

I stand to previous translators of the *Agamemnon*: I must also speak of the views which are entertained in the present day on the subject of translation generally: the more so as it will enable me to develop more fully those notions with respect to the duties of a translator, which I have expressed somewhat loosely in the preceding sentence. I am far from thinking that these duties can be summed up in any dictum about literal or free translation^b. There has been a reaction lately in this as in other matters, against the principles maintained in the last century: and men seem disposed to think that the true idea has never been understood till now. Articles have appeared by different writers of ability, in the only journal open to a full discussion of such questions, the *Classical Museum*, all of them asserting the necessity of a translator following the metre and words as well as the general sense of the original, and reprobating the notion that the author is to be made to speak as he would have spoken in English. Now to a certain extent there is no doubt truth in this: but as it is stated, I believe it to be founded on a misconception. The rule is undoubtedly that the author should be represented as completely as possible, in form no less than in spirit: whether this is to be done by giving in all cases the same words and the same metre, is another question. In the first place it must be observed, that in *words* at least absolute identity is impossible—even *καί* is not the same word as *and*; in form they are totally unlike; but in sense they are the same, that is, they are analogous to each other, the one standing to the Greek language in the same relation in which the other does to the English. Now, is not this analogy the real principle of translation? and does it not seem probable

^b The same opinions have already been supported by substantially the same arguments in an article on Chapman's *Homer*, in the *Oxford and Cambridge Review*, No. V., the

authorship of which I here acknowledge, lest any one should suspect me of having appropriated the sentiments of another writer.