

books 'the word of God may spread rapidly and be glorified' (2 Thess. 3: 1) and the treasure of revelation, entrusted to the Church, may more and more fill the hearts of men. Just as the life of the Church is strengthened through more frequent celebration of the Eucharistic mystery, similarly we may hope for a new stimulus for the life of the Spirit from a growing reverence for the word of God, which 'lasts forever' (Is. 40: 8; see 1 Peter 1: 23-25).

CORRESPONDENCE

We are glad to print a letter received from the Rev. T. H. Lyle on which we invited the Rev. H. K. Moulton to comment. Mr Moulton needs no introduction to readers of this journal and he is probably known personally to the majority of its readers. We hope the publication of this correspondence will encourage others to write to the Editor. Ed.

Dear Mr Editor,

1. The translation of *ho huios mou ho eklelegmenos* in Luke 9: 35.

Professor Kilpatrick, in his article in Vol. 16, No. 3 (July 1965) argued, on grounds of Hebrew and LXX antecedents, that phrases in the New Testament, in which a noun having the article and qualified by a noun or pronoun in the genitive, is followed by an adjective having the article, should be translated in English by a noun with an attributive adjective. He specifically says, on page 118, 'The R.S.V. is to be congratulated on its treatment of Mark 1: 11 ("my beloved Son"); 9: 7 ("my beloved Son") and their parallels. Renderings like "My Son, the Beloved One" do not comprehend the idiom. It is all the more surprising that the Revisers did not produce the right rendering at Luke 23: 35 (where the R.S.V. has "the Christ of God, his Chosen One").' He goes on to say, 'Probably the reason why *the Beloved/only* and *the chosen* are separated from the rest of their phrase in the mistranslations just noted is that much play has been made with the few occasions on which these words serve as titles.'

All this leads me to infer that Professor Kilpatrick would translate 'My chosen Son' in Luke 9: 35. The R.S.V., however, has 'my Son, my Chosen'; so, as this is the Lucan parallel to Mark 9: 7, it was presumably through oversight that Professor Kilpatrick congratulated the R.S.V. on its treatment of 'Mark 1: 11; 9: 7 and their parallels.' I was pleased to read his views because my own wish, in drafting the new Gujarati translation, was to say '*maaro pasand karelo putra*' (my chosen Son), and I am glad to say the Gujarati Revision Committee agreed. But what puzzled me, and still gives me some misgivings, is that, of all the dozen or so versions, which we consulted in other Indian languages and in English (both old versions and new revisions) the solitary one which adopts this translation is the B.F.B.S. Diglot, which

would naturally be influenced by Professor Kilpatrick's views. Everybody else, without exception, separates 'chosen' from 'son'. Is this simply because of the use elsewhere of 'the Chosen One' as a title, or is there some other cogent reason which Professor Kilpatrick has omitted to mention? From such knowledge as I have of Biblical Greek, it seems to me that, unless there are special reasons to the contrary, the obvious and straightforward rendering to adopt is 'my chosen Son'; yet the commentaries which I was able to consult do not even mention this point, apparently taking it for granted that the rendering 'my Son, my Chosen' is so obvious that it needs no justification!

2. 'Indigenous Reaction as a Guide to Meaningful Translation'

I was greatly interested in the table of examples given under this heading by Ernest L. Richert in Vol. 16, No. 4 (October 1965). I felt it was a helpful analysis of the process which often has to be gone through—even if only in the mind of the translator—to achieve a truly idiomatic translation. Although the process was illustrated from a language in New Guinea, it has obvious applications to literary languages also; and after all, 'indigenous reaction' is the ultimate test of the success of any translation in conveying the intended meaning.

A couple of the examples, however, made me raise my eyebrows, for it seemed to me that the translator, in his commendable determination to achieve a *meaningful* translation, had allowed himself to forget that the meaning conveyed must be, as nearly as possible, the meaning of *the original*. A translation which is thoroughly meaningful to every reader, but in fact conveys a meaning quite different from the original, is just a bad translation—though of course it is equally true that a translation which 'adheres' so closely to the original that it conveys nothing to the reader (or even conveys a wrong meaning) is bad.

(a) In Mark 2: 22, 'wineskins' was rendered 'gourds', because national readers were puzzled that anyone should put wine into animal skins, whereas they can readily conceive that a new gourd would be a better container for liquid than an old one. But surely, if Jesus actually spoke about wineskins, which were in fact the containers used for wine in Palestine in His time, it is our duty as translators to give 'wineskins', or at least 'skins' in the translation, and add explanations if necessary (either in footnotes or otherwise) to acquaint the readers with the customs of ancient Palestine, however peculiar those may seem to them at first. If we do not observe this principle, the time will surely come, in a generation or two, when some Christians will learn that what Jesus really spoke about were wineskins, and will feel the previous translation has deceived them by letting them think He spoke about gourds; and, if they come across several instances of such 'deceit', their confidence in the translation will be undermined.

Dr E. A. Nida makes a similar point when, in *Bible Translating*, p. 137, he insists that it would be wrong to say 'beetle' instead of 'moth' in Luke 12: 33, even in a country where in fact beetles more commonly damage clothes than moths do. And I think it was the same fundamental principle which was at

stake when our Gujarati Bible Revision Committee was faced with the suggestion that the 'mustard' (Mark 4: 31 and parallels) should be rendered as 'banyan', because in India the mustard plant never grows more than a few feet high, whereas the banyan tree, from small beginnings, can spread far and wide. After detailed discussion we finally agreed that, in spite of the strangeness to anyone who knows anything about agriculture in India, we must translate 'mustard' because that is what *sinapi* means, and explain, through footnotes or otherwise, that the mustard tree of Palestine is one which does grow big enough to have birds roost in its branches. Can you confirm that we were right in this?

(b) In Mark 11: 9 'he that comes in the name of the Lord' was rendered 'the Lord's namesake who comes'. Surely this is a misunderstanding of the purport of the original Greek (or English) phrase. The point is not that Jesus came with (that is, bearing) the Lord's name, but that He came as the Lord's representative, to carry out the Lord's wishes. This, which I think is the usual interpretation, is confirmed by Dr R. G. Bratcher in his article on 'The Name' (*The Bible Translator*, Vol. 14, p. 79). It may well be, of course, that in Guhu-Samane a literal rendering of the words 'in the name of the Lord' would convey the sense of 'bearing the name of the Lord'. But the idiomatic translation ought not merely to remove the puzzlement as to whether Jesus just assumed the name for Himself; it ought to go further, and remove the misleading idea of a 'name' altogether, since apparently there is no natural idiom in Guhu-Samane which uses the word 'name' to convey the idea of being a representative. This latter idea could be conveyed by such a phrase as 'comes as the Lord's messenger' or 'comes with authority from the Lord' or 'comes to do the Lord's work'. As a matter of fact, this particular difficulty is one which does not trouble us in Gujarati, because in that language, as in English, a literal rendering of the Greek 'in the name of the Lord' quite correctly conveys the meaning of coming as the Lord's representative to do His work.

It seems to me that example (a) shows the danger of seeking meaningfulness without sufficient faithfulness to the original, whereas example (b) shows the danger of seeking to retain the linguistic form of the original (in this case the idea of 'name') without sufficient care to preserve the meaning which that form enshrined. But, after all these criticisms, I must conclude by repeating that I found Mr Richert's two pages of examples most stimulating and helpful.

Last of all, may I express fervent thanks to you, Mr Editor, and the other people responsible for compiling and producing *The Bible Translator*. In my opinion it is a first class magazine for those engaged in the work of Bible translation, and contains a great deal which would also be valuable for those whose vocation is not the translation of the Bible but its exposition, and the proclamation of its message among people of varying cultures.

Yours sincerely,

TOM H. LYLE

Dear Mr Editor,

The Rev. T. H. Lyle raises several interesting questions.

(1) Luke 9: 35. It would certainly appear that the R.S.V. translation here does not conform to the principles of Professor Kilpatrick's article. It should perhaps be excluded from his congratulations. On the other hand it is not an exact parallel with Matthew and Mark, as it reads *eklelegmenos* not *agapētos*. The R.S.V. translators may have felt that to speak of a chosen Son involved unnatural compression. It is possible to choose a leader, and extend that expression even to a Messiah. It is not so normal to choose a Son. There are two separate ideas: He is a Son, and He is chosen for the Messianic task.

At the same time, many translators have not felt the expression 'chosen Son' too difficult. It unfolds itself to interpretation. Mr Lyle does not find it in Indian or English versions. I find it, however, in three recent versions in European languages, made by scholars and committees of high standing. The Revised French Segond N.T. has 'mon Fils élu'; the Revised German Luther N.T. has 'mein auserwählter Sohn', and the Revised Spanish N.T. (produced primarily for South America) has 'mi Hijo amado'. The English tradition is not the only one on the field, though Dutch and Portuguese (Brazilian) go with it. (A study of the article entitled 'Grammatical Equivalences in Bible Translation' which appears elsewhere in this number may suggest that Mr Lyle's question could also be answered on slightly different lines which would re-inforce Mr Moulton's comments. Ed.)

(2) Most certainly translation must be meaningful, provided, as Mr Lyle says, that it is the meaning of the original, and provided that we are sure what the meaning of the original is. Sometimes a translation may have to be left a little open because the original is not clear.

Cultural equivalents are always a problem. On the one hand, we hesitate to change Palestinian customs, fauna, flora etc. On the other, the exact translation may not be intelligible to readers elsewhere. One often has to steer a narrow course between Scylla and Charybdis. If a translation varies seriously from the original, a footnote can be valuable. In that case it is probably better to put the literal translation in the footnote and the more 'natural' translation in the text. This is the rule adopted in the *Translators' Translation* in other instances where a similar dilemma has to be faced.

Even on this general principle, each case may need considering on its merits. A container for wine or other liquid is according to the custom of a country, and may be varied as, for example, the 'eye' of a needle varies according to local idiom. To exchange a mustard plant for a banyan, however, is a much greater modification. Even in Palestine the mustard does not grow very big, but its small seed was proverbial. It would be a pity to lose that. A brief footnote could explain the situation here.

In Mark 11: 9 'the Lord's namesake' is not a rendering of the original for which support would be general, though it is a thoughtful attempt. Even 'representative' may not be right. The Hebrew and Greek alike may take the phrase 'in the name of the Lord' either with 'comes' or with 'blessed'. Dr Vincent Taylor, in his commentary on Mark, p. 457, takes it with 'blessed': 'In the Psalm the words bespeak a blessing in the name of the Lord upon

pilgrims who came to the feast'. There is no reason to suppose that the crowds in the New Testament had a different meaning in their minds, though it is possible that 'he who comes' may have acquired a Messianic ring. Vincent Taylor gives reasons for doubting this.

Yours sincerely,

H. K. MOULTON

THOSE 'QUOTATION MARKS'

Many translators are aware of the differing practice regarding the use of double and single quotation marks in English books printed in the United Kingdom and the United States of America. R. A. Paroz, a translator into Suto, in a letter originally addressed to the Translations Department of the B.F.B.S., mentions some passages where any completely logical system would require quotation marks to the fifth degree. Inconsistency is at times the best policy! Ed.

Dear Mr Moulton,

Suto

You may remember that in our conversation on Friday, I mentioned cases where quotation marks would occur to the fifth degree in Jeremiah. Here is a case in point from the Revised Version:

Jer. 36: 27 ff. 27 Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, after that the king had burned the roll, and the words which Baruch wrote at the mouth of Jeremiah, saying, 28 ¹Take thee again another roll, and write in it all the former words that were in the first roll, which Jehoiakim the king of Judah hath burned. 29 And concerning Jehoiakim king of Judah thou shalt say, ²Thus saith the LORD: ³Thou hast burned this roll, saying, ⁴Why hast thou written therein, saying: ⁵The king of Babylon shall certainly come and destroy this land, and shall cause to cease from thence man and beast."³ ⁴ ³ 30 Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning Jehoiakim king of Judah: ³He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David: . . . 31 . . . they hearkened not."³ ² ¹

Of course, it is possible to "cheat" a little bit and simplify, as the R.S.V. does, by ignoring degree 3, and by replacing the direct quotation degree 5 by "that" and indirect quotation. So we do also in order to avoid hopeless confusion of "s and 's: but one has to be very careful to sift out similar cases and apply the same rules all along the Bible. See the R.S.V. where the words "Thus says the LORD," spoken by Jeremiah, and introducing the LORD's words, are not followed by a quotation mark, a capital letter only showing the change of speaker; this is the case in most instances (see 37: 7, 9; Ez. 16: 3, 36, etc.; but cf. Isa. 43: 1; 45: 2, 14, etc.).

Jérusalem simplifies to 2 degrees, ignoring degrees 2, 3 and 5 in this case, most arbitrarily, it seems!