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**Essays On the Languages of the Bible and Bible-  
Translations**

**Cust Robert Needham**

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**Title: Essays On the Languages of the Bible and Bible-Translations**

**Author: Cust Robert Needham**

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**LANGUAGES OF THE BIBLE.**



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ESSAYS  
ON  
THE LANGUAGES OF THE BIBLE  
AND  
BIBLE-TRANSLATIONS.

BY  
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(*in preparation*).

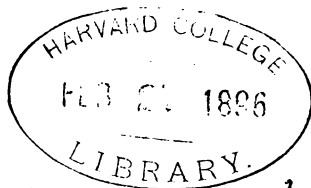
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## P R E F A C E.

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A FEW months ago I published *Three Lists of Bible-Translations Actually Accomplished* (Elliot Stock, 1890). By itself this book would be to some dry reading, consisting as it does merely of names and statistics: to others it would reveal the marvellous story of the Grace of God poured down in such fulness on this generation. Unquestionably it represents only a skeleton, which I propose in a series of *Essays* to clothe with a little flesh: this book is the first instalment. I may not live to carry out my plan to its final completeness: so I publish portions as they are ready.

First comes the consideration of the Languages, in which the inspired Books were written, and of the particular vehicle of human ideas honoured by the use of the Lord of Glory during his earthly Pilgrimage. I approach the subject quite simply, and fearlessly, as a Linguist, and not as a dogmatic Theologian: if wrong in my views, I shall be glad to be set right by those who are conversant with linguistic problems ancient and modern. I doubt whether the early Fathers, who lived several centuries after the Christian Era, and were divided from the Jewish world of ideas by an abyss of prejudice, and a narrow view of things in general, were in as good a position to form a judgment as the men of this generation. Their utterances also must not be taken literally. When Jerome writes, "*Sermone Græco, quo omnis Oriens loquitur,*" he meant no more than the expression of a modern writer, "*All the world knows French.*" Jerome could have known very little of the

languages spoken in Asia and Africa, and must have forgotten the notice in the Acts of the languages of the strangers assembled in Jerusalem at the time of the Pentecost-Miracle, if he meant his words to be taken literally, either for his own epoch, or for that of our Lord's earthly sojourn.

I propose, if life and health be spared, to pass under review the different groups of Language-Translations, such as India, Africa, China, Oceania, North America, the Russian dominions, etc., etc., in the same manner that I have now dealt with the Latin and French translations. They offer subjects of extreme fascination, and the story of the translations of the Bible, and the conversions wrought by these translations has an evidential value all its own. Did any book ever appear in such a number of translations as this book? Did any book ever work such a marvellous effect upon nations, whether in the pride of their civilization, or in their unsophisticated simplicity, as this book? Nor is its Mission completed. It goes on like the Sun at mid-day: conquering, and to conquer.

ROBERT NEEDHAM CUST.

LONDON, DECEMBER 18, 1890.

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