translated it into their (mother) tongue, and have learned to be (true) Philosophers, he meaneth Christians. To this may be added Theodorit, as next unto him, both for antiquitie, and for learning. His words be these, Every Countrey that is under the Sunne, is full of these wordes (of the Apostles and Prophets) and the Hebrew tongue (he meaneth the Scriptures in the Hebrew tongue) is turned not onely into the Language of the Grecians, but also of the Romanes, and Egyptians, and Persians, and Indians, and Armenians, and Scythians, and Sauromatians, and briefly into all the Languages that any Nation useth. So he. In like maner, Ulpilas is reported by Paulus Diaconus and Isidor (and before them by Sozomen) to have translated the Scriptures into the Gothicke tongue: John Bishop of Sivil by Vasseus, to have turned them into Arabicke, about the yeere of our Lord 717: Beda by Cistertiensis, to have turned a great part of them into Saxon: Efnard by Trithemius, to have abridged the French Psalter, as Beda had done the Hebrew, about the yeere 800: King Alured by the said Cistertiensis, to have turned the Psalter into Saxon: Methodius by Aventinus (printed at Ingolstad) to have turned the Scriptures into Il Sclavonian: Valdo, Bishop of Frising by Beatus Rhenanus, to have caused about that time, the Gospels to be translated into Dutch-rithme, yet extant in the Library of Corbinian: Valdus, by divers to have turned them himselfe, or to have gotten them turned into French, about the yeere 1160: Charles the 5. of that name, surnamed The wise, to have caused them to be turned into French, about 200. yeeres after Valdus his time, of which translation there be many copies yet extant, as witnesseth Beroaldus. Much about that time, even in our King Richard the seconds dayes, John Trevisa translated them into English, and many English Bibles in written hand are yet to be seene with divers, translated as it is very probable, in that age. So the Syrian translation of the New Testament is in most learned mens Libraries, of Widminstadius his setting forth, and the Psalter in Arabicke is with many, of Augustinus Nebiensis setting foorth. So Postel affirmeth, that in his travaile he saw the Gospels in the Ethiopian tongue; And Ambrose Thesius alleageth the Psalter of the Indians, which he testifieth to have bene set forth by Potken in Syrian characters. So that, to have the Scriptures in the mother-tongue is not a quaint conceit lately taken up, either by the Lord Cromwell in England, or by the Lord Radevil in Polonie, or by the Lord Ungnadius in the Emperours dominion, but hath bene thought upon, and put in practise of old, even from the first times of the

conversion of any Nation; no doubt, because it was esteemed most profitable, to cause faith to grow in mens hearts the sooner, and to make them to be able to say with the words of the Psalme, As we have heard, so we have seene.

Now the Church of Rome would seeme at the length to beare a motherly affection towards her children, and to allow them the Scriptures in their mother tongue: but indeed it is a gift, not deserving to be called a gift, an unprofitable gift: they must first get a Licence in writing before they may use them, and to get that, they must approve themselves to their Confessor, that is, to be such as are, if not frozen in the dregs, yet soured with the leaven of their superstition. Howbeit, it seemed too much to Clement the 8. that there should be any Licence granted to have them in the vulgar tongue, and therefore he overruleth and frustrateth the grant of Pius the fourth. So much are they afraid of the light of the Scripture, (*Lucifugæ Scripturarum*, as Tertullian speaketh) that they will not trust the people with it, no not as it is set foorth by their owne sworne men, no not with the Licence of their owne Bishops and Inquisitors. Yea, so unwilling they are to communicate the Scriptures to the peoples understanding in any sort, that they are not ashamed to confesse, that wee forced them to translate it into English against their wills. This seemeth to argue a bad cause, or a bad conscience, or both. Sure we are, that it is not he that hath good gold, that is afraid to bring it to the touch-stone, but he that hath the counterfeit; neither is it the true man that shunneth the light, but the malefactor, lest his deedes should be reprovèd: neither is it the plaine dealing Merchant that is unwilling to have the waights, or the meteyard brought in place, but he that useth deceit. But we will let them alone for this fault, and returne to translation.

Many mens mouths have bene open a good while (and yet are not stopped) with speches about the Translation so long in hand, or rather perusals of Translations made before: and aske what may be the reason, what the necessitie of the employment: Hath the Church bene deceived, say they, all this while? Hath her sweet bread bene mingled with leaven, her silver with drosse, her wine with water, her milke with lime? (*Lacte gypsum malè miscetur*, saith S. Ireney,) We hoped that we had bene in the right way, that we had had the Oracles of God delivered unto us, and that though all the world had cause to be offended and to complaine, yet that we had none. Hath the nurse holden out the breast, and nothing but winde in it? Hath the bread bene delivered by the fathers of the Church, and the same proved to be lapidosus, as Seneca speaketh? What is it to handle the word of God deceitfully, if this be not? Thus certaine brethren. Also the adversaries of Judah and Jerusalem, like Sanballat in Nehemiah, mocke, as we heare, both at the worke and workemen, saying; What doe these weake Jewes, &c. will they make the stones whole againe out of the heapes of dust which are burnt? although they build, yet if a foxe goe up, he shall even breake downe their stony wall. Was their Translation good before? Why doe they now mend it? Was it not good? Why then was it obruded to the people? Yea, why did the Catholicks (meaning Popish Romanists) alwayes goe in jeopardie, for refusing to goe to heare it? Nay, if it must be translated into English, Catholicks are fittest to doe it. They have learning, and they know when a thing is well, they can manum de tabulá. Wee will answere them both briefly: and the former, being brethren, thus, with S. Jerome, *Damnamus veteres? Minimè, sed post priorum studia in domo Domini quod possumus laboramus.* That is, Doe we condemne the ancient? In no case: but after the endeavours of them that were before us, wee take the best paines we can in the house of God. As if hee said, Being provoked by the example of the learned that lived before my time, I have thought it my duetie, to assay whether my talent in the knowledge of the tongues, may be profitable in any measure to Gods Church, lest I should seeme to have laboured in them in vaine,

and lest I should be thought to glory in men, (although ancient,) above that which was in them. Thus S. Jerome may be thought to speake.

And to the same effect say wee, that we are so farre off from condemning any of their labours that traveled before us in this kinde, either in this land or beyond sea, either in King Henries time, or King Edwards (if there were any translation, or correction of a translation in his time) or Queene Elizabeths of ever-renoumed memorie, that we acknowledge them to have beene raised up of God, for the building and furnishing of his Church, and that they deserve to be had of us and of posteritie in everlasting remembrance. The Judgement of Aristotle is worthy and well knowne: If Timotheus had not bene, we had not had much sweet musicke; but if Phrynus (Timotheus his master) had not beene, wee had not had Timotheus. Therefore blessed be they, and most honoured be their name, that breake the ice, and gluethe onset upon that which helpeth forward to the saving of soules. Now what can bee more availeable thereto, then to deliever Gods booke unto Gods people in a tongue which they understand? Since of an hidden treasure, and of a fountaine that is sealed, there is no profit, as Ptolomee Philadelph wrote to the Rabbins or masters of the Jewes, as witnesseth Epiphanius: and as S. Augustine saith; A man had rather be with his dog then with a stranger (whose tongue is strange unto him.) Yet for all that, as nothing is begun and perfited at the same time, and the later thoughts are thought to be the wiser: so, if we building upon their foundation that went before us, and being holpen by their labours, doe endeavour to make that better which they left so good; no man, we are sure, hath cause to mislike us; they, we persuade our selves, if they were alive, would thanke us. The vintage of Abiezer, that strake the stroake: yet the gleaning of grapes of Ephraim was not to be despised. See Judges 8. verse 2. Joash the king of Israel did not satisfie himselfe, till he had smitten the ground three times; and yet hee offended the Prophet, for giving over then. Aquila, of whom wee spake before, translated the Bible as carefully, and as skilfully as he could; and yet he thought good to goe over it againe, and then it got the credit with the Jewes, to be called, that is accuratly done, as Saint Jerome witnesseth. How many bookes of profane learning have bene gone over againe and againe, by the same translators, by others? Of one and the same booke of Aristotles Ethikes, there are extant not so few as sixe or seven severall translations. Now if this cost may bee bestowed upon the goord, which affordeth us a little shade, and which to day flourisheth, but to morrow is cut downe; what may we bestow, nay what ought we not to bestow upon the Vine, the fruite whereof maketh glad the conscience of man, and the stemme whereof abideth for ever? And this is the word of God, which we translate. What is the chaffe to the wheat, saith the Lord? *Tanti vitreum, quanti verum margaritum* (saith Tertullian,) if a toy of glasse be of that reckoning with us, how ought wee to value the true pearle? Therefore let no mans eye be evill, because his Majesties is good; neither let any be grieved, that wee have a Prince that seeketh the increase of the spirituall wealth of Israel (let Sanballats and Tobiahs doe so, which therefore doe beare their just reproofe) but let us rather blesse God from the ground of our heart, for working this religious care in him, to have the translations of the Bible maturely considered of and examined. For by this meanes it commeth to passe, that whatsoever is sound alreadie (and all is sound for substance, in one or other of our editions, and the worst of ours farre better then their autentike vulgar) the same will shine as gold more brightly, being rubbed and polished; also if any thing be halting, or superfluous, or not so agreeable to the originall, the same may bee corrected, and the trueth set in place. And what can the King command to bee done, that will bring him more true honour then this? and wherein could they that have beene set a worke, approve their duetie to the King, yea their obedience to God, and love to his Saints more, then by yeelding their service, and

all that is within them, for the furnishing of the worke? But besides all this, they were the principall motives of it, and therefore ought least to quarrell it: for the very Historicall trueth is, that upon the importunate petitions of the Puritanes, at this Majesties comming to this Crowne, the Conference at Hampton Court having bene appointed for hearing their complaints: when by force of reason they were put from all other grounds, they had recourse at the last, to this shift, that they could not with good conscience subscribe to the Communion booke, since it maintained the Bible as it was there translated, which was as they said, a most corrupted translation. And although this was judged to be but a very poore and emptie shift; yet even hereupon did his Majestie beginne to bethinke himselfe of the good that might ensue by a new translation, and presently after gave order for this Translation which is now presented unto thee. Thus much to satisfie our scrupulous Brethren.

Now to the later we answer; that wee doe not deny, nay wee affirme and avow, that the very meanest translation of the Bible in English, set foorth by men of our profession (for wee have seene none of theirs of the whole Bible as yet) containeth the word of God, nay, is the word of God. As the Kings Speech which hee uttered in Parliament, being translated into French, Dutch, Italian and Latine, is still the Kings Speech, though it be not interpreted by every Translator with the like grace, nor peradventure so fitly for phrase, nor so expresly for sence, every where. For it is confessed, that things are to take their denomination of the greater part; and a naturall man could say, *Verùm ubi multa nitent in carmine, non ego paucis offendor maculis, &c.* A man may be counted a vertuous man, though hee have made many slips in his life, (els, there were none vertuous, for in many things we offend all) also a comely man and lovely, though hee have some warts upon his hand, yea, not onely freakles upon his face, but all skarres. No cause therefore why the word translated should bee denied to be the word, or forbidden to be currant, notwithstanding that some imperfections and blemishes may be noted in the setting foorth of it. For what ever was perfect under the Sunne, where Apostles or Apostolike men, that is, men indued with an extraordinary measure of Gods spirit, and priviledged with the priviledge of infallibilitie, had not their hand? The Romanistes therefore in refusing to heare, and daring to burne the Word translated, did no lesse then despite the spirit of grace, from whom originally it proceeded, and whose sense and meaning, as well as mans weaknesse would enable, it did expresse. Judge by an example or two. Plutarch writeth, that after that Rome had bene burnt by the Galles, they fell soone to builde it againe: but doing it in haste, they did not cast the streets, nor proportion the houses in such comely fashion, as had bene most sightly and convenient; was Catiline therefore an honest man, or a good Patriot, that sought to bring it to a combustion? or Nero a good Prince, that did indeed set it on fire? So, by the story of Ezrah, and the prophesie of Haggai it may be gathered, that the Temple build by Zerubbabel after the returne from Babylon, was by no meanes to bee compared to the former built by Solomon (for they that remembred the former, wept when they considered the latter) notwithstanding, might this later either have bene abhorred and forsaken by the Jewes, or prophaned by the Greekes? The like wee are to thinke of Translations. The translation of the Seventie dissenteth from the Originall in many places, neither doeth it come neere it, for perspicuitie, gratvitie, majestie; yet which of the Apostles did condemne it? Condemne it? Nay, they used it, (as it is apparent, and as Saint Jerome and most learned men doe confesse) which they would not have done, nor by their example of using it, so grace and commend it to the Church, if it had bene unworthy the appellation and name of the word of God. And whereas they urge for their second defence of their vilifying and abusing of the English Bibles, or some pieces thereof, which they meete with, for that heretikes (forsooth)

were the Authours of the translations, (heretikes they call us by the same right that they call themselves Catholikes, both being wrong) wee marveile what divinitie taught them so. Wee are sure Tertullian was of another minde: Ex personis probamus fidem, an ex fide personas? Doe we trie mens faith by their persons? we should trie their persons by their faith. Also S. Augustine was of an other minde: for he lighting upon certaine rules made by Tychonius a Donatist, for the better understanding of the word, was not ashamed to make use of them, yea, to insert them into his owne booke, with giving commendation to them so farre foorth as they were worthy to be commended, as is to be seene in S. Augustines third booke De doctrinâ Christianâ. To be short, Origen, and the whole Church of God for certain hundred yeeres, were of an other minde: for they were so farre from treading under foote, (much more from burning) the Translation of Aquila a Proselite, that is, one that had turned Jew; of Symmachus, and Theodotion, both Ebionites, that is, most vile heretikes, that they joyned them together with the Hebrew Originall, and the Translation of the Seventie (as hath bene before signified out of Epiphanius) and set them forth openly to be considered of and perused by all. But we weary the unlearned, who need not know so much, and trouble the learned, who know it already.

Yet before we end, we must answer a third cavill and objection of theirs against us, for altering and amending our Taanslations [sic] so oft; wherein truely they deale hardly, and strangely with us. For to whom ever was it imputed for a fault (by such as were wise) to goe over that which hee had done, and to amend it where he saw cause? Saint Augustine was not afraide to exhort S. Jerome to a Palinodia or recantation; the same S. Augustine was not ashamed to retractate, we might say revoke, many things that had passed him, and doth even glory that he seeth his infirmities. If we will be sonnes of the Trueth, we must consider what it speaketh, and trample upon our owne credit, yea, and upon other mens too, if either be any way an hinderance to it. This to the cause: then to the persons we say, that of all men they ought to bee most silent in this case. For what varieties have they, and what alterations have they made, not onely of their Service bookes, Portesses and Breviaries, but also of their Latine Translation? The Service booke supposed to be made by S. Ambrose (Officium Ambrosianum) was a great while in speciall use and request: but Pope Hadrian calling a Councill with the ayde of Charles the Emperour, abolished it, yea, burnt it, and commanded the Service-booke of Saint Gregorie universally to be used. Well, Officium Gregorianum gets by this meanes to be in credit, but doeth it continue without change or altering? No, the very Romane Service was of two fashions, the New fashion, and the Old, (the one used in one Church, the other in another) as is to bee seene in Pamelius a Romanist, his Preface, before Micrologus. The same Pamelius reporteth out of Radulphus de Rivo, that about the yeere of our Lord, 1277. Pope Nicolas the third removed out of the Churches of Rome, the more ancient bookes (of Service) and brought into use the Missals of the Friers Minorites, and commaunded them to bee observed there; insomuch that about an hundred yeeres after, when the above named Radulphus happened to be at Rome, he found all the bookes to be new, (of the new stampe.) Neither was there this chopping and changing in the more ancient times onely, but also of late: Pius Quintus himselfe confesseth, that every Bishopricke almost had a peculiar kind of service, most unlike to that which others had: which moved him to abolish all other Breviaries, though never so ancient, and priviledged and published by Bishops in their Dioceses, and to establish and ratifie that onely which was of his owne setting foorth, in the yeere 1568. Now, when the father of their Church, who gladly would heale the soare of the daughter of his people softly and sleightly, and make the best of it, findeth so great fault with them for their oddes and jarring; we hope the children have no great cause to vaunt of their

uniformitie. But the difference that appeareth betweene our Translations, and our often correcting of them, is the thing that wee are specially charged with; let us see therefore whether they themselves bee without fault this way, (if it be to be counted a fault, to correct) and whether they bee fit men to throw stones at us: O tandem major parcas insane minori: they that are lesse sound themselves, ought not to object infirmities to others. If we should tell them that Valla, Stapulensis, Erasmus, and Vives found fault with their vulgar Translation, and consequently wished the same to be mended, or a new one to be made, they would answere peradventure, that we produced their enemies for witnesses against them; albeit, they were in no other sort enemies, then as S. Paul was to the Galatians, for telling them the trueth: and it were to be wished, that they had dared to tell it them plainlier and oftner. But what will they say to this, that Pope Leo the tenth allowed Erasmus Translation of the New Testament, so much different from the vulgar, by his Apostolike Letter & Bull; that the same Leo exhorted Pagnin to translate the whole Bible, and bare whatsoever charges was necessary for the worke? Surely, as the Apostle reasoneth to the Hebrewes, that if the former Law and Testament had bene sufficient, there had bene no need of the latter: so we may say, that if the olde vulgar had bene at all points allowable, to small purpose had labour and charges bene undergone, about framing of a new. If they say, it was one Popes private opinion, and that he consulted onely himselfe; then wee are able to goe further with them, and to averre, that more of their chiefe men of all sorts, even their owne Trent-champions Paiva & Vega, and their owne Inquisitors, Hieronymus ab Oleastro, and their own Bishop Isidorus Clarius, and their owne Cardinall Thomas à Vio Caietan, doe either make new Translations themselves, or follow new ones of other mens making, or note the vulgar Interpretor for halting; none of them feare to dissent from him, nor yet to except against him. And call they this an uniforme tenour of text and judgement about the text, so many of their Worthies disclaiming the now received conceit? Nay, we wil yet come neerer the quicke: doth not their Paris-edition differ from the Louaine, and Hentenius his from them both, and yet all of them allowed by authoritie? Nay, doth not Sixtus Quintus confesse, that certaine Catholikes (he meaneth certainte of his owne side) were in such an humor of translating the Scriptures into Latine, that Satan taking occasion by them, though they thought of no such matter, did strive what he could, out of so uncertaine and manifold a varietie of Translations, so to mingle all things, that nothing might seeme to be left certaine and firme in them, &c? Nay, further, did not the same Sixtus ordaine by an inviolable decree, and that with the counsell and consent of his Cardinals, that the Latine edition of the olde and new Testament, which the Councill of Trent would have to be authenticke, is the same without controversie which he then set forth, being diligently corrected and printed in the Printing-house of Vatican? Thus Sixtus in his Preface before his Bible. And yet Clement the eight his immediate successour, publisheth another edition of the Bible, containing in it infinite differences from that of Sixtus, (and many of them waightie and materiall) and yet this must be authenticke by all meanes. What is to have the faith of our glorious Lord JESUS CHRIST with Yea and Nay, if this be not? Againe, what is sweet harmonie and consent, if this be? Therefore, as Demaratus of Corinth advised a great King, before he talked of the dissensions among the Grecians, to compose his domesticke broiles (for at that time his Queene and his sonne and heire were at deadly fuide with him) so all the while that our adversaries doe make so many and so various editions themselves, and doe jarre so much about the worth and authoritie of them, they can with no show of equitie challenge us for changing and correcting.

But it is high time to leave them, and to shew in briefe what wee proposed to our selves, and what course we held in this our perusall and survey of the Bible. Truly (good Christian Reader) wee never thought from the beginning, that we should neede to make a new Translation, nor yet to make of a bad one a good one, (for then the imputation of Sixtus had bene true in some sort, that our people had bene fed with gall of Dragons in stead of wine, with whey in stead of milke:) but to make a good one better, or out of many good ones, one principall good one, not justly to be excepted against; that hath bene our indeavour, that our marke. To that purpose there were many chosen, that were greater in other mens eyes then in their owne, and that sought the truth rather then their own praise. Againe, they came or were thought to come to the worke, not exercendi causâ (as one saith) but exercitati, that is, learned, not to learne: For the chiefe overseer and under his Majestie, to whom not onely we, but also our whole Church was much bound, knew by his wisdom, which thing also Nazianzen taught so long agoe, that it is a preposterous order to teach first and to learne after, yea that to learne and practise together, is neither commendable for the workeman, nor safe for the worke. Therefore such were thought upon, as could say modestly with Saint Jerome, Et Hebræum Sermonem ex parte didicimus, & in Latino penè ab ipsis incunabulis &c. detriti sumus. Both we have learned the Hebrew tongue in part, and in the Latine wee have beene exercised almost from our verie cradle. S. Jerome maketh no mention of the Greeke tongue, wherein yet hee did excell, because hee translated not the old Testament out of Greeke, but out of Hebrew. And in what sort did these assemble? In the trust of their owne knowledge, or of their sharpenesse of wit, or deepenesse of judgement, as it were in an arme of flesh? At no hand. They trusted in him that hath the key of David, opening and no man shutting: they prayed to the Lord the Father of our Lord, to the effect that S. Augustine did; O let thy Scriptures be my pure delight, let me not be deceived in them, neither let me deceive by them. In this confidence, and with this devotion did they assemble together; not too many, lest one should trouble another; and yet many, lest many things haply might escape them. If you aske what they had before them, truely it was the Hebrew text of the Olde Testament, the Greeke of the New. These are the two golden pipes, or rather conduits, where-through the olive branches emptie themselves into the golde. Saint Augustine calleth them precedent, or originall tongues; Saint Jerome, fountaines. The same Saint Jerome affirmeth, and Gratian hath not spared to put it into his Decree, That as the credit of the olde Bookes (he meaneth of the Old Testament) is to bee tryed by the Hebrew Volumes, so of the New by the Greeke tongue, he meaneth by the originall Greeke. If trueth be to be tried by these tongues, then whence should a Translation be made, but out of them? These tongues, therefore, the Scriptures wee say in those tongues, wee set before us to translate, being the tongues wherein God was pleased to speake to his Church by his Prophets and Apostles. Neither did we run over the worke with that posting haste that the Septuagint did, if that be true which is reported of them, that they finished it in 72. dayes; neither were we barred or hindered from going over it againe, having once done it, like S. Jerome, if that be true which himselfe reporteth, that he could no sooner write any thing, but presently it was caught from him, and published, and he could not have leave to mend it: neither, to be short, were we the first that fell in hand with translating the Scripture into English, and consequently destitute of former helpe, as it is written of Origen, that hee was the first in a maner, that put his hand to write Commentaries upon the Scriptures, and therefore no marveile, if he overshot himselfe many times. None of these things: the worke hath not bene hudled up in 72. dayes, but hath cost the workemen, as light as it seemeth, the paines of twise seven times seventie two dayes and more: matters of such weight and consequence are to bee speeded with maturitie: for in a businesse of moment a man feareth not the blame of convenient

slacknesse. Neither did wee thinke much to consult the Translators or Commentators, Chaldee, Hebrewes, Syrian, Greeke, or Latine, no nor the Spanish, French, Italian, or Dutch; neither did we disdain to revise that which we had done, and to bring backe to the anvill that which we had hammered: but having and using as great helpe as were needfull, and fearing no reproch for slownesse, nor coveting praise for expedition, wee have at the length, through the good hand of the Lord upon us, brought the worke to that passe that you see.

Some peradventure would have no varietie of sences to be set in the margine, lest the authoritie of the Scriptures for deciding of controversies by that shew of uncertaintie, should somewhat be shaken. But we hold their judgmet not to be so sound in this point. For though, whatsoever things are necessary are manifest, as S. Chrysostome saith, and as S. Augustine, In those things that are plainely set downe in the Scriptures, all such matters are found that concerne Faith, hope, and Charitie. Yet for all that it cannot be dissembled, that partly to exercise and whet our wits, partly to weane the curious from loathing of them for their every-where-plainenesse, partly also to stirre up our devotion to crave the assistance of Gods spirit by prayer, and lastly, that we might be forward to seeke ayd of our brethren by conference, and never scorne those that be not in all respects so complete as they should bee, being to seeke in many things our selves, it hath pleased God in his divine providence, heere and there to scatter wordes and sentences of that difficultie and doubtfulness, not in doctrinall points that concerne salvation, (for in such it hath bene vouched that the Scriptures are plaine) but in matters of lesse moment, that fearefulness would better beseeme us then confidence, and if we will resolve, to resolve upon modestie with S. Augustine, (though not in this same case altogether, yet upon the same ground) *Melius est dubitare de occultis, quàm litigare de incertis*, it is better to make doubt of those things which are secret, then to strive about those things that are uncertaine. There be many words in the Scriptures, which be never found there but once, (having neither brother nor neighbour, as the Hebrewes speake) so that we cannot be holpen by conference of places. Againe, there be many rare names of certaine birds, beastes and precious stones, &c. concerning which the Hebrewes themselves are so divided among themselves for judgement, that they may seeme to have defined this or that, rather because they would say something, the because they were sure of that which they said, as S. Jerome somewhere saith of the Septuagint. Now in such a case, doth not a margine do well to admonish the Reader to seeke further, and not to conclude or dogmatize upon this or that peremptorily? For as it is a fault of incredulitie, to doubt of those things that are evident: so to determine of such things as the Spirit of God hath left (even in the judgment of the judicious) questionable, can bene lesse then presumption. Therefore as S. Augustine saith, that varietie of Translations is profitable for the finding out of the sense of the Scriptures: so diversitie of signification and sense in the margine, where the text is not so cleare, must needes doe good, yea is necessary, as we are perswaded. We know that Sixtus Quintus expresly forbiddeth, that any varietie of readings of their vulgar edition, should be put in the margine, (which though it be not altogether the same thing to that we have in hand, yet it looketh that way) but we thinke he hath not all of his owne side his favourers, for this conceit. They that are wise, had rather have their judgements at libertie in differences of readings, then to be captivated to one, when it may be the other. If they were sure that their hie Priest had all lawes shut up in his brest, as Paul the second bragged, and that he were as free from error by speciall priviledge, as the Dictators of Rome were made by law inviolable, it were an other matter; then his word were an Oracle, his opinion a decision. But the eyes of the world are now open, God be thanked, and have bene a great while, they find that he is subject to the same affections and infirmities that

others be, that his skin is penetrable, and therefore so much as he prooveth, not as much as he claimeth, they grant and embrace.

An other thing we thinke good to admonish thee of (gentle Reader) that wee have not tyed our selves to an uniformitie of phrasing, or to an identitie of words, as some peradventure would wish that we had done, because they observe, that some learned men some where, have beene as exact as they could that way. Truly, that we might not varie from the sense of that which we had translated before, if the word signified the same thing in both places (for there bee some wordes that bee not of the same sense every where) we were especially carefull, and made a conscience, according to our duetie. But, that we should expresse the same notion in the same particular word; as for example, if we translate the Hebrew or Greeke word once by Purpose, never to call it Intent; if one where Journeying, never Traveiling; if one where Thinke, never Suppose; if one where Paine, never Ache; if one where Joy, never Gladnesse, &c. Thus to minse the matter, wee thought to savour more of curiositie then wisdom, and that rather it would breed scorne in the Atheist, then bring profite to the godly Reader. For is the kingdome of God become words or syllables? why should wee be in bondage to them if we may be free, use one precisely when wee may use another no lesse fit, as commodiously? A godly Father in the Primitive time shewed himselfe greatly moved, that one of the newfanglednes called , though the difference be little or none; and another reporteth, that he was much abused for turning Cucurbita (to which reading the people had beene used) into Hedera. Now if this happen in better times, and upon so small occasions, wee might justly feare hard censure, if generally wee should make verball and unnecessary changings. We might also be charged (by scoffers) with some unequall dealing towards a great number of good English wordes. For as it is written of a certaine great Philosopher, that he should say, that those logs were happie that were made images to be worshipped; for their fellowes, as good as they, lay for blockes behinde the fire: so if wee should say, as it were, unto certaine words, Stand up higher, have a place in the Bible alwayes, and to others of like qualitie, Get ye hence, be banished for ever, wee might be taxed peradventure with S. James his words, namely, To be partiall in our selves and judges of evill thoughts. Adde hereunto, that nicenesse in wordes was alwayes counted the next step to trifling, and so was to bee curious about names too: also that we cannot follow a better patterne for elocution then God himselfe; therefore hee using divers words, in his holy writ, and indifferently for one thing in nature: we, if wee will not be superstitious, may use the same libertie in our English versions out of Hebrew & Greeke, for that copie or store that he hath given us. Lastly, wee have on the one side avoided the scrupulositie of the Puritanes, who leave the olde Ecclestiall words, and betake them to other, as when they put washing for Baptisme, and Congregation in stead of Church: as also on the other side we have shunned the obscuritie of the Papists, in their Azimes, Tunike, Rational, Holocausts, Præpuce, Pasche, and a number of such like, whereof their late Translation is full, and that of purpose to darken the sence, that since they must needs translate the Bible, yet by the language thereof, it may bee kept from being understood. But we desire that the Scripture may speake like it selfe, as in the language of Canaan, that it may bee understood even of the very vulgar.

Many other things we might give thee warning of (gentle Reader) if wee had not exceeded the measure of a Preface already. It remaineth, that we commend thee to God, and to the Spirit of his grace, which is able to build further then we can aske or thinke. Hee removeth the scales from our eyes, the vaile from our hearts, opening our wits that wee may understand his word,

enlarging our hearts, yea correcting our affections, that we may love it above gold and silver, yea that we may love it to the end. Ye are brought unto fountains of living water which yee digged not; doe not cast earth into them with the Philistines, neither preferre broken pits before them with the wicked Jewes. Others have laboured, and you may enter into their labours; O receive not so great things in vaine, O despise not so great salvation! Be not like swine to treade under foote so precious things, neither yet like dogs to teare and abuse holy things. Say not to our Saviour with the Gergesites, Depart out of our coasts; neither yet with Esau sell your birthright for a messe of potage. If light be come into the world, love not darknesse more then light; if foode, if clothing be offered, goe not naked, starve not your selves. Remember the advise of Nazianzene, It is a grievous thing (or dangerous) to neglect a great faire, and to seeke to make markets afterwards: also the encouragement of S. Chrysostome, It is altogether impossible, that he that is sober (and watchfull) should at any time be neglected: Lastly, the admonition and menacing of S. Augustine, They that despise Gods will inviting them, shal feele Gods will taking vengeance of them. It is a fearefull thing to fall into the hands of the living God; but a blessed thing it is, and will bring us to everlasting blessednes in the end, when God speaketh unto us, to hearken; when he setteth his word before us, to reade it; when hee stretcheth out his hand and calleth, to answere, Here am I; here wee are to doe thy will, O God. The Lord worke a care and conscience in us to know him and serve him, that we may be acknowledged of him at the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom with the holy Ghost, be all prayse and thanksgiving. Amen.

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