

KOSSUTH THE THEOLOGIAN.

Of all Kossuth's admirable adaptations of himself to those he meets, none has been more striking, than his appearance as a Biblical critic, putting a question to the "Evangelical Clergy" of Philadelphia, when they waited upon him. We had seen him Kossuth the Statesman,—Kossuth the Lawyer,—Kossuth the Editor,—Kossuth the Linguist,—Kossuth the Ladies' Man. But it was reserved to Philadelphia, to see him appear, with real modesty and intelligence too, as Kossuth the Theologian.

The Evangelical Clergymen of the city waited on him with an address. His answer goes at some length into his idea of the Christian law of Peace;—pursuing an argument which he introduced with the following words:

"I would like, could I have been so happy, to have read the Bible, which I even have done, in the English language, because it word afford me more facility to reply (respond) to certain principles which I find there. But I could not have it in English, only now and then, since I am free from my captivity in Turkey. Therefore I wish to know of one statement which I have heard pronounced, quoted from the Bible, but somewhat in a different way from that which I have read in the Greek, Latin, and Hungarian. 'Glory to God in Heaven, and peace and good will to men on Earth.' In Latin I heard it: 'Gloria to God in heaven, and peace to good willing men on Earth.'—'Gloria in altissimis Deo, et in terra pax hominibus bene voluntatis.' So it is in Latin, and certainly the Greek 'εὐδοκίας εὐδοκίας εὐδοκίας' means the same. I got the impression, that it is to those who follow out the gospel precept of good will to each other, that we are here taught that peace is to come."

With this introduction follows his argument, such as we might expect from a man in his position, that even under Christ's religion war may be necessary for advancing the empire of right.

Although he thus took occasion, with great propriety, as we think, to ask a body of theologians, why his impression of the choros which announced Christ's birth to the world, was different from theirs, none of them seems to have answered the question;—as it would have been civil enough for them to do.

The answer is here. The Vulgate, or Latin version of the Scriptures, constructed by St. Jerome in the 4th century, and now the authority of the Roman church in all questions relating to the text of the sacred volume reads nearly as Kossuth quoted it, "Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terra pax hominibus bene voluntatis." The words are familiar even to Protestants who remember Pergolous's beautiful masses, Kossuth's rendering is exact.

It is adopted by Mr. Keble in his Christmas hymn.

"Glory to God on high, on Earth be peace,
And love towards men of low—salvation and release."

The misquotation "Gloria in altissimis" for "Gloria in excelsis" seems just enough to show how M. Kossuth relies on his memory, and on priests manufactured for him.

The Protestant churches generally regard the Greek text as the true exhibition of the original. Of the Greek text, here are two different readings;—that which is given by Kossuth and which probably is followed in the Hungarian version of St. Luke. If it were followed in our Bibles, we should read:

"Glory to God, in the highest; and on Earth peace to the men of good will," (or "to the good-willing men.") The other reading is that of the text received as the basis of the English version. It reads *εὐδοκίας*, instead of the genitive *εὐδοκίας*. The literal translation is that of our Bibles, which use no colon in pointing;—"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." This reading is accepted by the best critics, with several varieties of punctuation, of which the best is found in Griesbach's text, where after "peace" there is a colon instead of a comma.

When Kossuth, therefore, put his modest inquiry to the Philadelphia clergymen, one of them should have answered: "You quote a reading, sir, which though respectable from its antiquity, is not received as genuine by those Protestant critics who have studied the best manuscripts."

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