

communion with the Roman Pontiff; but I had heard it said at times that the authority of the Roman Pontiff was certainly lawful and to be respected, but still an authority derived from human law, and not standing on a divine prescription. Then when I observed that public affairs were so ordered that the sources of the power of the Roman Pontiff would necessarily be examined, I gave myself up to a most diligent examination of that question for the space of seven years, and found that the authority of the Roman Pontiff which you rashly—I will not use stronger language—have set aside is not only lawful, to be respected and necessary, but also grounded on the divine law and prescription. That is my opinion. That is the belief in which, by the grace of God, I shall die.”

For St. Peter’s primacy, carried on by his successors, we have Scriptural authority, Patristic authority, Conciliar authority. But for the royal primacy what authority is there—Scriptural, Patristic or Conciliar?

He assuredly assumes a grave responsibility who uses pen and position to keep people from the Catholic Church and the sacraments by “rashly—I will not use stronger language—setting aside the supremacy of the Roman Pontiff, which is lawful, to be respected, necessary, grounded on prescription and divine law.”

It is for the Church to teach the individual, not the individual the Church.

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THE EVOLUTION OF OUR ENGLISH BIBLE.

THE only authorized, in the sense of official Bible of the Catholic Church, is the Vulgate.¹ The historic Church is conservative of its ancient language, and it was inevitable that the authoritative form of the Scriptures for the Universal Church should be a Latin version. Whatever local authorization vernacular Bibles enjoy depends primarily on their being faithful renderings of the Vulgate—except in some inconsiderable Oriental sections of the Church. And so we cannot understand what our English version of to-day is unless we first acquaint ourselves, however cursorily, with the history and character of the Vulgate.

In studying the history of any translation of Sacred Scripture,

¹ The name is very ancient. The Vulgate’s predecessor was called the *editio vulgata*, i. e., the vulgar or popular version; and St. Jerome’s translation, in taking its place, inherited its name.

the question of the purity of its underlying text is of capital importance. A version, of course, will not attain its desired end unless it renders the original with at least substantial fidelity; but it is obviously paramount that this original should not be vitiated by textual corruptions, and no amount of linguistic or literary skill will overcome the radical fault of building upon a false or precarious foundation. The first essential of a good translation of Holy Writ is that its original text should, as far as possible, agree with the primitive inspired one. Hence the prominence this essay will give to everything bearing on the integrity and preservation of the basis, immediate and ultimate, of our sacred versions; matters which would be dry and tedious were it not that they concern so closely the value of those forms of the written Word which the Church and ecclesiastical authorities have placed in our hands.

THE MAKING OF THE VULGATE.

This venerable version is inseparably linked with a great and striking personality—a figure unique in Christian antiquity. The story of the making of the Vulgate is the story of Saint Jerome.

Eusebius Hieronymus—to give him once his full Latin name—was born of well-to-do Christian parents at Stridon, a town of semi-barbarous Dalmatia (now in Austria), and in the year of grace 342. He was sent to acquire a polite education at Rome; and the youth of eighteen was not proof against the allurements of the still half-pagan capital. Fortunately for himself and the world, to an ardent temperament Jerome joined an eager and able mind, and his passion for books and learning was a potent auxiliary to his better instincts in the struggle for the mastery. A youth who spent hours in toilsome copying to add another treasure to his parchment library could never become a vulgar profligate. The highest things appealed to him through the higher, and on a visit to Gaul he resolved to renounce the pleasures of the world. Hitherto only a catechumen, for fear of failing to keep the lofty standard required of the baptized Christian, Jerome at the age of twenty-four had himself christened by Pope Liberius at Rome. Yet his moral struggles were by no means over. Long after, the memory of his Roman pleasures haunted him as temptations; and all through his life he warred against an irascible and caustic temper, and overbearing impatience of opposition.

Space forbids us to follow the details of Jerome's career. He imbibed sacred knowledge and first fell under the influence of monastic discipline at Aquileia, in his native province. But his imperious and somewhat acrid temperament lost him friends, and

weariness of embitterment and strife, the student turned his eyes toward the East, hoping to forget his heartburnings in the sweet calm of the holy places.

He went in company with a few friends, encumbering the long overland journey with his inseparable books. Jerusalem was the original goal, but illness and other circumstances detained him in Syria.² As he desired an anchorite's life in the desert, his stay at Antioch was short. He buried himself for five years in the sandy waste of the Syrian desert. But the fiery blood of youth and memories of his libertine days harassed him with dreadful temptations, and it was only by the most anguished efforts that he overcame himself. He chastened his body by rigorous penances, and to these, beside imploring prayers, he added a novel discipline—the study of Hebrew.³ It was a converted Jew, a monk, who initiated Jerome in the mysteries of the language of the Old Testament—a language for which he never entirely overcame his initial repugnance. At the end of his solitude the saint was induced to take priest's orders at Antioch, on condition that he was to be unencumbered by a charge. We find him spending a while at Constantinople as a disciple of its Bishop, Saint Gregory of Nazianzen, in Sacred Scripture, then the dominant theological study, and already Jerome's passion.

Thence he returned to Rome at the call of Pope Damasus, who had been impressed by Jerome's learning and orthodoxy, through a correspondence, and wished the benefit of his counsel at an approaching synod.⁴ Damasus soon recognized Jerome's vigor and ability. The Pontiff had not been long in personal intercourse with the latter when he chose him as his secretary and entrusted to him a flattering but difficult task. This was no less than a revision of the current Latin version of the New Testament and Psalter.⁵

The Old Latin Bible, of which these were parts, is not without interest to us, since it was the first translation into a Western tongue, and formed the basis of St. Jerome's revision, which still exists in the New Testament and Psalms of the Vulgate. Its origin is lost in obscurity. Scholars are generally agreed that there were a number of independent versions of the Greek Bible in the very first centuries of the Church. But whatever may have been the beginnings and diversities of the Old Latin, it is certain that a particular recension of it had been in use in Italy many years before Jerome's time, and had acquired a quasi-official authority as a text.

² Letter 30, to Eustochium.

³ Letter 125, to Rusticus.

⁴ Letter 52, to Nepotianus; Commentary on Ephesians v., 32.

⁵ Preface to the Gospels; dedicated to Damasus.

The Italian Old Latin was a superior type of that manifold version, having been revised at least once upon the Greek.⁶ But amateur correctors had since wrought such confusion that its theoretic unity was dispersed into actual multiplicity, and St. Jerome could complain of it: "Among the Latins there are as many different Bibles as copies."⁷

It was to bring order out of this confusion and create a standard text that Jerome addressed himself at the request of Damasus. The Gospels naturally came first. As the basis of his revision he carefully chose from a multitude of varying copies a few of the least adulterated and approaching most nearly to the text in the original language.⁸ All was executed with careful comparison with the Greek, and here again Jerome exercised discrimination in selecting among the Greek manuscripts.⁹ We have reason to think that the Greek text to which he gave the preference was better and older than those underlying the version he had in hand. In fact, the New Testament of St. Jerome has endless points of agreement with the oldest and most esteemed Greek manuscripts extant, and readings which are an improvement on the Old Latin must have been introduced by Jerome, if not also by the previous revisers.¹⁰

What is to be thought of the critical merits of the New Testament text as it issued from the saintly doctor's revision? The field of New Testament textual criticism is a peculiarly tangled and thorny one. Our extant Greek manuscripts—the very oldest of which are not older than the century of Jerome's revision—vary from each other in many little points, in some of greater consequence, and in a few of considerable length. The Greek text translated by the King James Version differs in thousands of details from that which the Revised Protestant stands for, while the Vulgate, in great part, combines elements of both; in lesser, it agrees with neither. Where lies the purest text? Neither the sacred autographs nor authentic copies of them have survived. Criticism is yet far from such a finality of results as to point with a sure finger to that type of the New Testament approaching most nearly the inspired autographs.

⁶ Cf. Hort's and Westcott's "The New Testament in the Original Greek;" Introduction, pp. 78-79.

⁷ Preface to Joshua.

⁸ Preface to the Revision of the Gospels: "You (Damasus) oblige me to make a new work out of the old, so that I sit like a Judge among the copies of Scripture scattered over the world, and since they vary from one another, determine which of them agree with the Greek truth."

⁹ "We have been in such manner cautious in the emendation (of the Gospels) by a comparison of Greek codices—that is, old ones not differing much from the Latin reading—that we have corrected only those things that seemed to change the sense, leaving the rest stand." Preface to the Gospels.

¹⁰ See the appendix to Wordsworth's and White's edition of the Vulgate New Testament, pp. 660 ff.

But what criticism fails to give, we Catholics get in sufficient measure from authority. When the Council of Trent defined that the Scriptures, as they were from time immemorial read in the Vulgate, are sacred and canonical, *cum omnibus suis partibus*, it set the seal of the Church infallible on the genuineness of two greatly disputed passages: the woman taken in adultery, St. John vii., 53; viii., 11, and the ending of St. Mark's Gospel, xvi., 9-20. The same unerring pronouncement affords us the precious certainty that *no* portion of the Vulgate of considerable length or vital importance can rightly lie under suspicion.

Jerome put a restraint upon his work, keeping it strictly within the limits of an emendation.¹¹ He studiously avoided all unnecessary changes in the diction, mindful how the faithful folk jealously conserved traditional forms in matters religious. Hence the Latinity of the Vulgate is that of the older version, the language not of Cicero and Horace, but of the *plebs* of the early centuries. This vulgar language was, however, enriched by many new words, taken mostly from the Septuagint, conveying spiritual and abstract ideas, and it was ennobled and consecrated by its adoption into the Bible of the Church. The Old Latin had sprung from the demand of the common people unversed in Greek, and was primarily intended for their use.

The work was completed in about a year. Damasus, it seems, had died meantime, and Jerome, deprived of his friend, was anxious to be quit of his task and wind up his affairs in Rome. Therefore while the Gospels are carefully revised, the work on the rest of the New Testament is of a somewhat inferior quality, but on the whole the result was a successful and adequate rendition of the originals. A correction of the Psalter followed the New Testament, but Jerome was dissatisfied with this as hasty, and ten years later, in Palestine, brought out another revision of the Psalms.¹² This got the name *Psalterium Gallicanum* in distinction to the older edition, the *Psalterium Romanum*, and it is still the official Psalter of the Church. Jerome's later version direct from the Hebrew never found its way into the sacred offices, presumably from the difficulty of substituting a new translation for the familiar words of the old in the liturgical chant, in which the people then took part. Favored by the influence—perhaps the authority—of Damasus and its own merits, our saint's correction of the New Testament was not long in finding general acceptance, not indeed without much conservative outcry. But the practical Western genius which excluded the Psalter translated from the Hebrew, on account of liturgical diffi-

¹¹ See note 9 above.

¹² Preface to the Psalms.

culties, in this case was not without its disadvantages, for despite the saintly doctor's double revision, the Psalter of the Vulgate and Roman breviary has the defects inseparable from the translation of a translation.

Pope Damasus probably did not live to see the New Testament revision completed, and Jerome, deprived of his powerful friend and patron and involved in acrimonious disputes with enemies which his austere and fiery zeal had made in Rome, again turned his thoughts towards the East. He had gathered about him a group of devoted disciples, mostly high-born ladies, whom he had imbued with his own ardor in the study of the inspired Word. Of these Paula, a wealthy widow, and her daughters, Eustochium and Blesilla, are closely linked with his subsequent career. They resolved to follow their spiritual father and master to the Holy Land, for thither was Jerome bent, and there he wished to remain until life's close.

After at length reaching Bethlehem, which was his chosen home, he established himself in a hut or cave and returned to the coarse garb, the rude fare and the ascetic life of an anchorite. The first years at Bethlehem (circa 385-394) make the golden time of Jerome's life—years of idyllic Christian peace in that hallowed and serene atmosphere. In this congenial environment the saintly recluse again took up his Biblical studies with redoubled fervor. He perfected himself in Hebrew and the knowledge of the Hebrew text by means of a friendly Israelite who for fear of his brethren's displeasure came to the anchorite's cell only at night, "like another Nicodemus," to use Jerome's phrase.¹³ With what heroic effort he also mastered Aramaic, the language of parts of Daniel and Esdras, he has left us a graphic description.¹⁴ We cannot but admire the indomitable energy with which he overcame the then formidable obstacles to the knowledge of the original texts, for it was long before the age of Oriental grammars and lexicons, and Hebrew manuscripts at that time exhibited a blind array of strange-looking consonants without a sign to represent the needful vowels, which were transmitted only by word of mouth.

Jerome had begun and carried to a conclusion the revision of the Old Testament already referred to.¹⁵ But he excepted from this correction the books of Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch and the Machabees, probably also Tobias and Judith.¹⁶ This task brought more clearly to his view the defects of the Old Latin version of the

¹³ Letter 84, 65.

¹⁴ Preface to Daniel.

¹⁵ Against Rufinus, Book II., 24.

¹⁶ See Jerome's prefaces to the Books of Solomon and Jeremias.

Septuagint,¹⁷ and the discrepancies between the Greek itself and the Hebrew text. He saw that only a version direct from the Hebrew could do desirable justice to the inspired originals, and he resolved to begin such a translation. The saint had imbibed from his Jewish teachers an overweening esteem for the current Hebrew edition, the *Hebraica veritas*, as he loved to call it. He seems to have been convinced that it was the primitive text, in its purity. Yet on the whole his preference for it over the Septuagint was right. Only by extricating the original Hebrew of the Greek Bible could Jerome have possibly secured a fundamental text superior to his Hebrew copy—an extremely difficult achievement, and one which modern criticism, with all its advantages, is not yet ready to compass.

But St. Jerome's main motive in undertaking a new translation from the Hebrew rose higher than reasons of literary and philological criticism. He had been grieved at the helplessness of Christian apologists in opposing the Jews when the former would cite a passage according to the Septuagint, only to be scornfully told that it was wanting in the Hebrew original, and that the Christians were appealing to a Bible they did not know. He writes in the preface to *Isaias*, addressed to Eustochium: "I have toiled in a strange language to this end—that the Jews should no longer insult His (Christ's) Church for the falsity of the Scriptures." Throughout Jerome's allusions to the translation we can plainly discern the gracious figures of the matron and maiden, Paula and Eustochium, in the background, cheering him in his heavy task, following its progress with eager enthusiasm, lending whatever aid they can in the details of the undertaking. This element of the eternal feminine in Jerome's gigantic task, so far removed from the ordinary interests and pleasures of the sex, invests the making of the Vulgate with an unexpected grace.

To turn to a factor of quite a different order, the Septuagint is by no means a negligible quantity in the genesis of the Vulgate, for Jerome enjoyed the rare advantage of access to Origen's monumental "Hexapla" edition of that version, comprising in parallel columns the Alexandrian master's critical recension of the Septuagint and Aquila's, Symmachus' and Theodotion's independent Greek translations of the Old Testament—a combination affording invaluable aid for reference in the work.

Since the Hebrew copy which St. Jerome used was older by almost six centuries than our most ancient existing manuscripts in that language—the very oldest is dated 916 A. D.—it would

¹⁷ The Septuagint is the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible, made by Alexandrian Jews in the third century before Christ.

appear at first sight that Jerome's text had an immense advantage in point of purity over the Hebrew which has come down to us and which is known as the Masoretic text. But an acquaintance with the history of the Jewish Bible rebuts this presumption. Strange to say, the hundreds of Hebrew manuscripts in existence show an almost stereotyped uniformity. They represent a single type most carefully reproduced by the copyists. We find among them only accidental and trifling differences, far removed from the marked variations between our Hebrew text and that which the Septuagint translators had before them. And when we seek to know when the Hebrew Bible took on this uniformity we can with reasonable certainty determine the time as about the middle of the second century of our era. The Vulgate and the quotations of the Talmudists prove that far back in the centuries the Jews had a single recension of the Old Testament which was fixed as well as the most scrupulous and religiously exact hand copying could fix it, and practically identical with the current text. So by taking the beginning of the Talmudic writings as the *terminus ad quem* we arrive at the conclusion that about 150 A. D. the Jewish doctors adopted a standard text and destroyed all other types so effectually that we possess but a single papyrus fragment as a manuscript witness of their existence. But the text underlying the Septuagint testifies indisputably that there were varying types of the Hebrew before the above period.

St. Jerome's Hebrew copy therefore was almost identical with that which is found in the printed Hebrew Bibles of to-day, and which formed the basis of the Protestant Authorized or King James Old Testament. The few variations deducible can be explained by the fact that Jerome had to depend on oral tradition to supply the vowels, and herein he had an advantage over the moderns, for this tradition was about four centuries older than that which the Masoretic scribes fixed by vowel points.¹⁸

But what assurance have we that our sole surviving Hebrew text is approximately true to that which came from the hands of the inspired writers? The Israelitic copyists were not always so scrupulous in keeping unity of text unimpaired and in transcribing the sacred rolls. That marked variations or rather types existed among ancient copies of the Hebrew Scriptures is a fact of which we are warned by the contents of the Septuagint, the Greek Bible translated from the Hebrew in the third century before Christ. In places its underlying text is obviously superior to our Hebrew, notably in the books of Samuel and Kings. But the differences at

¹⁸ Here and there, it seems, Jerome substituted Septuagint readings for his current Hebrew.

most affect only details of no great consequence, and we can rest confident that the Masoretic text, which is virtually that of St. Jerome, preserves the sacred originals in a high degree of integrity.

St. Jerome began his great enterprise of a Latin version direct from the Hebrew, about the year 390, by translating the books of Samuel and Kings. The entire work extended over fifteen years, being interrupted by other literary activity, correspondence, illness, controversies and other afflictions. Circumstances hastened the doing of several books. Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and the Canticle of Canticles were despatched in three days in order not to disappoint expectant friends.¹⁹ An Aramaic Tobias detained him only the single day he had the help of a friendly rabbi skilled in that language.²⁰ Literary accuracy necessarily suffered from this haste, but Jerome set no great store by punctilious exactness of expression. He cared little for nicety of wording except when needed to bring out the sense. This was his controlling aim according to a principle he laid down in a letter to a friend, "non verba consideranda in scripturis, sed sensus." With the substantial sense of all the books of the Jewish Bible long years of reading had made him familiar, and his book-a-day rendering of the three Solomonic writings are marvelous for the circumstances.

Tobias and Judith more palpably show looseness. But there are ulterior reasons for this. Alone among the early fathers of the Church St. Jerome had a slight esteem for the seven books not found in the Hebrew Scriptures and not received by Protestants, but venerated by the Church as equally sacred and inspired with the rest. These are Tobias, Judith, Baruch, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, First and Second Machabees. To them are to be added the parts of Esther and Daniel whose originals exist only in Greek, that is of the former, chapter x., 4 to the end of the book, and for Daniel, the canticle of the three youths in the fiery furnace inserted between iii., 23 and 24 of the Hebrew, the stories of Bel and the Dragon and Susannah and the Elders. These books and additions, called "deutero-canonical" by Catholics, and the "Apocrypha" by non-Catholics, constitute the great difference between Catholic and Protestant Bibles.

No definite canon of Scripture had yet been formally imposed on the Universal Church, though the immemorial reading of the deutero-canonical books in the churches was a practical canonization, persisting amid the questionings which arose in the fourth century. So it was that Jerome, overinfluenced by Palestinian tradition, doubted the inspired character of these portions of the

¹⁹ Preface to the Books of Solomon.

²⁰ Preface to Tobias.

Old Testament. That he translated Tobias and Judith, from Aramaic originals, was due to his deference to the desire of certain Bishops. As for the rest of the seven, which were either composed in Greek (Wisdom, II. Machabees) or whose Hebrew originals were lost (Baruch, Ecclesiasticus, I. Machabees), we saw that Jerome had deemed them unworthy of revision. Hence our versions of these in the Vulgate come directly from the Old Latin untouched by the Doctor of Bethlehem. He translated the Greek additions to Daniel from Theodotion's version and borrowed the non-Hebrew parts of Esther from the Old Latin without revising.²¹

At Eustochium's request St. Jerome translated Josue, Judges and Ruth, while lamenting the loss of Paula, who died in 404. Tobias and Judith seem to have been the last, and the task was completed about 405. The great work was at length done, and well done. The only one of the age who was capable of it, the providential sage who embraced the learning of his world, who united a thorough knowledge of the classic tongues, a mastery of Hebrew, a familiarity with Oriental life—such a one had given to the Church a new Bible.

Of course, there are defects in it. The wonder is that there are not more. But after all faults are acknowledged and deductions made, the Vulgate remains one of the greatest monuments of Christian zeal giving energy to learning and power. The grandeur of the achievement grows as we contemplate this masterpiece which wrested the sacred ideas from a forbidding and unexplored language and for the first time clothed them in a Western one. Therefore the Old Testament of the Vulgate is more than a mere translation. It is almost a creation. And the anguish, the tears, the long and heavy toil of the penitent recluse of Bethlehem are in it. Instinctively we honor the heroic soul and masterful mind who performed the work. And it is a pleasure to find the latest Protestant student of the Vulgate, Mr. H. J. White, gladly reëchoing the grateful words of the Protestant translators of the Authorized Version, words which Catholics may well make their own: "This moved St. Hierome, a most learned Father, and the best linguist without controversy of his age, to undertake the translating of the Old Testament out of the very fountains themselves; which he performed with that evidence of great learning, judgment, industry and faithfulness that hath forever bound the Church unto him in a debt of special remembrance and thankfulness."²²

The new version met with scant favor at first. Even sane and moderate men like St. Augustine shook their heads and questioned

²¹ Commentary on Daniel xii., 13. Translation of Esther, Migne, Vol. XXVIII., xv., 5.

²² The translators to the reader.

its expediency. The body of the faithful, always extremely sensitive to changes in traditional forms, looked askant at Jerome's work as a mischievous innovation. An African Bishop excited a riot in his church when he read from the new translation, in Jonas iv., 6, the word *ivy* (*hedera*) instead of the familiar *gourd* (*cucurbita*).²³ Slowly, very slowly, the version won recognition by its intrinsic superiority, for no ecclesiastical decree or statute gave it an official standing. But Jerome did not see its triumph except perhaps by prevision. By the time of the Lateran Council, 647, the Vulgate had prevailed in the Roman and Italian churches, but it was not until the eighth century that it had supplanted the antique version everywhere and Venerable Bede could call the latter old.²⁴ However, the Old Latin was very tenacious of life, and even as late as the twelfth century enjoyed a certain practical value.

The appended synopsis shows at a glance the composition and the intermediate and ultimate sources of our Latin Bible (LXX=Septuagint):

OLD TESTAMENT.

All books except the following translated directly from the Hebrew:
 Psalms (revised twice), Old Latin, LXX.....Hebrew
 Baruch, Ecclesiasticus, I. Machabees (not revised), Old Latin, LXX, Hebrew
 Tobias, Judith, AramaicHebrew
 Wisdom, II. Machabees (not revised), Old Latin, LXX.....Greek
 Esther x., 4; xvi., 24 (not revised), Old Latin, LXX.....Greek
 Daniel iii., 24-90 (not revised), Old Latin, Theodotion's Greek.....Hebrew
 Daniel xii., xiv. (not revised), Old Latin, Theodotion's Greek.....Greek

NEW TESTAMENT.

All books are revisions of the Old Latin.....Greek
 N. B.—St. Matthew's Gospel was composed originally in Aramaic or Hebrew.

THE TRANSMISSION OF THE VULGATE.

The Vulgate underwent the fate of all literature which could not be preserved and multiplied except by hand copying. The deterioration of its text could be prevented only by such extraordinary precautions and rigid rules as enabled the Talmudic and Masoretic scribes to hand down a uniform Hebrew type. But Christian copyists did not practice this letter-worship, and though they naturally gave greater care to the transcription of the Bible than that of mere human compositions, it was copied much oftener and hence the chances of error were so much increased as to offset the caution of copyists. Even to-day, with all our facilities for procuring pure texts, long lists of errata are features of early editions of large books. If Bibles are exceptions, it is because their texts have been reprinted and revised so often that all but absolute correctness is attained.

²³ Augustine to Jerome, Migne, Vol. XXII., col. 929, 930.

²⁴ Commentary on Genesis xi., 31.

Before the invention of printing it was morally impossible to have a universally accessible text, fixed in form and serving as a standard. With the best available copy before him and the best of will, the eye of the tired scribe would go amiss; the more familiar phrases of the older version or another text would unawares glide into the manuscript through his mind; a note or gloss placed in the margin would through the inadvertence or officiousness of later copyists creep into the body of the page. Accordingly the most serious errors in manuscript Latin Bibles are interpolations. But at first ignorance and officiousness led to adulterations in other forms. Cassiodorus, an abbot of the sixth century, is the first we know to have applied himself to remedy the already degenerate state of St. Jerome's version. The regulations he imposed on his monks to guide them in copying and amending reveal the fact that the alterations of his time had come chiefly from those who were offended at grammatical solecisms and strange expressions they found in the copy before them and judged that St. Jerome could not have written such bad Latin.²⁵

The history of the reproduction of the Bible of the Middle Ages—that is the Vulgate—has two quite different aspects. One is that of devotional art, in which we see the patient and loving labor of the expert copyist, usually a monk, producing with sure and skilful touch those wonderfully regular and beautiful pages of cursive script or black-letter, interspersed with exquisite illuminations, all compelling our admiration as we gaze at one of these mediæval manuscripts which are the most prized treasures of large libraries and wealthy collectors. The other side of the story is that of new errors with each new copy, a progressive corruption of the text, arrested at times by intermittent efforts at purification.

The limits of this essay will permit scarcely more than an enumeration of the principal of these. In the long periods of the history of the Vulgate extending from the early Middle Ages down to the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century, there are three well-marked epochs: 1. Alcuin's revision. 2. The Correctoria and Paris Bible of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. 3. The printed editions of Stephanus.

1. Alcuin, Charlemagne's chancellor, abbot of St. Martins at Tours and the great scholar of his time, was charged by his imperial master with the task of Bible reform.²⁶ His efforts, seconded by Charlemagne's powerful influence, effected some good, but failed to bring about practical uniformity even in his own day. The

²⁵ "De Integritate Divinarum Litterarum," Migne, Pat. Lat. Vol. LXX., 1, 105 ff.

²⁶ See the capitularies or decrees providing for the correction of the whole Bible; Berger, "Histoire de la Vulgate," pp. 185-188.

Bibles of this era, though magnificent in adornment, betray many variations from each other.²⁷ 2. The most intelligent and scholarly endeavor to restore the Vulgate's text in its purity was that of the correctors of the thirteenth century, witnessed now in the emended and annotated manuscript Bibles called *correctoria*. They strove to amend the Paris Bible, the edition in general use, and unfortunately an interpolated and depraved text.²⁸ Yet we must guard against an exaggerated view of the condition of the Bible of the Middle Ages. For substantial fidelity to Jerome's text abided under the shifting form of details, and that Bible can be justly described as corrupt only relatively to its original textual perfection. This is proved by an inspection of the manuscripts or an examination of the Biblical quotations of the scholastic theologians. 3. The printed editions of the fifteenth century were uncritical, perpetuating many of the faults of the Paris Bible. Robert Estienne, latinized into Stephanus, a scholar-printer of Paris, brought out an edition in 1528 which aimed at a critical restoration. This was improved upon in subsequent issues. The Stephanus Bible is the ultimate printed basis of the official edition of the Vulgate.²⁹

The critical taste of the Renaissance found much fault with the inelegant Latinity of the ancient version, and a number of would-be classical editions, some revisions, others translations anew of the Hebrew and Greek, appeared to add to the already sufficient confusion. The Council of Trent took cognizance of the situation, but first it solemnly reaffirmed the traditional canon of the Scriptures, declaring that the books of the Old and New Testaments, "as they are accustomed to be read in the Catholic Church and are found in the ancient Latin Vulgate edition," be received as sacred and canonical with all their parts. Of course, this canonization did not extend to the language and wording of St. Jerome's version, but only to the ideas they convey. No one pretends that Jerome was an inspired translator. The sacredness of a version is necessarily mediate and conditioned on the completeness and exactness with which it reproduces the thoughts of the inspired originals.

The preference shown by the fathers of Trent for the Vulgate could have little more than a theoretic value until that would be redeemed from the corruption and doubts entangling it. The

²⁷ Cf. Berger, "Histoire de la Vulgate," 225-226.

²⁸ Roger Bacon calls it "horribiliter corruptus." Opus Majus, ed. Jebb, p. 49. Cf. H. Denifle O. P. in "Archiv für Literatur des Mittelalters," Freiburg, 1888, IV., 281.

²⁹ In view of this fact, the character of Estienne's material is important, but we are able to identify only four out of the fourteen manuscripts he used. Of these the best go back to the ninth century, and have much critical value. See the catalogue of manuscript in Berger, p. 408.

Council took two wise measures to put an end to the existing chaos of translations and texts. It chose the Vulgate as against all modern Latin versions to be the "authentic," that is, authoritative one, and so to be used exclusively in all public readings, disputations, sermons and expositions.³⁰ And it resolved to ask the Holy See to take in hand the reformation of the Vulgate and the establishment of a typical or standard edition.

That Trent applied the term "authentic" in its ancient legal sense of "authoritative," and not in that of absolute fidelity to the originals, is a fact evinced by the proceedings preparatory to the decree, as well as the text of the decree itself. The act was a practical, not a dogmatic one.

The Council's action regarding the Vulgate was hailed with pleasure by the Catholic world in general as putting an end to the bewilderment of various current versions. But the Humanists were disgruntled at this exclusive approval of what, in their eyes, was a barbarous relic of an unenlightened age. Curiously, these mutterings found echoes at Rome, where the Renaissance was at its height and Humanism strongly entrenched. Cardinals of the Curia and not a few Roman theologians shook their heads at the decree and feared that the Council had set its weighty stamp upon a version undeserving of it. Pope Paul III. himself hesitated for a while to give the act his sanction, doubting the wisdom of formally authorizing a version of Holy Writ all of whose faults could not be ascribed to copyists and printers. The episode is fully illustrated by the serious correspondence upon the subject between officials of the Roman court and one of the Cardinal Legates presiding at Trent,³¹ and it is curious to see the legate pleading for the approval of the decrees as they came from the synod. But they at length obtained the Papal confirmation and have full binding force to-day.

The Holy See, as requested by the Council, undertook the revision of the ecclesiastical Bible with a view to an official and standard text. The true path to uniformity was at length entered upon. A pontifical commission was appointed, sitting at Rome. Like most Roman committees it proceeded on its task slowly and deliberately. The preliminary work had begun promptly on the sanction of the Biblical decrees in 1546 by Paul III. In 1561—a new commission having been appointed meanwhile—the results had reached such a stage that Pope Pius IV. was about to arrange for publication, but

³⁰ De Editione et Usu Sacrorum Librorum, Sess. IV.

³¹ Printed in Father Vercellone's essay, *Sulla autenticità della . . . Bibbia volgata*, etc., pp. 12 ff. Also in the same author's *Dissertazione Accademiche*, Rome, 1864, pp. 79-87. The latter work also gives the text of the original documents for the subsequent history of the revision.

desisted when the commission urged that it was not yet satisfied that its labors were ripe for the press.

Rome's majestic slowness is not without its drawbacks, and the Catholic world would have unduly suffered for the want of a standard edition, actualizing the boon of Trent's decrees, if the default had not been partially supplied by individual and corporate enterprise. It is fair to say, however, that this was stimulated not only by the Tridentine statute regarding the printing of the authorized version, but also by the motion of the Apostolic See.³² The famous Antwerp printer Plantin published between 1546 and 1573 a series of critical editions of the Latin Bible, based on the best text of Stephanus and carefully prepared by John Henten and other learned members of the Louvain faculty of theology.

It was the idea of Cardinal Peretto, later Pope Sixtus V., that an emended edition of the Septuagint would be a valuable help in the correction of the Vulgate Old Testament. In consequence the commission's labors were diverted to this enterprise, and during nine years work on the Vulgate waited the completion of the scholarly Sixtine Septuagint. As for the Greek New Testament, the revisers had at their command the celebrated Codex Vaticanus or Vatican manuscript, dating from the fourth century and considered by most modern critics the purest and most precious of the ancient copies.

When the Septuagint was finally out of the way that energetic and autocratic Pontiff, Sixtus V., pushed the work with commendable zeal. All the resources of Papal authority were employed to bring to Rome the oldest and best Latin codices, or at least copies of their variations. The monks of Sant Amiato were reluctantly compelled to part with the treasure of their library, the noted Codex Amiatinus of the eighth century and the acknowledged prince of Vulgate manuscripts. An examination of the official text shows that in the ultimate form of the revision the Amiatine copy and kindred manuscripts filled a respectable but by no means predominant part. In most of the *important* variant readings the typical Vulgate is not in company with them.³³

The commission which wrested with the accumulation of material left by its predecessor and collected by Sixtus V. was a truly representative body, counting among its members the learned Italian

³² See the dedication to Gregory XIII. of Plantin's Bible, partially reprinted in Kaulen, "Geschichte der Vulgata," p. 433, note.

³³ In this regard I have collated four chapters, representing the four Gospels. Out of seventy-seven readings where the Amiatine excels, the standard Vulgate follows it in forty-seven. Twelve of the seventy-seven are important, affecting the sense. The official text agrees with the Amiatine in only two of these.

Jesuits Agelli and Bellarmin, the French critical scholar Morin, the Spanish Valverde and the English Cardinal Allen, who had been the moving spirit of the Rheims-Douay English version. This was undoubtedly the ablest of the series of revising boards which labored at the task, and on the whole its influence was the greatest.

The principles by which it was guided, and which with two exceptions were followed to the finish, are set forth in a document prefixed by Sixtus to the edition of 1590. The correctors were to restore as nearly as morally possible the text as it came from the hands of St. Jerome. They were to treat with respect readings consecrated by long ecclesiastical usage and refrain from making changes of a startling nature. The first authority was to be allowed to manuscripts, and this according to their age. Second were to come quotations of the Fathers. Recourse was to be had to the Hebrew and Greek only when the foregoing criteria left the reading obscure or ambiguous. The results were noted in the margin of the best edition of Henten's Bible, which served therefore as the immediate basis. Henten's preface informs us that he consulted thirty-one manuscripts and two editions, but it is impossible to identify any of the former, and the critical merits of this heir to Stephanus cannot be historically determined. Finally the revisers were instructed that the text as printed would be definitive; no alternative readings were placed in the margin.

The commission at length turned over the result of its toil to Sixtus V. But that Pope, who as Cardinal had belonged to the revising body, revised the revision, retouching with a free hand and on his individual judgment. So numerous were the changes he made that when the long expected official edition appeared in July, 1590, the learned commission could not recognize the child of its arduous travail. Their vexation was naturally great. The Pontiff died soon after, happy to have brought his cherished project to completion. But before his successor was chosen the president of the committee whose results had been so rudely treated caused the sale of the Sixtine edition to be stopped.

The delicate problem of an honorable burial of the discredited Sixtine Bible was solved under Gregory XIV. in the following manner: It was determined that the official Vulgate should be reprinted under the name of Sixtus V., after being purged of his ill-advised changes. A new commission was named, embracing some of the ablest members of the former body. The Sixtine rules were kept with two wise modifications. In choosing between variant readings of manuscripts the Hebrew and Greek texts were given precedence over the Fathers. Again a traditional reading stood only when supported by some testimony of critical worth;

but one entirely wanting critical authority was not to be spared, no matter how long current. Some doubtful readings were left to the decision of the Pope. But Gregory XIV. died on the eve of the intended publication of the revision, and the official Bible suffered another setback.

Clement VIII. was raised to the throne in 1592. The Vulgate was fated to undergo another, and this time a superfluous revision. The new Pope entrusted the charge to two Cardinals and the learned Jesuit Toletus, the latter of whom did practically all the work. It was completed in seven months, and the new Bible appeared in 1592 with the name of Sixtus in the title page. It was Sixtine in the sense that, broadly speaking, the methods followed were those prescribed by Sixtus V., and the bulk of the conclusions of the Sixtine commission retained. But this edition, henceforth and at present the typical one, is better known as the Clementine.

Between the beginning and close of the undertaking of which the Clementine Vulgate is the final fruit forty-six years had elapsed and twelve Popes reigned. Revision had come upon revision, and human learning and scholarship provided with large means had spent itself in the work. Yet it is not perfect, and the official preface disclaims that the edition is a faultless restoration of St. Jerome's translation. But no one may dispute the words of the same preface concerning this Clementine Bible of 1592, "that it is not to be doubted that it is purer and more correct than any other text which has appeared down to this time." Modern criticism may pick flaws in the standard Vulgate, but nevertheless in the text officially fixed after a scrutiny of unexampled thoroughness, the Catholic Church has given to itself and the world an approximately pure recension of the most historic and time-honored of the Christian versions.

THE RHEIMS AND DOUAY VERSION (OR OUR ENGLISH CATHOLIC BIBLE).

The merciless anti-Catholic laws of Elizabeth's reign not only proscribed the priesthood, but made it impossible for young Catholic Englishmen to prepare themselves even remotely for the ranks of the clergy by a college education, as the universities and schools were closed to all of the old faith who were not ready to sacrifice their religious principles. In consequence the Catholic student was driven to the Continent.

To meet these conditions and supply devoted missionaries to keep alive Catholic faith in the mother country, at the peril of their lives, various seminaries and schools were established on the Continent.

None is so long and closely linked with the struggles of Catholicism in England as the missionary college, or as it would now be styled, seminary of Douay, the seat of a university, then in the Netherlands, and now in Northern France. It was established in 1568 through the efforts of a remarkable man, Dr. William Allen, later a Cardinal. Through some causes which are obscure, but probably political in their nature, the faculty and students removed to Rheims, France, in 1578. It was there that the New Testament was translated and published—the first printed English edition issued under Catholic auspices.⁸⁴

We are fortunate in being able to trace the inception of the Rheims-Douay Bible in a Latin letter written by President Allen under the date of 1578 and preserved in the English College at Rome.⁸⁵ After describing the methods taken to familiarize the students with Holy Scripture, the writer refers to the difficulty of Catholic preachers in handling a Bible translated in a tongue unknown to the auditors. "When they are preaching to the unlearned and are obliged on the spur of the moment to translate into the vulgar tongue some passage which they have quoted, they often do it inaccurately and with unpleasant hesitation, either because there is no vernacular version of the words or it does not then and there occur to them. Our adversaries, on the other hand, have at their fingers' ends, from some heretical version, all those passages of Scripture which seem to make for them, and by a certain deceptive adaptation and alteration of the words produce the effect of appearing to say nothing but what comes from the Bible. This evil might be remedied if we, too, had some Catholic version of the Bible, for all the English versions are most corrupt. I do not know what you have in Belgium. But certainly we on our part will undertake, if His Holiness shall think proper, to produce a faithful, pure and genuine version of the Bible, in accordance with the edition approved by the Church, for we already have men most fitted for this work."

Within a month the much needed version was begun, and the following entry in the college diary for 1578 tells us the plan followed in translating the New Testament, and doubtless later the Old: "On October 16th or thereabouts Martin (Licentiate in theology) began a translation of the Bible into English, with the object of healthfully counteracting the corruptions whereby the heresies have so long lamentably deluded almost the whole of our country-

⁸⁴ Regarding Catholic manuscript Bibles in English, the reader is referred to Abbot Gasquet's "Old English Bible and Other Essays;" also to an article by the present writer in the *Catholic World* of March, 1904.

⁸⁵ Letters and memorials of Cardinal Allen in "Records of English Catholics," 1882, Vol. II, pp. 52 ff.

men. In order that the work—most useful as it is hoped—may be published the more speedily, he completes daily the translation of two chapters, which, to secure greater correctness, are read through by Allen, our President, and Bristow, our Master, who in their wisdom faithfully correct whatever seems to need emendation.”⁸⁶

The great burden of the heroic enterprise of translating the whole Bible was thus borne by a single man, Gregory Martin. How was he fitted for such a task? He had been a scholar of St. John's College, Oxford, and later tutor in the family of the Duke of Norfolk. He had a name among his fellows for the highest skill in Hebrew and the classics. When the Duke visited Oxford a deputation from the university addressed him and paid a high compliment to their former associate, Martin: “You have, illustrious Duke, our Hebraist, our poet, our ornament and glory.”⁸⁷ Wood, the chronicler of noted Oxonians, says of him: “He was a most excellent linguist, exactly read and versed in the Sacred Scriptures, and went beyond all of his time in human literature, whether in poetry or prose.”⁸⁸ In addition to this proficiency in Latin, Greek and Hebrew, Martin joined the valuable advantage of familiarity with the current English versions of the Bible as appears from a treatise from his pen entitled “A Discoverie of the Manifold Corruptions of the Heretikes of Our Daies, Especially the English Sectaries, & Rheims, 1582.”

The translation followed the Vulgate with almost servile exactness. Says the preface to the New Testament of 1582: “We are very precise and religious following our copie, the old vulgar approved Latin, not only in sense, which we hope we alwaies doe, but sometimes in the very words and phrases.” The words of the title, “Diligently compared with the Greeke,” are not an idle boast. The Greek Testament lay before Martin, and it left its impress on the Rheims, first in the numerous Greek readings on the margin of the original editions, and more prominently as a guide in the choice of the article, wanting in Latin. The other editions in “divers languages” are not named, but it is extremely probable that the diction was influenced by the traditional phraseology which is the common stock of the English Protestant Bibles, beginning with Tyndale's. Another borrowed element may be discerned in the form of the Rheims-Douay Version. Martin and his colleagues had an English translation of the Vulgate New Testament ready to hand in Coverdale's, and as Dr. J. C. Carleton has remarked, the Rhemish trans-

⁸⁶ Douay College Diaries, Vol. I. of “Records of English Catholics,” p. 162.

⁸⁷ Athenæ Oxontenses, col. 487, Vol. I., editton of 1813.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

lation has a considerable number of readings in common with Coverdale's work.³⁹

But what is at once the characteristic literary trait and the disfigurement of the Rheims-Douay is its many Latinisms, such as *inhabiters of the land*, Gen. i., 11; *in latitude* for "in a spacious place," Osee iv., 16; *impudicities* for "immodesties," Mark vii., 21; *celestials* for "heavenly places," Eph. ii., 6; *concorporat and comparticipant*, Eph. iii., 6; *exinanited himself* for "emptied himself," Philip ii., 7. This strong admixture of curious Latin-English in the Anglo-Saxon stream of its language was due to an exaggerated reverence for the Vulgate, leading the translators to keep its verbal forms as far as possible, and sometimes even to coin strange words from the Latin.

The translators claim entire sincerity for their work, while not without reason accusing the contemporary Protestant versions with corrupting the sense. "We boldly avouch," they wrote, "the sinceritie of this translation, and that nothing is here either untruly or obscurely done of purpose in favor of the Catholike Roman religion." This assertion has not been disproved. Dr. Scrivener, an eminent Protestant critic, testifies: "In justice it must be observed that no case of wilful perversion has ever been brought home to the Rhemish translators."⁴⁰ It is true the phraseology of the Rheims has a sacerdotal and sacramental turn. "Presbyter" (Greek, *presbuteros*) is rendered by "priest;" "justitia" (*dikaioisune*), by "justice;" "poenitentiam agere" (*metanoiein*), by "do penance;" "sacramentum" (*musterion*), by "sacrament." All of these renditions—which have been kept in the current revision of the Rheims—may be criticized from a linguistic point of view, and it is quite possible that they were partially the result of theological preoccupations, but in every case except "priest" (it had been for centuries the traditional sense of "presbyter" in the Church) they are amply explained by the translators' policy of adhering to the Vulgate's forms.

The New Testament was printed at Rheims in 1582. Martin lived to see this event, but the tremendous strain he had borne for several years proved fatal to his health, and in September of the same year he died and was buried at Rheims. The Rheims and Douay Bible bears the consecration of this supreme sacrifice of a noble life spent in the service of the Church.

The Old Testament had been done into English immediately after the New, but the faculty's poverty, their "poor estate in ban-

³⁹ "The Part of Rheims in the Making of the English Bible," p. 30.

⁴⁰ Supplement to the Authorized Version, 1845; quoted in Cotton's "Rhemes and Doway," p. 156.

ishment," as they quaintly phrase it, forced them to defer the publication of this part. It appeared at length at Douay (whither the college had returned) in 1609 and 1610. As the official or Clementine edition of the Vulgate was now available, the Old Testament was conformed to this, and the marginal Greek readings omitted.⁴¹ Both Testaments are accompanied by explanatory notes, in accordance with the spirit of the Church, which has been hostile to placing the Bible in the hands of the laity without precautions against the waywardness of private interpretation.

These notes are voluminous in the New Testament of 1582, and of the polemical character of that age of fierce theological controversy. It was chiefly on their account that its publication evoked a mass of acrid criticism and several bulky "confutations" from English Protestants. But the translators of the King James, while not sparing a fling at the Rheims in their preface, had quietly made the despised Popish version do yeoman service in the preparation of their Bible. There are no fewer than 2,383 places where the Authorized agrees with the Rheims against all then existing English versions of note, and a Protestant scholar has recently demonstrated that the King James' "debt to Roman Catholic Rheims is hardly inferior to her debt to Protestant Geneva."⁴²

CHALLONER'S BIBLE.

The Rheims-Douay version filled an urgent need and performed good service. But with the lapse of time its spelling and some of its words became obsolete, and its Latinisms grew more uncouth to readers who contrasted it with the pure and idiomatic English of the Protestant Bible. There was an increasing demand for a more suitable and intelligible form of the Sacred Word for English-speaking Catholics. In 1718 Dr. Nary, an Irish priest, published a new translation of the New Testament, and in 1730 appeared another by Dr. Witham, of Douay College. But neither of these enterprises succeeded in taking the place of the old Rheims. It was a century since this had been reprinted. In 1738 a handsome folio edition of the Rheims was issued with modernized spelling and a few verbal improvements. But this after all was a makeshift and failed to satisfy the want of an idiomatic Bible. Another entered the field of Biblical revision who was destined to succeed and whose work endures. This was Richard Challoner.

One of the most singular ironies of literary history is the oblivion that has befallen the capital part of Dr. Challoner in the production

⁴¹ Preface to the Douay Old Testament, 1609.

⁴² "The Part of Rheims in the Making of the English Bible," by Dr. Jas. G. Carleton, D. D., 1902, p. 31.

of our English Catholic Bible. The scholar and zealous prelate who gave us that Bible is not awarded even the scant recognition of placing his name on the title pages of reprints of his version—except perhaps in connection with certain brief notes. To read the title pages and introductory notices of our current editions one would suppose that the evolution of our vernacular Bible had been arrested where it began, in the sixteenth century, and that our publishers are furnishing us very accurate reproductions of the antique and curious translation of Gregory Martin.

Richard Challoner was born of Protestant parents in 1691 in Sussex, England. Early left fatherless, he was placed by his poor mother under the protection of a Catholic family belonging to the gentry of the neighborhood. His talent attracted notice and he was sent to Douay College, where he showed marked ability in the classics, especially in Greek. Here, at the age of twenty-one, he became a Catholic, and after completing his studies was ordained a priest and sent to his native land, where the field of his labors was London and Southern England. His learning, talents and virtues were recognized by Vicar Apostolic Petre, and he was made coadjutor of the London vicariate in 1741, succeeding to the administration in 1758, at the age of sixty-seven. He died, aged ninety, in 1781, after having passed through the sore trial of Gordon's No-Popery riots, the shock and anxiety of which occasioned his death.⁴³ His life was full of zeal and literary activity, for he left some forty controversial, historical and religious works, but none of these can be compared in value and importance with his revision of the Rheims and Douay Bible. It was as Coadjutor Bishop that he accomplished this. There is good reason to suppose that he had been concerned in the Rheims New Testament of 1738, and then realized the inadequacy of anything short of a thorough revision of the old version.⁴⁴ Challoner's New Testament appeared in 1749 at London, and the next year he published the whole Bible.

He has left us no account of the principles and methods he followed. We are therefore thrown back on the evidence of the version itself. From this it appears that the ruling idea was to render the ancient Rheims-Douay more intelligible and acceptable to modern readers. The literalisms were replaced by idiomatic forms, the construction was modernized and obsolescent terms made way for familiar ones. In short, Challoner's Bible is infinitely better adapted to modern readers than the old version. The great majority of its constant variations from the Rheims-Douay are in the direction of improvement.

⁴³ "Life of Dr. Richard Challoner," by Rev. T. Barnard, 1793, *passim*.

⁴⁴ "Barnard's Life," p. 128. Compare Cotton's "Rhemess and Doway," 47.

It is true Dr. Challoner's revision sacrificed here and there pithy and felicitous Anglo-Saxon words and phrases which in the ancient Bible stood side by side with cumbrous Latinisms. But the reviser, while erring sometimes in taste, had sufficient literary tact to retain many of these, and what we lost through him in this manner we regain by the Anglo-Saxonisms he borrowed from the Authorized. So we have scattered through our current Bible a goodly number of expressions which lend a quaint, archaic flavor to the vernacular form of the sacred text. Most of these are original with the older version. Instances are *heart* instead of *bowels*, Gen. xliii., 30; *goodman of the house*, Matt. xii., 37; *comely*, Eccli. xxv., 6; *carefulness for solicitude*, II. Cor. vii., 11; *Why make you this ado?* Mk. v., 39; *word sower*, Acts xvii., 18. We owe a few to Challoner himself, as *falleth out*, Ex. xvii., 16; *He will bring those evil men to an evil end*, Matt. xxi., 41. On the other hand, there are palpable literary blemishes in Challoner's Version, most of which are legacies from the Rheims-Douay. There is often a halting, unrhythmical quality in the style. This is frequently due to a survival of Latin words, as *inhabit*, *conduct*, when Anglo-Saxon equivalents would have been better employed. *Was* or *were* *come* is a weak substitute for *came* or *had come*; the flaccid *would* is too often found where the original demands *willed* or *desired*, e. g., Col. i., 27. The force of the Latin *autem* and the Greek *de* is often ignored or weakened, where the King James renders by *yea* or *now* very happily. A minor fault is the capricious alternation of *hath* and *has*.

Turning from the literary merits of Challoner's Bible to consider it simply as a translation, we naturally ask: Is it a good faithful version? The answer must be that it has the essential virtue of fidelity in a high degree. The sense of the Vulgate is often imperfectly reproduced, for no translation can be an exact equation of its original. But comparatively few actual mistranslations may be charged against our English Bible, and these are almost invariably of minor consequence. Five chapters taken at random from different parts of the version should be fairly representative. Careful examination of Exodus xviii. reveals no erroneous translation. In Psalms xxxiii. there is none; in Ecclesiasticus xxv. there is one.⁴⁵ The New Testament is slightly inferior. Chapter xxviii. of St. Luke, in the common text, contains three minor mistakes;⁴⁶ II. Corinthians vii., a short chapter, two.⁴⁷ With a slight qualification we have in Challoner's revision an accurate translation of the official

⁴⁵ "Not to be imagined by the mind" fails to convey the meaning of "insuspicabilia cordis," which is "surprising things."

⁴⁶ *To this place* for *usque huc*, v. 5; *orted again* for *succlamabant*, 21 (corrected in the edition of 1752); *drew on* for *illucescebat*, 54.

⁴⁷ *For you* for *in vobis*; *boast* *boasting* for *gloriari*, *gloriatio*, v. 14.

Vulgate, and the many instances where it does not conform to the Hebrew and Greek originals are due to the very fact that it is a faithful reproduction of the Latin version both for the better and the worse. In other words, in a vast majority of cases the fault is with the Vulgate and not with Challoner.

It is for the same reason, namely, that Challoner is habitually so true to his originals, that his voluntary departures from them are so surprising and notable. For it is a fact that with the standard text he took intentional liberties, few and scattered, indeed, in comparison with the great mass, but nevertheless many in the aggregate. There are few chapters wherein some little conscious deviation from the Vulgate may not be found. The changes are modest, inasmuch as they extend only to words and phrases, but bold inasmuch as they are in contravention of typical text and ecclesiastical version. Sometimes they are in the form of an extreme freedom of interpretation in order to approach nearer to the sense of the Hebrew or Greek. But time and again, especially in the Old Testament, Challoner simply parts company with the Vulgate to give a rendering truer to the originals than the scrupulous Rheims and Douay had dared. In doing so the revision generally, though not invariably, adopts the Protestant reading. To illustrate, there are three deviations of this kind in Exodus xxiii;⁴⁸ two in Proverbs x.;⁴⁹ two in Osee iv.;⁵⁰ four in Luke xxiii.;⁵¹ one in II. Corinthians vii.⁵²

Yet Dr. Challoner was not thoroughly consistent, for we occasionally meet cases in which the older version is more faithful to the original than his revision.

It is abundantly clear that the revision was done with constant reference to the original texts, that is the Hebrew and Greek, and that these exercised a notable influence upon the work. Dr. Challoner also kept in view the typical or Clementine Vulgate, which had appeared after the Rheims New Testament had been published.

Still more tangible is the influence of the Protestant Authorized, more familiarly known as the King James Version. An overwhelming preponderance of Challoner's literary changes are in the direction of the Protestant Bible. Doubtless many of these are merely natural coincidences and would have been chosen regardless of the Authorized Version, but the not infrequent identities where other words might easily have been employed leave no question

⁴⁸ In verses 5, 6, 27.

⁴⁹ See 4, 9, 14, 23.

⁵⁰ In 4, 19.

⁵¹ Verses 2, 10, 22, 26.

⁵² Verse 7.

that the King James was constantly before the translator and exercised a very considerable influence in the diction of the new version.

I have called Challoner a translator and his edition a version. And indeed the changes he introduced are so marked and considerable that the identity of the old Bible disappears in them. What Cardinal Newman said of Challoner's labors upon the New Testament may with equal correctness be applied to the Old: "They issue in little short of a new translation."⁵³ The result of these labors mediates between a thorough revision and an independent translation. It merits the name "Challoner's Version" as properly as the Protestant Revised is conceived as a version distinct from the Authorized. If we have any right to call our current English text the "Douay Bible," as is the common usage among us, it is on the slender ground that its author aimed to keep the readings of the Rheims-Douay so far as was consistent with a thoroughly improved version of the Vulgate.

Nothing will so well illustrate the evolution which the Rheims-Douay Bible underwent as the appended parallels. The influence of the King James upon Challoner (and in rare cases on the Rheims of 1738) is indicated by italicizing the words which coincide with the Protestant against the older version, while Challoner's departures from the Vulgate to the sense of the Greek are shown by placing the words or phrases between asterisks:

PSALM CXVII., 1-17.

Douay.

1. Confesse ye to our Lord because he is good; because his mercie is for ever.
2. Let Israel now say that he is good: that his mercie is for ever.
3. Let the house of Aaron now say: that his mercie is for ever.
4. Let them now say which feare our Lord; that his mercie is for ever.
5. From tribulation I invocated our Lord: and our Lord heard me in largeness.
6. Our Lord is my helper: I will not feare what man can doe to me.
7. Our Lord is my helper: and I will look over mine enemies.
8. It is good to hope in our Lord, rather than to hope in man.
9. It is good to hope in our Lord, rather than to hope in princes.
10. All nations have compassed me: and in the name of our Lord am I revenged on them.
11. Compassing they have compassed me, and in the name of our Lord I was revenged on them.
12. They compassed me as bees,

Challoner, Denvir's Edition.

- Give* praise to the Lord for he is good: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.
- Let Israel now say, that he is good: that his mercy *endureth* for ever.
- Let the house of Aaron now say, that his mercy *endureth* for ever.
- Let them that fear the Lord now say, that his mercy *endureth* for ever.
- In* my trouble I called upon the Lord; and the Lord heard me and enlarged me.
- The Lord is my helper: I will not fear what man can do unto me.
- The Lord is my helper: and I will look over mine enemies.
- It is good to *confide* in the Lord rather to *have confidence* in man.
- It is good to *trust* in the Lord, rather than to *trust* in princes.
- All nations have compassed me about, and in the name of the Lord I have been revenged on them.
- Surrounding me they have compassed me about: and in the name of the Lord I have been revenged on them.
- They surrounded me like bees, and

⁵³ "Tracts, Theological and Ecclesiastical," 1895, p. 416.

and were inflamed as fyre in thornes; and in the name of our Lord I was revenged on them.

13. Being thrust I was overturned to fal: and our Lord received me.

14. Our Lord is my strength, and my prayse: and he is made my salvation.

15. The voice of exultation, and of salvation in the tabernacles of the just.

16. The right hand of our Lord hath wrought strength: the right hand of our Lord hath exalted me, the right hand of our Lord hath wrought strength.

17. I shal not die, but shal live: and I wil tel the workes of our Lord.

they burned like fire among thorns; and in the name of the Lord I was revenged on them.

Being pushed I was overturned *that I might fall*: *but* the Lord supported me.

The Lord is my strength and my praise; and he is *become* my salvation.

The voice of *rejoicing* and of salvation *is* in the tabernacles of the just.

The right hand of *the* Lord hath wrought strength: the right hand of *the* Lord hath exalted me: the right hand of *the* Lord hath wrought strength.

I shal not die, but live and shal *declare* the works of *the* Lord.

The easy superiority of the Revision in rhythm, in purity of English, in the suppression of the unbiblical "our Lord" is seen at a glance.

EPHESIANS III., 1-14.

Rhelms of 1582.

Rhelms of 1738.

Chaltoner, Denvir's Ed.

1. For this cause, I Paul the prisoner of IESUS Christ, for you Gentiles:

2. If yet you have heard the dispensation of the grace of God, which is given me toward you,

3. Because according to revelation the Sacrament was made knowne to mee, as I have written before in brief.

4. According as you reading may understand my wisdom in the mystery of Christ.

5. Which unto other generations was not knowne to the sonnes of men, as now it is revealed to his hojy Apostles and Prophets in the Spirit:

6. The Gentiles to be coheirs and concorporat and comparticipant of his promise in Christ IESUS by the Gospell:

7. Whereof I am made a Minister according to the gift of the grace of God, which is given mee according to the operation of his power:

8. To mee, the least of all the Saints, is given this grace among the Gentiles to evangelize the unsearchable riches of Christ.

9. And to illuminate

For this cause, I Paul the prisoner of JESUS Christ, for you

If yet you have heard the dispensation of the grace of God, which is given towards you.

Because, according to revelation, the sacrament was made known to me, as I have written before in brief:

According as you reading may understand my wisdom in the mystery of Christ,

Which unto other Generations was not known to the sons of men, as now it is revealed to his hojy Apostles and Prophets in the Spirit.

That the Gentils are co-heirs and of the same body and partakers of his promise in Christ JESUS by the Gospel:

Whereof I am made a Minister according to the gift of the grace of God, which is given to me according to the operation of his power:

To me, the least of all the Saints, is given this grace, among the Gentils to *preach* the unsearchable riches of Christ.

And to illuminate all

For this cause, I Paul the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles;

If yet you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me towards you.

How that, according to revelation, the *mystery* has been made known to me, as I have written above in *a few words*;

As you reading, may understand my *knowledge* in the mystery of Christ,

Which ~~is~~ other generations was not known to the sons of men, as ~~it~~ *is now* revealed to his hojy apostles and prophets in the Spirit:

That the Gentiles *should be fellow-heirs*, and of the *same body*, and co-partners of his promise in Christ Jesus, by the gospel:

Of which I am made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God, which is given to me according to the operation of his power:

To me, the least of all the saints, is given this grace, to *preach among the Gentiles* the unsearchable riches of Christ,

And to enlighten all

all men what is the dispensation of the Sacrament hidden from the worlds in God, who created all things:

10. That the manifold wisdom of God may be notified to Princes and Postestats in the celestials by the Church,

11. According to the prefnition of worlds, which he made in Christ IESUS our Lord.

12. In whom we have affiance and access in confidence, by the faith of him.

13. For which cause I desire that you faint not in my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

14. For this cause I bowe my knees to the Father of our Lord IESUS Christ.

men what is the dispensation of the sacrament hidden from worlds in God, who created all things:

That the manifold wisdom of God may be notified to the Princes and Powers in the celestials by the Church,

According to the prefnition of worlds, which he made in Christ IESUS our Lord.

In whom we have affiance and access in confidence by the faith of him.

For which cause I desire that you faint not in my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

For this cause I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord JESUS Christ,

men that they may see what is the dispensation of the *mystery which hath been* hidden from eternity in God, who created all things:

That the manifold wisdom of God may be made known to the *principlities and powers in heavenly places* through the church,

According to the *eternal *purpose,** which he made, in Christ Jesus our Lord:

In whom we have *boldness* and access with confidence by the faith of him.

Wherefore I pray you not to faint at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

For this cause I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

The stylistic changes which the editors of the New Testament of 1738 made in verses 6, 8, 10 mark that issue as a real, though very modest transition between the original Rheims and Challoner's. The reading of verse 16 reveals that the 1738 edition was not conformed to the standard Vulgate.

Dr. Challoner published an edition of the New Testament in 1752, which differs not a little in phrasing and construction from that of 1749, and generally for the better. To illustrate: In Matt. xvi. "Who said," verse 6, becomes "And he said;" verse 8, "for that ye have," "because you have;" verse 20, "he commanded," "he charged;" "Go behind me, Satan," is improved to "Get thee behind me, Satan;" 25, "he that will save," "whosoever will save;" 26, "what exchange will a man give for his soul?" becomes "what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" All but the first of these readings of 1752 are conformed to the Authorized. These differences between Challoner's first and third edition of the New Testament total more than two thousand. We have almost absolute fixity in the Old Testament "Douay," for Challoner's version of 1750 has not been retouched. But our New Testaments have no such uniformity. The Troy New Testament, so called from Archbishop Troy, of Dublin, who gave it approbation, was a recension of Challoner's of 1752, with many original variations. Troy's strongly influenced the Haydock Bible, famous for its copious notes and first published in England in 1810-11. A text based on Haydock's was first printed in America in Dunigan's magnificent folio edition of 1852-56. I say *based* because the unknown American editor introduced not a few differing readings. Later large editions

of Bibles copy Haydock's faithfully, without always seeming to be aware of the fact. Indeed, what may be called the preceding generation of English Catholic Bibles, the large family editions, no longer in favor, were both in our own country and England strongly colored by the Troy New Testament, which, though based on Challoner's of 1752, has, as we have seen, a character of its own. These are the only modern Bibles which have been affected by the text of 1752; the tincture is very slight and our American editions have acquired it in the roundabout way of *via* Haydock, *via* Troy.

But of late years, since the ponderous family Bibles have been superseded by handy octavos and small quartos, there has been a return to Challoner pure and simple, without any Troy admixture. Most contemporary American editions are reprints of the text edited by Dr. Denvir, Bishop of Down and Connor, early in the last century. Denvir closely follows Challoner's New Testament of 1749, borrowing only a few words from the third edition, among them the questionable "that" for "who" and "which." Perhaps Bishop Denvir looked coldly upon Challoner's edition of 1752 because of its more pronounced leaning toward the Protestant Version. Anyhow, it has come about that the type of the New Testament prevailing in the United States and Ireland reproduces the less rhythmical and felicitous of Challoner's editions. In England Haydock's Challoner with its foreign element seems still to be ascendant, so that neither there is the edition of 1752 received. Further, for America and Ireland at least it is true that the multiplicity of texts of the New Testament, which recent Protestant essayists have exaggerated,⁵⁴ is rapidly disappearing, for our leading Bible publishers, by reprinting Challoner's text of 1749, are bringing about a desirable uniformity.

Dr. Challoner's Old Testament is undoubtedly the received text of all English-speaking Catholics. As seen above, the United States and Ireland practically have one accepted form of the New Testament also. The writer cannot speak with authority for England, Canada and the British possessions, but everywhere *some* recension of Challoner is in use. Challoner's Bible has never received the formal approbation of the Holy See.⁵⁵ But it has been authorized by ecclesiastical statutes or the formal sanction of Bishops. It is in the former manner that the version, taken generally without specification of a typical edition, enjoys the status of official approval in the United States.⁵⁶ Theoretically, the old

⁵⁴ "Catholic and Protestant Bibles Compared," 1905, containing the prize essays of the Gould competition.

⁵⁵ See "Concilia Baltimorensia," 1851, p. 66.

⁵⁶ "Conc. Balt.," pp. 26, 77; "Concillium Balt." Plen. II., Acta et Decreta, No. 16.

Rheims and Douay has the same privilege. In Ireland, Denvir's Bible received the recommendation of the hierarchy in the form of a declaration prefixed to a Dublin edition of 1857. So far as observed no formal approbation has been given to the "Douay" in England, Scotland and the British colonies beyond that of individual Bishops. But in all countries the authorization is merely positive and does not exclude the public and private use of other Catholic translations of the Vulgate.

We have had three English versions by Catholics since Challoner's: Dr. Lingard's Four Gospels, translated mainly from the Greek text, which was published in 1836 and has seen at least one more edition, viz., 1851; Archbishop Kenrick's⁵⁷ Bible, appearing by parts between 1849 and 1860, a translation from the Latin, and finally the Gospels translated by Father A. F. Spencer, O. P., from the Greek, with reference to the Vulgate and Syriac, and published in 1898. All these are works of real scholarship, but Dr. Kenrick's translation, being the only one faithful to the ecclesiastical version, is alone in any situation to compete with Challoner's Bible as a current text for public use. But it has not met with popular favor, and indeed the form of its only complete edition—a number of separate octavo volumes—was unsuited to a wide circulation. The Four Gospels alone reached a second edition.

Challoner's attempt succeeded owing to a combination of intrinsic merit, the author's prestige and the peculiar circumstances of the time. But the day is past when any translation or revision of the Scriptures by individual scholarship can hope to win public confidence and widespread acceptance. The conservative sense is strong in this field. Only the prestige and authority of a Catholic university or body of collective scholarship can take up the enterprise of a new version with the promise of both intrinsic success and popular esteem for the work. But even so, the result would be disappointing to the learned unless the translators would be permitted, in a measure exceeding Dr. Challoner's, to go behind the Latin text in order to correct certain crying errors. If such latitude would not be enjoyed, the improvement would be utterly disproportionate to the labor. If we must keep strictly to the Vulgate, that would be an unwarranted attempt that would seek to replace our time-honored and excellently received English version.

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⁵⁷ Of Baltimore.