

INTRODUCING  
THE  
NEW TESTAMENT  
IN  
COLLOQUIAL JAPANESE

THE JAPAN BIBLE SOCIETY

2, 4-chome Ginza, Tokyo

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## Contents

PREFACE .....	By Masaki Imaizumi .....	3
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### CHAPTER I

History of Bible Translation down to the Time of our Colloquial Translation .....	...By Seigo Yamaya .....	5
--	--------------------------	---

### CHAPTER II

The Procedure and the Character of our Colloquial Translation ...By Takuo Matsumoto.....	14
---	----

### CHAPTER III

Some Comparisons between the Current Version and our Colloquial Translation .....	...By Masashi Takahashi.....	20
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## PREFACE

Whenever a book is to be published, it is usual to preface the book with a brief statement for the readers' convenience concerning the author and his purpose of writing it. Now that the Japan Bible Society is issuing this booklet about the colloquial translation of the New Testament which has just been completed, it is a privilege for me to write a few words by way of a preface to it.

It was just three years ago that our Society, in response to the earnest and urgent requests on the part of the Christian churches and also of the public in general for a more readable version of the Bible, decided to launch the new enterprise of having the Bible translated into colloquial Japanese of present-day use. And on careful consideration we asked six outstanding Biblical scholars in Japan to-day (three each for the New Testament and for the Old) to serve as the translation committee.

We are happy to be able now to send out to the world the New Testament in colloquial Japanese which, thanks to the self-sacrificing efforts of the translators, has been completed in three brief years as originally planned. The three translators of the New Testament contributed for this booklet the articles on the History of Bible Translation, the Procedure and the Character of the Colloquial Translation, and some Comparisons between the Current and the Colloquial Versions. These articles tell concisely the story of our new colloquial translation.

In order to ensure the success of this enterprise, we organized two groups of people whose advice and suggestions were sought from time to time : eight consultants from among recognized scholars, and forty counselors representing the cooperating churches and organizations.

I may add that we have refrained from writing any preface like this for the newly translated New Testament itself for the obvious reason that it needs no preface or introduction but speaks for itself.

# CHAPTER I

## HISTORY OF BIBLE TRANSLATION

### Down to the Time of our Colloquial Translation

The Bible has been called "The Book of Humanity". And rightly so, because it is indeed the book written for all the peoples of the world so that they may thereby come to believe in God and be saved. It is "The Word of God" with a living message to declare and a special mission to fulfill. And all those who have been granted salvation through the reading of the Bible cannot but desire that others also may experience the same joy of salvation, and wish to help spread the Gospel by means of the Bible. Thus come of necessity the movements for the distribution of the Bible.

The Bible was written in ancient languages, however, and soon became unintelligible to peoples of later ages. Hence arose the need of translating it into different languages for them. This has often been done under conditions and circumstances of great difficulty. The history of Bible translation is truly one of heroic and inspiring achievements in face of great difficulties. And our translation of the New Testament into colloquial Japanese to-day is nothing but the latest attempt to follow the splendid examples set by the great Bible translators in other countries.

#### 1. Ancient Times and the Middle Ages

As is well known, the Old Testament is written in Hebrew and the New in Greek. Now, this Greek used for the New Testa-



ment is not classical Greek, such as was used by Sophocles or Plato, but just the common popular language called Koine which was widely current among peoples along the shores of the Mediterranean around the first century. This fact of one and the same language being used and understood everywhere throughout the Roman Empire, was highly significant in that it facilitated wide and rapid spread of the Gospel. Almost everybody could read and understand the New Testament writings. But before very long, there arose the need of translating the Book into various dialects, because as time went by Greek came to be forgotten or to fall into disuse among different peoples. Thus we came to have the Latin, the Coptic, the Syriac and other versions. And as Christianity spread into western Europe and the Church in Rome became dominantly influential, Latin came to assume great importance. Towards the close of the fourth century Hieronymus translated the Bible into Latin, and this Latin Bible is known as the Vulgate which literally means the book in the common tongue. The Vulgate was soon recognized officially by the Church of Rome as its standard version, and came to exert a supreme influence upon the church and the society throughout the Middle ages. The church forbade the reading of the Bible except in the text of the Vulgate. The Greek Bible was therefore neglected and soon forgotten, and as Latin became classical and out of touch with the people at large, the Vulgate itself came to be read only by priests and scholars.

## 2. Modern Times

As modern states came into existence at the close of the Middle Ages, there arose here and there movements of restoring the Bible from the monopoly held by the clerics to the hands of the people in general. The work of translating the Bible into



different languages is just a concrete expression of such movements for the popularization of the Bible and its message.

John Wycliffe started it in England in the 14th century. And William Tyndale, inspired by the spirit and work of Wycliffe, translated the New Testament out of the Greek original and died a martyr for the cause. In Germany, the recognition of the Bible as central in the Christian faith and life brought about the Reformation and bore fruit in Luther's German translation of the Bible. He completed his translation of the New Testament in just one year, and also that of the Old Testament soon after. The influence his German Bible exerted upon the Protestant churches in Germany and elsewhere is truly marvelous and contributed largely toward the unification of the German language as well as toward the elevation of the cultural life of the people. Then in England appeared the Authorized Version, a masterpiece comparable in importance and influence to Luther's work. It was the first translation to be done by a committee. Its literary excellence and religious influence upon the English-speaking peoples are all well known and need no repetition here.

Both Luther's rendering and the Authorized Version were based upon the Greek text and not upon the Latin version. It was Erasmus who first compiled the Greek New Testament. The new invention of printing which became available at the beginning of the 16th century, helped to popularize Erasmus' text, which came eventually to be known as "Textus Receptus". But the church could not rest satisfied with it very long. Ever since the 18th century, the study of the Bible has made great strides, many important Greek manuscripts have been discovered and have necessitated new textual studies, and new methods and principles of interpretation have been established. And so the

older versions were subjected to revision, and new translations were attempted by competent scholars. The Revised Version made in 1881 through the cooperation of the British and American scholars, was one of such attempts. The American Standard Version soon followed it in 1901. These later versions, however, never really displaced the Authorized Version.

Now that a new age has dawned upon the stage of history after the bitter experiences of the two world wars, demand for a Scripture which is more readable and accessible than heretofore, has become keen and urgent. Remarkable development in the Biblical studies, reconstructions and challenges in theological thinking, transformations in process in languages and also changes in cultural trends, which characterize the present age, all make it imperative that we restudy and retranslate the Bible, so as to meet the demand and to present it as the Book for today, as well as for all times. So in Germany, France, England and other countries, new translations are being attempted or planned. The Revised Standard Version which appeared recently in America is the latest major contribution toward and a splendid example of up-to-date Bible translation. We must not of course forget the truly great work being done for translation, publication and circulation of the Bible by the Bible Societies such as the British and Foreign Bible Society founded in 1804, the American Bible Society founded in 1816 and other Societies in Holland, Germany and so forth. Their contribution in these matters is inestimable.

### 3. Bible Translations in Japan

#### (a) Before and soon after the Meiji Era

Francis Xavier came to Japan on August 15, 1549 and carried on vigorous work among the Japanese people until there were

for a time nearly 200,000 Catholics in the land. But the Catholics never made any translation of the Bible as a whole, and for this Japan had to wait till the arrival of the Protestant missionaries about 300 years later. The Protestant churches in Europe started foreign mission work in the 17th century, and in 1859 some of the missionaries arrived in our country. They were convinced that for successful work of evangelism the Bible was necessary, and were soon at work on its translation. They had started learning the Japanese language from some unlettered sailors who had been cast adrift and had landed on the South Sea shores, and so what Japanese vocabulary they acquired was of the crudest sort. But we must bow our heads in admiration at and in respect for these first missionaries for their great zeal and untiring efforts to make the Bible available to the Japanese people. Gutzlaff translated into Japanese the Gospel of John and part of the Johannine epistles and published them at Singapore in 1838. That was the very first Japanese translation of the Bible or any part thereof. Then followed the translations of portions of the New Testament by Bishop C.M. Williams and by Dr. B.J. Bettelheim respectively. These translations were all done outside of Japan. The first translation done in Japan was the one on the Gospel of Matthew by the Baptist missionary Dr. J. Goble in 1871. The following year Dr. J.C. Hepburn translated and published the Gospels of Mark, Matthew and John, for which task he secured Rev. Masatsuna Okuno's assistance. Dr. Hepburn was himself a great scholar of the Japanese language, and when he got the cooperation of a Japanese man of real culture like Okuno, the accomplishment could not fail to be excellent. It is far superior to Gutzlaff's, and considerably influenced the committee version of 1879.



## ( b ) The Committee Version of 1879

The translations made by the missionaries up to this time, noble as they were, were only partial and incomplete. The need for a more adequate and comprehensive translation was keenly felt. In 1872 was held a conference in which the question of making an official translation of the Bible was taken up. The personnel of the committee on translation changed somewhat for one reason or another in the course of the work, but those members who served on it till the completion of the translation were : S. R. Brown, J.C. Hepburn, D.C. Greene and R.S. Maclay. Three Japanese, Okuno, Matsuyama and Takahashi cooperated with these missionaries as their assistants. Textus Receptus must have been consulted, but the real text of the translators was the Authorized Version. The difficulties they had to cope with were great, as the syntactical constructions of the Japanese language are so utterly different from those of the European tongues. The task took the translators five years and a half, and the completed draft was published in November 1879. As we read it over to-day, it gives us the impression of being quite similar to the Chinese Version and too classical in its diction, and yet it was rather severely criticized on its first appearance as not classical enough. But this committee version was really a great achievement and made significant contributions to the Christian cause in Japan. The translation of the Old Testament into Japanese was completed in 1887.

## ( c ) The Revised Japanese Version of 1917

In 1909 a revision of the Japanese version of the Bible was proposed. The reasons given were : great changes in style and vocabulary in our language, the Christian church outgrowing the

Bible which was translated 30 years ago and needing a new translation which should meet the requirements of the new day, and other similar reasons. The committee was to consist of both missionaries and Japanese scholars representing different denominations which existed in Japan at the time. The members elected were : Bishop H.J. Foss and Rev. Matsuyama (Episcopalians), Dr. D.C. Greene and Mr. Fujii (Congregationalists), Rev. C.S. Davison and Prof. Bessho (Methodists), Dr. C.K. Harrington (Baptist) and Rev. Kawazoe (Presbyterian). Quite soon after the work started, Mr. Fujii withdrew from the committee and Dr. Greene died. His place was taken by Dr. D.W. Learned, who was the author of a series of New Testament commentaries which made a real contribution to Biblical studies in Japan. The committee adopted Nestle's Greek text for translation but the Revised Version was really helpful to them, so that the translation was continued with the understanding that when deemed advisable or necessary the reading of the Revised Version might be followed and also that views of modern Biblical scholars might be incorporated with the approval of two-thirds of the members of the committee. This Japanese revision was completed in six years and eleven months of united effort. One will readily recognize the superior merits of the revision as compared with the older version. The sentences became simpler, the translation more faithful to the original, and there were few translation expressions in it. It did not escape adverse criticisms, however, but people soon got accustomed to it and came to appreciate it and to be proud of it as their own Bible until it practically displaced the previous version of 1879.

(d) The Translation of the New Testament into Colloquial Japanese

Soon after the end of the last world war, the Japanese government made the official decision to simplify our language by limiting the number of Chinese characters to be used and by using the Japanese alphabetic letters (kana) in strict accordance with their phonetic sounds. The style was to be colloquial, not literary. All the text books for school children are now written in accordance with these new ways of writing. The literary style, in which the revised version of 1917 is written, is fast becoming obsolete and unintelligible to the younger generation. And if our Bible is to continue to be the Book of the people which it certainly is and to be read by them with understanding, it must by all means be translated into the colloquial Japanese of the present day. And it was at the earnest pleadings on the part of many leaders and teachers of the church and Sunday Schools that the Japan Bible Society finally decided to respond and to make a new translation of the Bible. This decision was made in November 1950. In April of the following year, three Japanese New Testament scholars were invited to do the work for the New Testament (simultaneously the same number of the Old Testament scholars were invited to do the same for the Old Testament). They were Dr. Seigo Yamaya who was at the time the pastor of the great Shinanomachi Church in Tokyo, Prof. Masashi Takahashi of the School of Theology, Doshisha University in Kyoto, and Dr. Takuo Matsumoto who was at that time President of Hiroshima Girls' College. Mr. Baba acted as secretary to the committee. Each one of the committee members was to give up his present position and devote his time exclusively to the task of translation, at least for three years during which

the work was to be completed. The committee actually started the translation in September 1951, meeting two or three days a week in the Translators' Room of the Japan Bible Society. During the summer months they lived together in a cottage at the foot of Mt. Fuji and held the committee meeting every day so as to speed up the work. They had 318 meetings altogether and sent in their final drafts for printing on March 4, 1954.



## CHAPTER II

# THE PROCEDURE AND THE CHARACTER

### of our Colloquial Translation

#### 1. General Principles of the Translation

The members of the translation committee on the New Testament, after some discussions together as to the task assigned to them, laid down the following general articles as their guiding principles in carrying out the work of translation :

(a) Our task is to make a completely new translation of the Greek New Testament, not a revision of the current version (by which is meant the Revised Japanese Version of 1917) or any other versions.

(b) Our aim is to render an accurate and faithful translation, not to do any paraphrasing or free rewriting of the original text.

(c) Our effort is to translate the Greek original into an easy, chaste and idiomatic colloquial Japanese language of the present time.

(d) Our prayer is that the new translation may succeed by the guidance of the Holy Spirit in presenting the Gospel as it is : the Glad News which the people may hear gladly as of old.

#### 2. The Text for the Translation

The very first thing we must decide upon in our work of translating the New Testament is of course what text to use for the translation, The Catholics almost invariably use the Vulgate.

Rev. Naoji Nagai made his Japanese Translation out of the Stephanus text of 1550. Goodspeed based his American translation upon the Westcott-Hort text, while Moffatt translated the Von Soden text. But we felt no hesitation in choosing Nestle's text as the most convenient and trustworthy one available at the present time. In using it we laid down the following rules :

(a) The Text to be used for our translation is that of NOVUM TESTAMENTUM GRAECE edited by D. Eberhard Nestle and revised by D. Erwin Nestle. When we started our work we used its 19th edition (1949), but when the 21st edition appeared later we came to use this latest edition.

(b) We are to follow closely the readings as given in the main body of the Nestle text in our translation.

(c) In special cases, however, preference may be given to certain variant readings indicated in the apparatus criticus. But before the adoption of any such reading is decided upon, a careful weighing of the relevant evidence and a thorough discussion among the translators should be made.

(d) A few traditional readings usually discarded by textual critics and relegated to the margin, if they are found to be supported by sufficiently strong manuscript evidence and to possess a valuable religious message, may be incorporated in the body of the text of the Japanese translation, but within brackets.

To give a few examples: Nestle does not have the words "Son of God" in the text of Mark 1:1, but we put them in our translation, as they are read in the MS. B and are given in the Westcott-Hort text. We adopted the punctuation advocated by Ropes for James 4:2 in stead of following the Nestle text, and translated accordingly. In translating the obscure verse Luke 11:41 we chose to follow Wellhausen's suggestion as did Moffatt, Creed and Montgomery. Mark 7:16, 9:44, 46, 11:26,

15:28, Luke 23:17 and some other verses are not in the main text as compiled by Nestle but are relegated to the margin. We translated them and put them in our translation text within brackets, as explained above. And then we incorporated the famous John 7:53-8:11 into our translated text in stead of placing it down in the margin as does Nestle, by bracketing it. We do not think it appropriate for the Bible to have gaps and omissions here and there. They only confuse the ordinary readers for whom our translation is mainly meant.

### 3. The Style of the Japanese language used in our Translation

We made it our aim to use the colloquial language of such general standard as can be read and understood with ease by any people of intelligence on the compulsory education level. And in our choice of the vocabulary we followed as a matter of principle the suggestions made in the pamphlet entitled "How to Use the National Language" published by the Ministry of Education of the Japanese Government in November, 1950. In some few cases, particularly with regard to certain Biblical terms, we ventured to use words not given in the word-list prepared by the educational authorities. For such words, the phonetic alphabetic letters are always attached to show their correct reading. It was the committee's special effort to produce a truly idiomatic and readable translation of high literary quality, not a slavishly literal reproduction of the Greek original, although of course we strove to be faithful to it. We paid special attention to and tried to express in our translation the nuances and shades of meaning of the original, as reflected for instance in the tenses of the Greek verb, and also the flow and connection of thought as indicated by the Greek particles.

For example, in our attempt to bring out the continuity of movement suggested by the use of the imperfect tense as in Mark 1 : 5, Matthew 3 : 5 etc., we ventured to put in an adverb "Zokuzoku-to" which literally means "continuously" or "one upon the heels of another". As to the Greek connectives like *de*, *kai*, or *oun* which are used in the New Testament books very profusely, we found it often rather wise not to try to reproduce them in every instance, and yet in other cases very necessary and effective to translate them. One of the peculiarities indeed the problems of the Japanese language, which hardly exists in European languages, is the use of honorifics. After prolonged discussions on the matter, we have decided to use them to some extent, particularly with reference to God and Christ. Pronouns are also a problem with us. There are scores of pronouns to be used for the second person singular in our language, for instance. We have decided to use just one expression "Anata" for it in practically every case. There is real need in Japan for unifying or simplifying our pronouns, and we shall be happy if our new translation helps stimulate this simplification.

#### 4. The Procedure of our Work of Translation

In actually carrying forward our translation, the following steps were taken :

(a) Portions of the New Testament were assigned to each of the three translators for translating and preparing the first drafts thereof.

(b) Mimeographed copies of the prepared drafts were then distributed among the translators for their private study and examination.

(c) At the regular committee meetings which were held two or three days a week, the drafts were subjected to thorough-going



criticism and improvement.

(d) The drafts thus revised were again mimeographed and sent to the consultants for their opinions and suggestions. Conferences with the consultants were occasionally held for the purpose of exchanging opinions. The Old Testament translators were always invited to be present and to participate in the discussions at these conferences.

(e) Suggestions offered by the consultants and others were then considered and when deemed appropriate, incorporated into the translation.

(f) In order to solicit criticisms and suggestions from a wider circle of interested readers, we issued copies of tentative drafts of our translation and were glad to accept whatever suggestions were thought reasonable and right. Suggestions from several missionaries were helpful to us in this respect.

(g) The already published translations of the New Testament in various languages, English, German, French and Japanese were consulted as far as possible, as were many commentaries in those languages.

(h) Our counselor on the Japanese diction and style, Mr. Sekine, was very faithful in reading over our drafts and making valuable suggestions regarding the proper and effective use of the language.

We were happy and grateful that we could complete the translation within three years, the period of time assigned for the task.

In concluding this brief account of the truly significant enterprise, we may profitably point out at least three matters of great importance about this new translation :

In the first place, the New Testament is now presented for the first time in Japan in popular colloquial language quite similar

to the Koine in which it was originally written. Justice is at last done to the Book of the common folk which "even farm-boys on the farm with the ploughshare can read as he ploughs", as Tyndale hoped.

In the second place, The translation of the New Testament from the original Greek has been done by the Japanese scholars alone for the first time. How well it is done remains to be judged. But the fact that the church in Japan has grown enough to assume responsibility for such a truly important enterprise is highly significant in the history of Christianity in this country. The New Testament is no longer an imported book but our own now.

In the third place, this New Testament in colloquial Japanese is not a private translation by an individual. We have had several private translations into colloquial Japanese in recent years and certainly they have their value and rightful place. But what makes our translation uniquely significant is the fact that it was done by the Japan Bible Society for the churches in Japan, indeed at the request of many church leaders. It is, in other words, a church version. And it was rather a bold and courageous step for the Japan Bible Society to undertake to get the Bible translated into the plain popular language instead of keeping it in the dignified literary form of the current version. But it was surely a prophetic and forward-looking achievement. Through the use of such a popular language edition of the Scriptures we hope that the church and the people may be brought closely together. It is the translators' fervent prayer that it may be blessed and used of God to spread the Bread of Life among the Japanese people in all walks of life.

## CHAPTER III

### SOME COMPARISONS

#### Between the Current Version and our Colloquial Translation

#### 1. A General Statement

It is needless to emphasize that a translation of the Bible should be accurate and faithful to the original text and that it should be one of good literary style. A good style, however, if it is not an accurate translation, cannot bring out the true message of the Bible. But on the other hand, as long as it is a piece of writing, it should be one of real literary quality and taste. This is the problem the translators have to grapple with. Ordinarily a Greek term may best be translated by one and the same Japanese word in every case. But it may not be advisable to do so, as the shades of meaning vary often according to the contexts in which the term in question is used. And again, literal reproduction in every case of the conjunctions used so often in the Greek New Testament may make the style too awkward to be readable.

Now the current Japanese translation of the New Testament is known to be a splendid literary achievement which it is not easy to emulate. A colloquial style is apt to become diffuse and redundant, but at the same time it has the advantage of being expressive and accurate in expression, if well done. The present translators did their best to produce a translation in colloquial style which is at once accurate and of good and readable style.



Our readers will be interested to know where and in what way the new translation differs from the current version. It is not of course possible to give here a complete list of such differences, but some comparisons may profitably be made to indicate the character of the new translation.

Reference has already been made to our readings of Mark 1 : 1, Luke 11 : 41, and James 4 : 2.

## 2. The Gospels and the Book of Acts

In the genealogy at the beginning of Matthew, we translated much like the Revised Standard Version and many other modern translations "Abraham was the father of Isaac" and so forth, although the Greek text gives the verb meaning "to beget". We translated the word "grammateus" by the Japanese "Rippogakusha" which literally means "the scholar of the Law". In the current Japanese version it is translated just "the scholar" (gakusha). The Japanese sentence in Matthew 6 : 27 according to the current version reads; "...can add one foot to his stature?". We translated this verse, "...can prolong his span of life even a bit?". The expression "Wisdom is justified by her deeds" is not very intelligible in its present Japanese translation, so we made it to read something like "that the wisdom is right is demonstrated by its actual workings". "Eunuch" (enjin) is changed to the somewhat prosaic but more intelligible "Celibate or Bachelor" (Dokushinja). The expression "Is your eye evil because I am good?" (Matthew 20 : 15) is wholly unintelligible to the Japanese readers, so we rendered it "Are you envious because I am generous?". Matthew 25 : 25 is translated in the current version as "Lo! you got what is yours". This is not idiomatic, so we changed it to the simple expression, "Now, here is your money". "Prophecy" in Matthew 26 : 68 we changed

to just "Guess". The current version has the expression "the friends of the bridegroom" for the Greek "hoi hwioi tou numphonos" (Mark 2 : 19, Matthew 9 : 15, Luke 5 : 34). We translated this phrase "the guests of the wedding" (konrei-no kyaku). The Greek participle "parakousas" in Mark 5 : 36 may mean "overhearing" as the current version has it, but we thought it better to translate "ignoring" or "paying no attention to" (kikinagashite). The wording "Mite wo atete" of the current version for "laid his hands" in Mark 8 : 23, 25 does not indicate whether it was one hand or both hands that Jesus used for healing the blind man. We made it clear by translating "laid both hands of his", which by the way is of much interest as indicating Jesus' gesture in the healing work. The well-known and much-quoted word "the cornerstone" (Mark 12:10, Matthew 21 : 42, Luke 20 : 17, Acts 4 : 11, First Peter 2 : 7), we changed to "the head-stone" in accordance with the findings in regard to Hebrew architecture. "The seventy" of Luke 10 : 1 is changed to "seventy-two" by following the Nestle text, although Nestle brackets "two". He uses the brackets about 170 times in the main body of his text for words and phrases whose authenticity he himself accepts but some other scholars are not so sure of. We generally followed Nestle in these cases. For the Greek "epi tou topou" in Luke 22:40, we used the expression "On arriving at the usual (or accustomed) spot" instead of just "getting there" which the current version has. This version translates Luke 23:42 as "when you enter the Kingdom ...". We believe this is not the real meaning of the words there, and changed the expression to "When you come with the authority of the Kingdom", which is similar to that rendered by RSV.

For John 1 : 5 we gave the translation quite in agreement with

RSV and some others: "The darkness did not overcome it", instead of "the darkness did not comprehend it". The Greek word "Dike" which appears in Acts 28:4, we have taken to mean a goddess Dike whom the natives superstitiously believed, as K. Lake and Cadbury suggest in their commentary (Beginnings of Christianity, Vol. 1).

### 3. Paul's letters and other New Testament Writings

Romans 1:17 we translated "He who is righteous by faith shall live" whereas the text has heretofore been read as "the righteous shall live by faith". The very important and controversial passage of Romans 3:25 we ventured to render "whom God put forward as an offering of atonement..." and discarded the word "propitiation" which the current version still keeps. We followed the new reading at Romans 8:28 and rendered it "God, working with those who are called according to His purpose, brings about in every thing what is good". In First Corinthians 14:16 the current version has the single word "tadabito" (outsider or ordinary person) for the Greek expression "ho anapleron ton topon tou idiotou". We made a more faithful rendering, believing the phrase indicates a certain arrangement of the pew at the primitive church service, by these words: "one who sits on the seat for novices". In First Corinthians 16:22 we reproduced the Aramaic words "marana tha" along with the translation "Our Lord, come". We believe this expression was used constantly among the believers in the early church like "Amen" and "Abba" and may best be reproduced verbatim. The Greek words "ta stoicheia tou kosmou" have given the translators of the Bible a lot of trouble. We have accepted the modern interpretation of the words as meaning the supposed spiritual powers of the heavenly bodies which

the pagans worshipped in the Graeco-Roman world, and translated them in accordance with this\* interpretation. First Timothy 5:23, we believe, is parenthetical and so we bracketed the verse. In First Peter 3:18 "dikaios" obviously refers to Christ, and so in order to make the reference explicit we translated it "even though He was righteous...". The rendering in the current version does not make it clear.

There are very many instances in which we chose to give renderings different from those in the current version to which we have been accustomed. But many of them can be appreciated only in the Japanese wording, and indeed have much to do with turns of expression which are difficult to give in English. But the above examples may suffice to indicate the general character of our colloquial translation.

#### 4. Weights and Measures, etc.

With regard to proper nouns, we followed the traditional pronunciation of them, and used the same phonetic alphabetic letters in indicating the pronunciation as in the current version. For moneys, we thought it better to give the original designations as they are given in the text, and not to try to state them in terms of the present Japanese monetary values, as these are never stable but are apt to fluctuate from time to time. Weights and measures are also difficult to render. In many cases the numbers 3, 7, 12 and so forth are significant and so we refrained from changing these numerical signs by mechanically trying to state those weights and measures in corresponding Japanese equivalents.

We may conclude this brief account of our efforts by saying that the work of translating the Bible will never come to an end but will have to be renewed over and over again. No single translation can claim to be final.





