

APPENDIX IV

Preface to "The Nomenclator"

IN LETTER 3652 RB writes to his father: "Sarianna will tell you that I am trying to dispose of the 'Nomenclator' to a proper Bookseller. It is evident that the plan is quite novel and ingenious. . . . Meanwhile, I and Ba have thrown your notes, and some explanatory passages that occurred in your letters, into a very sufficient preface."

"The Nomenclator," compiled by RB, Sr. over a period of many years, contains genealogies of the characters in the Old Testament. Four copies of this work have been traced; the whereabouts of three are known (see *Reconstruction*, J95–98). "The Nomenclator" with EBB and RB's "Preface" (*Reconstruction*, J97), is at the Robert Browning Settlement, London. The inside of the front cover carries an inscription by RB (probably written about the time he was trying to find a publisher for the work): "All that seems wanting to this 'Nomenclator' is an Alphabetical list of names with reference to the pages wherein they occur—so that if we remember a *name* only, and not the passage in the Bible where it is mentioned, we may find it here." There is no evidence that the work was ever published.

The manuscripts of "The Nomenclator," the "Preface," and letter 3652 were sold in 1913 as part of lot 129 in *Browning Collections* to London art and book dealer Frank T. Sabin. In 1916 he sold them, among other items, to Robert H. Dodd, a New York book seller, who offered them for sale in his catalogue that same year. They were bought at auction in early 1928 by the Rev. J.W. Graves, warden of the Robert Browning Settlement, as indicated in a letter from him to Fanny Browning dated 14 February 1928 (MS at Texas). Graves included a description of the manuscripts in *The Browning Bulletin of the Robert Browning Settlement* (London, [1928], p. 27).

The "Preface," in EBB's hand, consists of 3¼ octavo pages. There are several revisions, but it is otherwise a fair copy. We gratefully acknowledge the Robert Browning Settlement for permission to publish this item.

Preface—

The object of the NOMENCLATOR is to allow an easy and immediate reference to every proper name in the Old Testament, indicating its relation to other names: and, on the ground of Scripture being the best interpreter of Scripture, the author believes it will be found available in removing certain difficulties & apparent discrepancies which are troublesome to Bible students.

He himself in the course of his scriptural studies having felt the need of such a book, the suggestion occurred to his mind to provide for others the help he had required.

Nothing is inserted but what is necessary for this purpose: all repetitions are avoided except in the places which absolutely require them in order to avoid confusion. The work might be extended & improved in many respects,—but the author's desire was simply to give a correct outline, to be filled up in harmony with the student's individual needs & tastes, by supplying the concordance, dates, &c. Some names are added from the Apocrypha, which[,] however inevitably unreliable, are useful for the light they throw upon Ezra & Nehemiah.

Several French writers have made valuable remarks on this subject; but the aversion (not to use too strong a word) of the Romish church to the Hebrew language, is an obstacle to the eminence of Biblical critics in France, and the author has been seldom satisfied by the solutions of Calmet,¹ Sacy,² & others, when they have attempted to deal with difficult points.

The three principal English works on the subject in present question, are by Speed,³ Barry⁴ & Burrington—⁵ They are very scarce and dear. The Genealogies in Barker's⁶ and the other Bibles are only copied from Speed. Barry is exceedingly intricate, and Burrington too voluminous for general use.

The objection to all books on the Scriptural Genealogies, has been the size considered necessary to any clearness of view & comprehensiveness of method. The author of the Nomenclator has endeavoured to reduce the necessary information within the smallest limits, while observing, he hopes, even greater perspicuity & completeness than are attained in works which by their extent and price, are put beyond the reach of the general reader.

The names are spelled according to the authorized version.

Wherever a doubt has arisen on which the satisfaction is inadequate, a note of interrogation is appended.

The signs used are as few as could be made consistent with intelligibility



An asterisk after a name shows it will be subsequently referred to—

An asterisk before a name shows it has been referred to previously—

Leading names are in the Roman character, which in many instances, (especially when the names are in immediate contiguity) prevents the necessity of asterisks.

The colours are used as a means of facilitation to the eye. Males are generally expressed by red—females always by yellow. Relation by marriage or otherwise is expressed by blue: towns, tribes, families &c. by green squares—

1. Antoine Augustin Calmet (1672–1757), French Biblical scholar, published commentaries on the Old and New Testaments.

2. Louis-Isaac Lemaistre de Sacy (1613–84), principal translator of the Vulgate Bible into French. The Old Testament was published in 1667; the New Testament, from 1672 to 1693; and the complete Bible, often called the Bible de Sacy, in 1696. It was the standard French Bible for two centuries.

3. See letter 3653, note 2.

4. *Sic*, for Berry. See letter 3653, note 3.

5. See letter 3653, note 3.

6. Robert Barker (ca. 1568–1646), the king’s printer, printed the first edition of the Authorized Version (the King James Bible) in 1611.
