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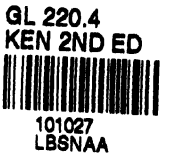

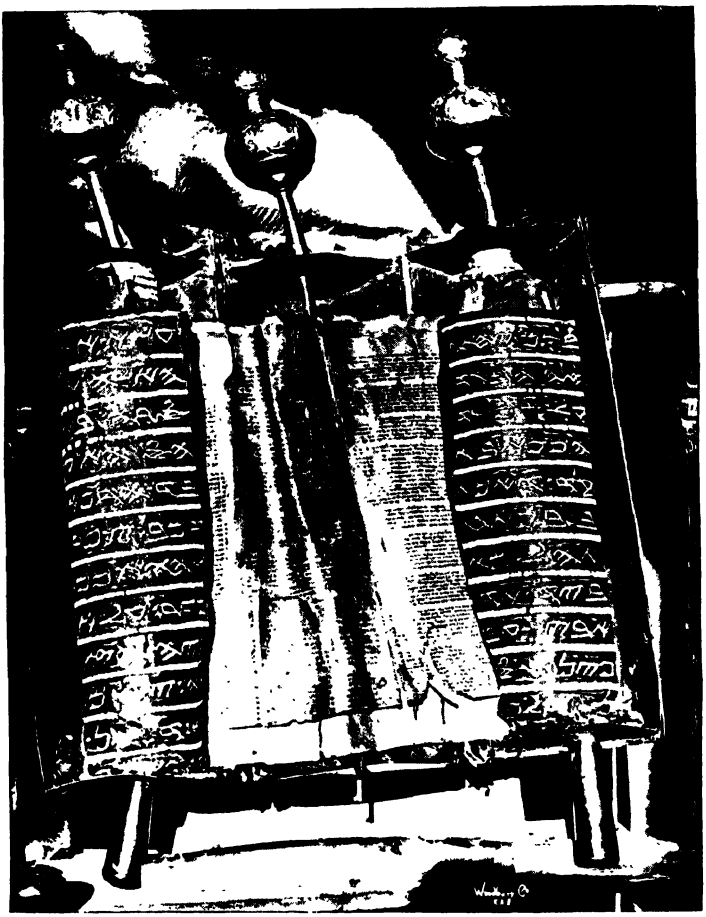

THE SAMARITAN PENTATEUCH-ROLL AT NABLOUS

(Original height, excluding rollers, about 45 cm.)

OUR BIBLE

AND THE

ANCIENT MANUSCRIPTS

BEING A

History of the Text and its Translations

BY

FREDERIC G. KENYON, M.A., D.LITT.

Hon. Ph.D. of Halle University; Late Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford

WITH 26 FACSIMILES

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PREFACE.

THE Bible has a twofold history, internal and external. The internal history deals with the character of its narrative and its teaching, as a revelation of God and of God's will; the external history tells how and when the several books were written, and how they have been preserved to us. The former treats of the Bible in its divine, the latter in its human, aspect. The former is unique, differing not merely in detail, but in kind, from the history of any other book; the latter is shared by the Bible with every other book that ever was written. It is, of course, its internal history which is of supreme value; but the very greatness of this value gives to the external history of the Bible a special interest and importance above that of all other books. If the Bible claims so unparalleled a pre-eminence, it is of the first consequence to us to know when and how it was written, whether the several books of it are authentic, and whether they have been faithfully handed down to us through the centuries which separate us from the time of their origin.

The present volume deals solely with the latter part of the Bible's external history, the transmission of the sacred

text. It is a subject upon which very much has been written, and each section of it has engaged the attention and occupied the lives of many scholars. My object has been to condense within the limits of a moderate volume the principal results at which these specialists have arrived, so as to furnish the reader who is not himself a specialist in textual criticism with a concise history of the Bible text, and to enable him to form an intelligent opinion on the textual questions which continually present themselves to the Bible student. In this attempt I have necessarily been indebted to the labours of others at every turn. To acknowledge this indebtedness in every case, to trace every statement to its original owner, would be an endless task, and would overload this book with notes to an extent quite unsuitable to its character; but it may be of some use to mention the principal authorities whom I have followed in each part of the history. To Strack, Davidson, Driver, Cornill, and Buhl on the Old Testament generally; to Field, Lagarde, Ceriani, and Swete on the Septuagint; to Scrivener, Gregory, and Hort on the New Testament; to the writers in the second volume of Scrivener's *Introduction* (4th edition, by Miller) on the versions of the New Testament; to Wordsworth, White, and Berger on the Vulgate; to Skeat, Madden, and especially Westcott on the history of the English Bible—I desire to record my obligations in the strongest terms of respect. I have not, however, confined myself to the writers here mentioned, but have tried throughout to find and consult all the best authorities, so as to present in this volume a readable summary of the present results of the best criticism. I hope also that I may have gained something from an acquaintance with the Biblical manuscripts in the British Museum.

This volume is especially intended for those who study the Bible in English, and in referring to details of textual criticism I have consequently had in my mind the only edition of the English Bible in which these details are made accessible to the ordinary reader, namely the Variorum Bible published by Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode. I hope, however, that it may also be found useful by students who are beginning to make acquaintance with the textual criticism of the Septuagint or New Testament in their original language, and who use such editions as the Cambridge Septuagint edited by Prof. Swete, or the Oxford Greek Testament edited by Prof. Sanday. To any of these editions this volume may, in the chapters relating to those parts of the subject, serve as a companion; but independently of such use, it is intended to give the reader a general knowledge of the textual history of the Bible, from the time at which the several books were written until their appearance in our English Bibles to-day.

With regard to the plates, a few words of explanation are necessary. In presenting facsimiles of large manuscripts within the compass of a small page, two alternatives are possible. One may either reproduce a small portion of the original page in its full size, or one may give the whole page (or a large part of it) on a reduced scale. There is something to be said for either course; but I have preferred the latter, on the ground that it gives a better idea of the general appearance of the manuscript, and also that it enables one to point out more examples of the characteristics of the manuscripts and the errors of the scribes. I have, however, in every case stated the original size of the page reproduced, and (in cases where the whole page

cannot be given) of the part reproduced; and it is open to anyone to counteract the reduction by the use of a magnifying glass. It should be observed that in many cases the greater part of the difference between the whole page and the part reproduced is accounted for by the margins. Use has been made, in several instances, of the plates published by the Palæographical Society, with the permission of the editors; but wherever it has been possible I have tried to give pages which especially illustrate the peculiarities of the manuscript in question or some important detail of textual criticism.

In a book which covers so much ground on which so much labour has been bestowed, it is useless to hope that there should be no room for differences of opinion and no errors of detail; but I shall be very grateful for any corrections which may serve to make my work less unworthy of the high subject with which it ventures to deal.

F. G. K.

Department of Manuscripts,
British Museum.

25th October, 1895.

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OUR BIBLE AND THE ANCIENT MANUSCRIPTS:

BEING A

History of the Text and its Translations.

CHAPTER I.

VARIATIONS IN THE BIBLE TEXT.

THE following history of the Bible text and of its translation into English is an attempt to trace the manner in which the words of the sacred books have been handed down to us, from the time when they were first written in the original Hebrew or Greek, down to their appearance in our English Revised Version to-day. No one can read that version intelligently without seeing that in very many places there is considerable doubt as to the exact words used by the original writers. On nearly every page, especially of the New Testament, we see notes in the margin to the effect that "Some ancient authorities read" this, or "Many ancient authorities read" that,—these readings being alternatives to the readings actually adopted in the text of the Revisers. The question inevitably follows, What are these "ancient authorities?" How comes it that they differ so frequently among themselves? How do we, or how does anyone, know which to follow among these divergent witnesses? And then the larger question suggests itself, How has the text of the Bible come down to us? We know that the several books which compose it were written many centuries ago, and in other languages than ours. What do we know of their history since that time, and how have they been preserved to us and translated into our own language?

Uncertainties in the Revised Version.

The difficulties suggested by the various readings in the Revised Version are made more prominent if we look at such an edition as the Variorum Bible.* Here we find the several "ancient authorities" quoted separately whenever there is any important conflict of evidence as to the exact reading of any passage. Thus at Matt. 19. 17, to the words "Why callest thou Me good?" there is the following note: "*So* C Δ, *Pesh. Theb. Mcl.* R *marg.*; Why askest thou me concerning the good? ℵ B D L, *Al. La. Ti. Tr. We. WH.* R." The meaning of this note is that there are two divergent readings recorded in this passage. The manuscripts known as C and Δ (which will be found described in Ch. VII.), two ancient translations of the New Testament into Syriac and Egyptian, the editor McClellan, and the margin of the Revised Version, read "Why callest thou Me good?" On the other hand, the four manuscripts ℵ, B, D, L, the editors Alford, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Weiss, Westcott and Hort, and the text of the Revised Version, have "Why askest thou Me concerning the good?" To the student acquainted with these critical symbols, this information is intelligible and important; but unless we have some previous knowledge of the subject we shall not understand the comparative value of the various authorities quoted. The indispensable information is given in the preface and introduction to the Variorum Bible; but, although stated with admirable completeness and conciseness, it is necessarily brief,

The Variorum Bible.

* This is, I believe, the only critical edition of the Bible in English. It gives a digest, under the head of "Various Renderings," of the translations or interpretations proposed by the best commentators in doubtful passages, and under the head of "Various Readings," of the more important variations of the principal manuscripts, versions, and editions. The names of the editors (Prof. Driver and Prof. Cheyne of the O.T., Prof. Sanday and the Rev. R. L. Clarke of the N.T., and the Rev. C. J. Ball of the Apocrypha) are guarantees for the excellence of the work. The surest results of Biblical criticism are thus made accessible to English readers in a clear and compact form; and since the present book is intended primarily for those who study the Bible in English, reference will generally be made to the notes of the Variorum Bible, rather than to the critical editions of the Hebrew or Greek texts.

and it may occur to many to wish to know more about the authorities on which our knowledge of the Bible rests. It is all very well to say that such-and-such manuscripts support one reading of a passage, while other manuscripts support another, but we are no better able than before to judge which reading is to be preferred unless we know which manuscripts are most likely to be right. The questions asked above recur with doubled force: How do there come to be differences in different records of the Bible text, and how do we know which reading to prefer when the authorities differ?

Examples of important variations.

That these questions are not idle nor unimportant may be seen by mentioning a few of the passages in which important variations are found. We will take, for the moment, the Gospels alone. The Doxology of the Lord's Prayer is omitted in the oldest copies of Matt. **6.** 13; several copies omit Matt. **16.** 2, 3 altogether; a long additional passage is sometimes found after Matt. **20.** 28; the last twelve verses of St. Mark are omitted altogether by the two oldest copies of the original Greek; one very ancient authority inserts an additional incident after Luke **6.** 4, while it alters the account of the institution of the Lord's Supper in Luke **22.** 19, 20, and omits altogether Peter's visit to the sepulchre in **24.** 12, and several other details of the Resurrection; the version of the Lord's Prayer in Luke **11.** 2–4 is much abbreviated in many copies; the incident of the Bloody Sweat is omitted in **22.** 43, 44, as also is the word from the Cross, "Father, forgive them," in **23.** 34; the mention of the descent of an angel to cause the moving of the waters of Bethesda is entirely absent from the oldest copies of John **5.** 4, and all the best authorities omit the incident of the woman taken in adultery in **7.** 53–**8.** 11. Besides the larger discrepancies, such as these, there is scarcely a verse in which there is not some variation of phrase in some copies. No one can say that these additions or omissions or alterations are matters of mere indifference. It is true (and it cannot be too emphatically stated) that none of the fundamental truths of Christianity rests on passages of which the

genuineness is doubtful; but it still remains a matter of concern to us to know that our Bible, as we have it to-day, represents as closely as may be the actual words used by the writers of the sacred books. It is the object of this volume to present, within a moderate compass and as clearly as possible, the means we have for knowing that it does so; to trace the history of the sacred texts from the time of their original composition to our own Revised Version of 1885; to show the authorities on which they rest, and the comparative value to be put upon each. It is the special duty of scholars to weigh the evidence on each particular disputed passage, and to form editions and translations of the sacred books; but any intelligent reader, without any knowledge of either Greek or Hebrew, can learn enough to understand the processes of criticism and the grounds on which the judgments of scholars must be based. Nor is the subject dry or uninteresting. The history of the Bible text has a living interest for all those who care for its contents; and no Englishman should be altogether ignorant of the history of the English Bible.

One preliminary question should be cleared away before proceeding to the history of the text. It is the question that naturally rises first; How do various readings of a passage come into existence? It is a question easily answered, so soon as the character of ancient books is understood. Nowadays, when an author writes a book, he sends it to the printer, from whom he receives proof-sheets; and he corrects the proof-sheets until he is satisfied that it is printed accurately, and then hundreds or thousands of copies, as the case may be, are struck off from the same types and distributed to the world. Each one of these copies is exactly like all the rest, and there can be no varieties of readings. All the extant copies of, say, any one edition of Macaulay's History or Tennyson's Poems are identical. Tennyson may have himself altered his own verses from time to time, and so have other authors; but no one doubts that in each edition of a modern book we have (slips of editor or printer excepted) exactly what the author intended at the time, and

The origin of variations in the text.

that each copy of it is exactly like every other copy. But before the invention of printing this was far from being the case. Each separate copy of a book had to be written by hand; and the human hand and brain have not yet been created which could copy the whole of a long work absolutely without error. Often (and this we may easily believe to have been especially the case in the early days of the Christian Church, when it was a poor, half-educated, and persecuted body) copies were made hurriedly and without opportunity for minute revision. Mistakes were certain to creep in; and when once in existence they were certain to increase, as fresh copies were made from manuscripts already faulty. If the original manuscripts of the sacred book were still preserved, the errors of later copies would be to us now a matter of indifference; but since the original manuscripts perished long ago, we have to try to arrive at their contents by a comparison of later copies, all of which are more or less faulty and all varying from one another. This is the problem of textual criticism, and it will be seen that its sphere is large. Printing was invented in 1454, little more than four centuries ago; but for all the centuries before that date, books existed only in hand-written copies, which we call manuscripts (from the Latin *manu-scriptum* = "written by hand," often abbreviated as "MS."). Of the chief of these manuscripts we shall have to speak at greater length in the course of this book. Meanwhile it will be clear that the existence of differences of reading in many passages of the Bible as we have it to-day is due to the mistakes made in copying them by hand during the many centuries that elapsed between the composition of the books and the invention of printing.

The mistakes of scribes are of many kinds and of varying importance. Sometimes the copyist confuses words of similar sound, as in English we sometimes find our correspondents write *there* for *their* or *here* for *hear*. Sometimes he passes over a word by accident; and this is especially likely to happen when two adjoining words end with the same letters. Sometimes this cause

The mistakes of copyists: 1. Errors of hand and eye.

of error operates more widely. Two successive lines of the manuscript from which he is copying end with the same or similar words; and the copyist's eye slips from the first to the second, and the intermediate line is omitted. Sometimes, again, the manuscript from which he is copying has been furnished with short explanatory notes in the margin, and he fails to see where the text ends and the note begins, and so copies the note into the text itself.

These are all simple errors of hand and eye. Errors of the mind are more dangerous, because they are less easy to detect.

2. Errors of mind.

The copyist's mind wanders a little from the book he is copying, and he writes down words which come mechanically into his head, just as we do nowadays if people talk while we are writing, and distract our attention. Some words are familiar in certain phrases, and the familiar phrase runs off the pen of the copyist when the word should be written in some other combination. A form of this error is very common in manuscripts of the Gospels. The same event is often narrated in two or more of them, in slightly different language; and the copyist, either consciously or unconsciously, alters the words of the one version to make them the same as those of the other. A careful reader of the Variorum Bible or the Revised Version will note many instances where this has happened. Thus in Matt. **11.** 19 the Authorised Version has "But wisdom is justified of her children," as in Luke **7.** 35; but the Revised Version tells us that the original text had "works" instead of "children" here, the truth being that the copyists of all except the earliest extant manuscripts have altered it, so as to make it correspond with the account in St. Luke. Similarly in Matt. **16.** 13, our Lord's question runs (in the R.V.) "Who do men say that the Son of Man is?" and the margin tells us that "Many ancient authorities read *that I, the Son of Man, am*; see Mark **8.** 27, Luke **9.** 18." In Matt. **23.** 14 a whole verse has probably been inserted from the parallel passages in Mark and Luke; and so with Mark **15.** 28. In Luke **6.** 48 the concluding

words of the parable of the house built on the rock, "because it had been well builded," have been altered in "many ancient authorities" in accordance with the more striking and familiar phrase in St. Matthew, "for it had been founded upon the rock." Errors like these increase in the later copies, as the words of the sacred narrative are more and more familiar to the copyists; and when once made they do not admit of correction, unless we are able to examine copies written before the corruption took place. They do not betray themselves by injuring the sense of the passage, as is generally the case with errors of the first class.

3. Errors of deliberate alteration.

An untrue hand or eye or an over-true memory may do much harm in a copyist; but worst and most dangerous of all is it when the copyist begins to think for himself. The veneration in which the sacred books were held has generally protected them against intentional alterations of the text, but not entirely so. The *harmonisation* of the Gospel narratives, described in the last paragraph, has certainly been in some cases intentional; and that, no doubt, without the smallest wish to deceive, but simply with the idea of supplementing the one narrative from its equally authentic companion. Sometimes the alterations are more extensive. The earliest Greek translation of the Old Testament contains several passages in the books of Esther and Daniel which are not found in the Hebrew. The long passages, Mark **16.** 9–20 and John **7.** 53—**8.** 11, which are absent from the oldest manuscripts of the New Testament, must have been either omitted in these or inserted in the others intentionally. If, as is more probably the case, they have been inserted in the later copies, this was no doubt done in order to supplement the Gospel from some other good source, and the narratives are almost certainly authentic, though they may not have been written by the Evangelist in whose Gospel they now appear. Indeed an Armenian translation of St. Mark has quite recently been discovered, in which the last twelve verses of St. Mark are ascribed to Aristion, who is otherwise known as one of the earliest of the Christian Fathers; and it is quite

possible that this tradition is correct, and that Aristion compiled this short summary to take the place of the original ending, which had been lost. There is, however, no reason at all to suppose that additions of this kind have been made in any except a very few cases. The evidence for our Bible text is too great and of too varied a description to allow us to suppose that passages have been interpolated without any sign of it being visible. The intentional alterations of scribes are, for the most part, verbal, not substantial, such as the modification of a phrase in one Evangelist to suit the narrative of another, or the combination of two reports of some utterance into one; and errors of this kind can generally be detected on a comparison of several different manuscripts, in some of which the alteration will not have been made.

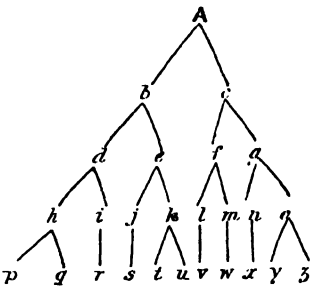
From this short account of the different classes of mistakes into which the copyists of manuscripts were most liable to fall, it will be clear that the later a manuscript is in date, the more likely it is to contain many errors. Each time a fresh copy is made, some new mistakes will probably be introduced, while only the most obvious blunders in the manuscript copied will be corrected. It may therefore be stated as a general rule that the earlier a manuscript is, the better is its text likely to be. The rule is only a general one, and is liable to exceptions; for instance, a manuscript written in the year 1200, if copied direct from a manuscript of the year 350, will probably be more correct than a manuscript written in the year 1000, which was copied from one written in 850 or 900. Each manuscript must therefore be searched, to see if it shows signs of containing an early form of the text; but the general rule that the earliest manuscripts are the best will still usually hold good.

Early manuscripts the most likely to be free from error.

The problem which lies before the textual critic, as the student of the language of the Bible is technically called, is now becoming clear. The original manuscripts of the Bible, written by the authors of the various books, have long ago disappeared. The critic's object, conse-

The method of recovering the true text.

quently, is to reconstruct the text of these original manuscripts by a comparison of the later copies which have come down to us; and the difficulty of his task depends on the age and number of these copies which he is able to compare. A diagram will make the position clear.



Here A represents the original author's copy of a book; *b* and *c* are copies made from it; *d*, *e*, *f*, *g* are copies made from *b* and *c*, and so on. Some errors are sure to be made in *b* and *c*, but not the same in each; *d* will correct a few of those in *b*, but will copy the rest and add more; *e* will both correct and copy different ones, and so will *f* and *g* and all the subsequent copies. So, as time goes on, the number of errors will go on increasing, and the extreme copies diverge from one another more and more. Often a copyist will use two manuscripts to copy from (for instance, we may suppose the writer of *p* to have copied from *n* as well as from *h*), and then the errors of two different lines of descent will become mixed. At some stage in the history of the text perhaps some scholar will compare several copies, correct what he thinks are mistakes in them, and cause copies to be made of his corrected text; and then all manuscripts which are taken, directly or indirectly, from these corrected copies will bear the stamp of this revision, and will differ from those of which the line of descent is different. Now suppose all the manuscripts denoted by the letters in the diagram to have disappeared (and it must be remembered that by far the greater number of copies of any ancient book have perished long ago),

except *p*, *l*, and *y*. It is evident that none of these copies will contain exactly the true text of A; each will have diverged from it, but each will have diverged differently. Some mistakes they may have in common, but in most they will differ; and wherever they differ it is the business of textual criticism to determine which manuscript has the true reading, and so to try to re-establish by comparison the original text of A.

Such, but infinitely complicated by the number of manuscripts of the Bible which have come down to us, and by the long lapse of years since the originals were written, is the task of the scholars who try to restore to us the exact words of the sacred books. The object of the chapters which follow is to show in more detail the nature of the problem in respect to the Old Testament and New Testament respectively; to state what is known, or plausibly conjectured, concerning the history of their text; and to describe the principal manuscripts of each, and the other means available for the detection of mistakes and the restoration of the truth. The story is not so technical but that all may understand it, and all can appreciate the interest and value of the minutest study of the true Word of God.

Textual errors do not endanger doctrine.

One word of warning, already referred to, must be emphasised in conclusion. No fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith rests on a disputed reading. Constant references to mistakes and divergencies of reading, such as the plan of this book necessitates, might give rise to the doubt whether the substance, as well as the language, of the Bible is not open to question. It cannot be too strongly asserted that in substance the text of the Bible is certain. Especially is this the case with the New Testament.* The number of manuscripts

* Dr. Hort, whose authority on the point is quite incontestable, estimates the proportion of words about which there is *some* doubt at about one-eighth of the whole; but by far the greater part of these consists merely of differences in order and other unimportant variations, and "the amount of what can in any sense be called substantial variation . . . . can hardly form more than a thousandth part of the entire text." (Introduction to *The New Testament in the original Greek*, p. 2).

of the New Testament, of early translations from it, and of quotations from it in the oldest writers of the Church is so large, that it is practically certain that the true reading of every doubtful passage is preserved in some one or other of these ancient authorities. This can be said of no other ancient book in the world. Scholars are satisfied that they possess substantially the true text of the principal Greek and Roman writers whose works have come down to us, of Sophocles, of Thucydides, of Cicero, of Virgil, yet our knowledge of their writings depends on a mere handful of manuscripts, whereas the manuscripts of the New Testament are counted by hundreds, and even thousands. In the case of the Old Testament we are not quite in such a good position, as will be shown presently. In some passages it seems certain that the true reading has not been preserved by any ancient authority, and we are driven to conjecture in order to supply it. But such passages are an infinitesimal portion of the whole and may be disregarded. The Christian can take the whole Bible in his hand and say without fear or hesitation that he holds in it the true Word of God, faithfully handed down from generation to generation throughout the centuries.

CHAPTER II.

THE AUTHORITIES FOR THE BIBLE TEXT.

WE have seen that the Bible has been preserved to us, for many centuries previous to the invention of printing, by means of copies written by hand; and we have seen that in such copies mistakes are certain to arise and multiply. Now if a scholar at this present day were to take in hand the task of correcting these mistakes and recovering the true text, how would he set about it? Of course, as a matter of fact, he would find that very much of the work had already been done for him by earlier scholars; but we will suppose that nothing has been done, and see how he must go to work. That will show us the way in which scholars for the last four centuries have laboured on the text of the Bible.

In the first place he will examine as many as possible of the manuscripts of the Bible in the original languages in which it was written, Hebrew and Greek. These are scattered about in all the great libraries of the world, and must be visited and carefully studied. He will note which are the oldest, he will use his judgment to determine which are the best. Where all the manuscripts are agreed, he has nothing more to do, and those parts of the text are put down at once as certain. Where there are differences between the manuscripts, he will have to decide which of the various readings is the more probable. In some cases the reading of a manuscript will be obviously wrong; in many it will be easy to see that the one reading is a perversion of the other,—that the copyist has inadvertently dropped out a word or misread the word in the original from which he was copying, or has fallen into some other of the classes of error

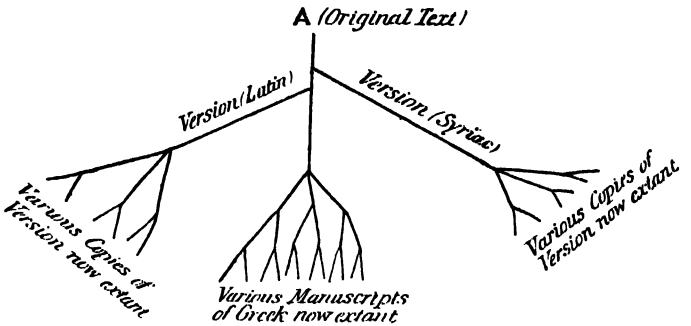
1. Manuscripts.

described in the preceding chapter. In this way a correct representation of the greater part of the text will be obtained. Still there will remain a considerable number of passages about which the manuscripts differ, but in which it is not possible to decide at once what reading is right. Then it will be necessary to discriminate between the manuscripts. Our scholar's earlier investigations will have shown him which manuscripts are generally trustworthy, and which are most full of mistakes. As a general rule he will prefer the reading which is supported by the oldest manuscripts, as being nearest to the time of the original work; and if all the oldest manuscripts are on one side, and all the later on the other, the reading of the former will certainly be adopted. Where the older manuscripts are divided, his task becomes harder; he has to consider whether either of the alternative readings is likely to have been derived from the other, or if one of them is more likely than the other to have been invented at a later time. For instance, there is a tendency among scribes, when they do not understand a phrase, to substitute one more easy of comprehension; and hence it is a rule of criticism that a harder reading is generally to be preferred to an easier one, since the latter is more likely to have been substituted for the former than *vice versâ*. This rule must be applied with discretion, however, for the *unintentional* alterations of scribes will often produce a harder reading than the true one. Another principle is to try to classify the manuscripts in groups, those which habitually agree with one another being probably descended from some common ancestor; and a reading which is supported by two or more groups is more likely to be right than one which is supported by one only, even though that one may be a very large and numerous group. By the time our scholar has proceeded so far in his work, he will have formed a pretty confident opinion as to which manuscripts are the most worthy of trust; and then, when other methods fail to determine the true reading in a doubtful passage, he will be inclined to accept that reading which is supported by the manuscripts which he believes to be the best.

So far our scholar has confined himself entirely to the manuscripts of the sacred books in their original languages; but he will be making a great mistake if he stops there. He will remember that the Bible has been translated into many different languages, and he will bethink himself that a translation which has been made with any care and accuracy will generally show what was the Hebrew or Greek text which the translator had before him. Now several of the translations of the Bible,—such as the Samaritan and Greek versions of the Old Testament, the Syriac and Latin versions of the New—were certainly made at a date much earlier than that at which any of the manuscripts which we now possess of the original Hebrew and Greek were written. The oldest manuscript of the Greek New Testament now in existence was written about A.D. 350; but the earliest Syriac and Latin translations of the New Testament were made somewhere about A.D. 150. Hence, if we can gather from the existing copies of these translations what were the Greek words which their authors were translating, we know what was read in that particular passage in a Greek manuscript current about the year 150, when these translations were made; and this brings us back very near to the time when the originals of the New Testament books were themselves written. It is true that we have not the original copies of the Latin and Syriac versions, any more than we have the originals of the Greek itself, and that a similar process of comparison of copies to that described in the last paragraph must be gone through if we are to discover the original readings of the translations; but in many cases this can be done with certainty, and then we have a very early testimony indeed to the original Greek text. We talk sometimes of the "stream of tradition" by which the text of the Bible has been borne down to us from the fountain-head in the original manuscripts; well, the service of the Versions (as the translations of the Bible into other languages are technically called) is that they tap the stream near the fountain-head. They are unaffected by any corruptions that may have crept into the Greek text *after* the translations were

2. Versions.

made; they may have corruptions of their own, but they will not generally be the same as the corruptions in the Greek text, and they will serve mutually to correct one another. To alter the comparison, we get several groups of evidence converging on the same spot, as the accompanying diagram shows.



Our scholar has yet one other source to which he may turn for evidence as to the original text, namely, the quotations of isolated passages in the writings of the early Fathers. Many of the first Christian writers whose works have been preserved — for instance, Irenæus, Origen, Jerome, Athanasius — must have used manuscripts of the Bible older than any that we now have, and many of them quoted largely from the Bible in their writings. If, therefore, we know in what form they quoted any particular passage, we may argue that they found that form of it in the manuscript which they used. But this argument must be used with much caution. In the first place, it is evident that they often quoted from memory. Copies of the Bible were not so common in those days as they are now, and, in the absence of the modern division into chapters and verses, it was less easy to turn up a passage when required to verify a quotation. A curious proof of the liability to error in quotations from memory is furnished by a modern divine. It is said that Jeremy Taylor quotes the well-known text, "Except a man be born again he

3. The early Fathers.

cannot see the kingdom of God," no less than nine times, yet only twice in the same form, and in no single instance correctly. We must not assume that the ancient Fathers were infallible in their memories. Further, it is often difficult to be certain that we have the quotations as the Fathers themselves wrote them. If a scribe who was copying a manuscript of one of the early Fathers found a text quoted in a form unfamiliar to him, he would be not unlikely to alter it into the form then current. For these reasons it is dangerous to base an argument for a reading on the Fathers alone, except when the context in which it is found shows conclusively in what form the writer quoted it; but to confirm other evidence they may often be of very great value. They will be of still more value when their own texts have themselves been critically edited, which is at present far from being the case with all of them.

Manuscripts, Versions, Fathers,—such are the resources of our scholar in his task of recovering the true text of the Bible. Of the third of these we cannot speak more at length within the compass of this book; but in the history of the two first is the history of the Bible text. Our object will be to describe, first the principal manuscripts, and then the chief translations, of each Testament in turn, and so to carry down the history of the Bible from the earliest times to our own days,—to show how our own English Bible is the lineal descendant of the volumes once written by Prophet, Apostle, and Evangelist.

CHAPTER III.

THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS OF THE BIBLE.

IN the year 1887 a discovery was made which has revolutionised our knowledge of the conditions of writing in Palestine in the earliest times. In the course of that year an Egyptian woman found, amid the ruins of an ancient city about half-way between Thebes and Memphis, now known as Tell el-Amarna, a collection of clay tablets inscribed with strange symbols. When these were brought to the knowledge of Oriental scholars, their excitement was immense; for here, in the middle of Egypt, were documents written, not, after the manner of the country, in the Egyptian language and upon papyrus, but engraved upon clay, and in the unmistakable *cuneiform*, or wedge-shaped, writing characteristic of Assyria and Babylonia. Nor did their surprise lessen as they deciphered the writing and discovered its meaning. For these tablets proved to be the official correspondence of Egyptian governors or vassal-princes, stationed in Palestine and in other places beyond the borders of Egypt, with their master, King Amenophis IV. of Egypt, and his ministers at home. Their date is about the year 1380 B.C., and, according to some scholars, the time is that at which Joshua and the Hebrews were overrunning southern Palestine, while the Hittites were conquering Damascus, and the Ammonites were invading Phœnicia. Jerusalem and Lachish, Jabin, king of Hazor, and Japhia, king of Gezer, are mentioned by name. It is a record contemporary with the events described in the Book of Joshua, and in part relating to those events themselves.*

The Tell el-Amarna Tablets.

* If this chronology be accepted, the ordinary date assigned to the Exodus, in the reign of Merenptah, successor of Rameses II., will have to be abandoned; for Amenophis IV. ruled about a century before Rameses II. The question

The direct historical importance of the discovery is very great; but it is hardly less important for the light it throws on the literary conditions of the East at the time when they were written. It proves that writing was familiarly known and freely used in Palestine fourteen centuries before Christ. It shows that the Babylonian language was the recognised medium of official intercourse in the East at that date, much as French has been in modern Europe. It shows that historical records were preserved, from which later writers may have drawn their materials. It tells us something of the form in which were written, if not the Bible books themselves, at least some of the documents from which they were composed.

The antiquity of writing.

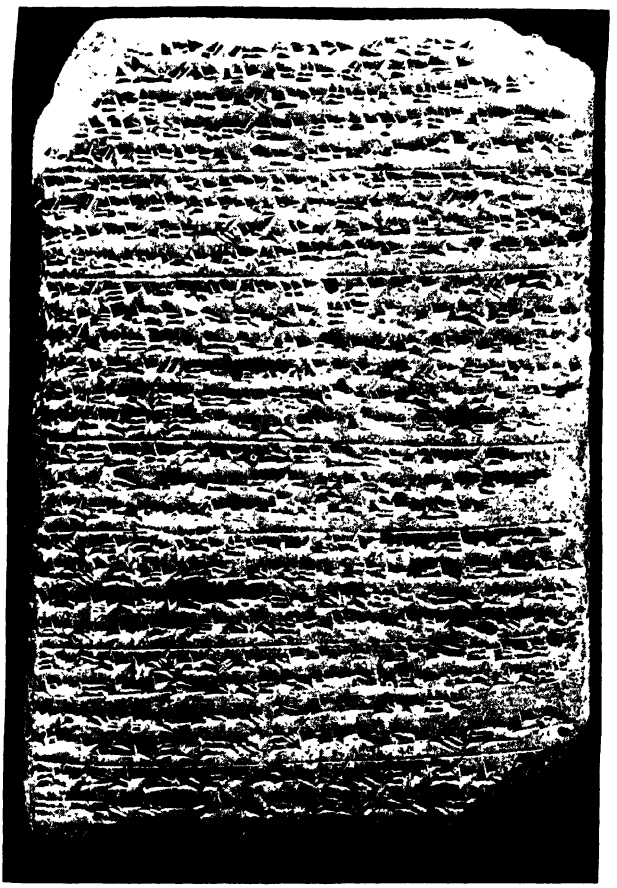
It is no part of the plan of this book to discuss the date at which the several books of the Old Testament were written. That is a subject requiring a treatise to itself. All that concerns us at present is to know in what outward form and shape books were written in Palestine during the periods in which the Old Testament books may have been composed. Palestine lay between the kingdoms of Egypt and Babylonia, and its literary development was affected from both sides. Both in Egypt and in Babylonia writing was largely practised from the earliest times of which we have knowledge, but in different materials and in very different languages. The writers of Palestine, as will be shown, borrowed something from each, but they also struck out new developments of their own.

In Babylonia the material on which books were written was clay. The clay was moulded into tablets or cylinders of various shapes, and the writing was inscribed on them with a sharp-pointed instrument while the clay was still moist. Whole libraries of these tablets, of all kinds of sizes, have been discovered, and there may now be

Writing in Babylonia.

whether the Abiri, mentioned in the tablets as overrunning southern Palestine, are the same as the Hebrews, must be left for specialists to decide; and their opinions are at present divided. According to the usual chronology, the Tell el-Amarna tablets belong to the century before the Exodus.

PLATE I.



CLAY TABLET FROM TELL EL AMARNA—*Circ.* B.C. 1380.

(*Original size*, $5\frac{3}{8}$ *in.* × $3\frac{3}{4}$ *in.*)

seen in the British Museum the tablets on which are recorded the ancient Babylonian story of the Flood, so curiously resembling the narrative in Genesis, and Sennacherib's account of his campaigns against Hezekiah of Judah. The discovery of the Tell el-Amarna tablets (one of which is reproduced in Plate I. as an example of this form of book) proves that writing of this kind was freely practised in Palestine at the time of the invasion of Joshua, or even earlier. We do not indeed know that the Hebrews themselves ever adopted this form of writing on clay for their books; but there can be very little doubt that Hebrew writers made use of records of this kind, which they found stored up in the cities of Palestine.* Even if we accept the very latest date which the most advanced criticism has assigned to the composition of the Pentateuch *in its present form*, the compilers of it must have used records of a far earlier date, and among them, as we now see, may have been clay tablets contemporaneous with the events narrated in the history.

Writing in Egypt.

In Egypt, on the other hand, books were made of papyrus, a material resembling paper in general characteristics, but manufactured out of the fibres of the papyrus-plant, which then grew plentifully in the waters of the Nile. The fibres of the stalk of this plant were separated, and laid upon one another in two layers, so that the fibres in the upper layer ran horizontally, and those of the lower layer perpendicularly. The two layers were then moistened with Nile water and fastened together by glue and pressure into a single sheet. These sheets were then attached to one another, side by side, so as to form long rolls of papyrus; the surface of the roll was rubbed and polished until it was smooth enough to be written on with ease, and on these rolls the writing was inscribed with reed pens and vegetable ink. One of these rolls, still preserved, reaches the enormous length of 144 feet, but usually they are much shorter, twenty feet being a fair average length for a Greek papyrus

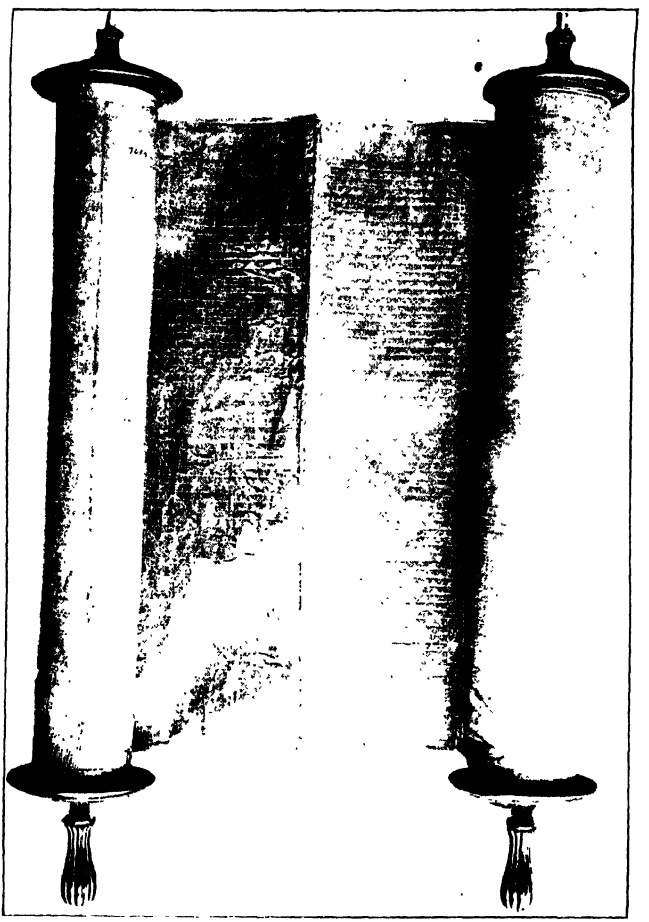
* The name of Kiriath-sepher, mentioned in Josh. 15. 15, means "the city of books," and is so translated in the Greek version of the passage. The name evidently implies that books were stored there.

manuscript. Brittle as the papyrus becomes with age, the dry climate of Egypt has preserved hundreds and thousands of such manuscripts, the earliest now extant having been written about the year 2500 B.C. These were the books with which the Israelites became familiar during their residence in Egypt, and it was from these that the form of their own books in later times was derived. The roll form, and to a great extent the papyrus material, were also adopted from Egypt by the Greeks; and all the great works of classical literature were written in this manner. It was not until after the beginning of the Christian era that the *page* form, as in a modern book, came into existence. The sands of Egypt still from time to time give us back books written fifteen, twenty, or even thirty centuries ago; but only the later ones are in book form, the earlier are invariably rolls.

Writing in Palestine.

There is nothing in the historical books of the Bible which expressly tells us the shape and form of books in the earlier part of that period, but in the times of the prophets rolls were certainly used. Tablets were no doubt employed for short inscriptions, such as Jeremiah was thinking of when he said "The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond; it is graven upon the table of their heart" (Jer. **17.** 1), and it was upon a "great tablet" (Isa. **8.** 1, R.V.) that Isaiah wrote the words "For Maher-shalal-hash-baz"; but it was a "roll of a book" which Jeremiah took in order that Baruch might write therein with ink the words which the Lord had spoken against Israel, and which Jehoiakim cut with a penknife and burnt in the fire that was in the brasier before him (Jer. **36.** 2, 18, 23).* It was a "roll of a book" which was spread before Ezekiel, written within and without with lamentations and mourning and woe (Ezek. **2.** 9, 10). The material of

* There can be little doubt that the alternative rendering, "columns," instead of "leaves," given in the R.V. and the Variorum Bible, is right. The knife which the king used was, as the note in the Variorum Bible explains, a scribe's knife, used for erasing words wrongly written; and this makes it probable that the material of the roll was skin, not papyrus, on which a knife could hardly be used, on account of its thinness of texture.



HEBREW SYNAGOGUE-ROLL—14TH CENT.

(Original height, excluding rollers, 27 in.)

which these rolls were made was not papyrus, however, but the prepared skins of sheep and goats. Skins were used in the ancient world as a material for books wherever papyrus was not obtainable; when specially prepared for this purpose they form the material known as parchment or vellum. It is possible, indeed probable, that papyrus was imported into Palestine, as it was into Greece, and was used concurrently with skins; but the sacred books seem always to have been written on the more durable material.

Form of the original manuscripts of the Bible.

If, then, we ask the question, Of what form were the original manuscripts of the Bible? the answer will be that the documents from which the historical books of the Old Testament were composed were very possibly in some cases inscribed on clay tablets, but that the books themselves were written on rolls, possibly of papyrus, but probably of skins, more or less carefully prepared. The later copies were certainly on skins. Whether on papyrus or on skins, the writing was arranged in columns of moderate width, which take the place of pages in a modern book. The skin or papyrus was either wound up in a single roll, the end being inside, or else wound round two sticks, one at each end, in which case it was unrolled from the one and rolled up round the other as the reader progressed. The latter form was stereotyped, at some date early in the Christian period, as essential for copies of the Law which were to be used in the service of the synagogue; but copies for private reading were written in book form when that shape came into general use. Specimens of both kinds are still in existence, and can be seen in many museums and public libraries. Plate II., which is taken from a Hebrew Pentateuch roll in the British Museum, written on goat-skin in the fourteenth century, will serve to show the general appearance of this kind of book.

With regard to the original manuscripts of the books of the New Testament, it is highly probable that many of them were written on papyrus. Papyrus was still the common material of the Greek literary world, and for books written by poor authors,

or for epistolary correspondence, it would almost certainly be used rather than vellum. In Egypt, where some of the earliest copies of the New Testament were made, papyrus would have been the material employed, even for the most important and handsome books. It has been remarked that the oldest vellum manuscripts which we now possess, being written with many narrow columns on a page, resemble in general appearance an open roll of papyrus (see Plates VIII. and X., and the accompanying descriptions of them); and from such a manuscript they may very likely have been copied. When, however, the Christian Scriptures came to be regarded as on the same level of importance as the Old Testament Scriptures (which was not at first the case), copies intended for church or library use would be written on vellum; but for private copies papyrus continued to be employed until the extinction of Greek writing in Egypt by the Arab conquest in the seventh century. For copies of the translation into the native Coptic tongue it continued to be used much later.

The visitor to the British Museum may still see manuscripts which reproduce in external form the books of the Bible as they were first written. In one of the exhibition-cases he will see the great synagogue rolls of the Hebrew Scriptures, written on large and heavy skins, and wound round great wooden rollers, a weight too heavy to lift with comfort in the hand. Elsewhere he may see the copies for common use, written on ordinary vellum in the familiar book form. Among the earliest Greek manuscripts he will find delicate papyrus rolls, now spread out under glass for their protection, with their narrow columns of small writing, which may well represent that in which the Gospels and Epistles were first written down; and finally he will see one of the earliest extant copies of the Greek Bible written in handsome letters upon fine vellum, the monument of a time when the Church was becoming prosperous under a Christian Empire, and now one of the most valuable witnesses to the original text of the Bible that has been spared to us by the ravages of time.

CHAPTER IV.

THE HEBREW TEXT.

THE original manuscripts of the Hebrew books perished long ago, and the scholar who would find out, as near as may be, the exact words which they contained, must, as we have seen, begin by examining and comparing the copies, more or less distantly derived from these originals, which have come down to us. What will he see then, when he opens one of the old Hebrew volumes in one of our great libraries, and what will it tell him concerning the text which it contains?

In the first place he will see the page covered with characters which to most people are quite unfamiliar. It is writing such as that represented in Plate IV. The letters are generally of a square shape, and underneath them are little dots and strokes. The writing is usually arranged in columns, two or more going to the page if the manuscript is in book form; and the margins are filled with other writing of similar appearance. What, now, is the meaning of this? What is the history of the Hebrew writing?

The Hebrew characters.

The characters in which modern Hebrew manuscripts are written are not the same as those which were in use when the books of the Hebrew Scriptures were composed. In the time of the Jewish kingdom, Hebrew was written in characters which were common to the Hebrews themselves, the Samaritans, and the Phœnicians; and these characters, having been preserved by the Samaritans when the Jews abandoned them, are known to us in the manuscripts of the Samaritan Pentateuch (*see* Plate V.). The oldest form in which they are now extant is on the Moabite Stone, the famous monument on which Mesha, king of Moab, recorded his war with

Ahab of Judah about the year 890 B.C.* Plate III. contains a representation of this most valuable relic of antiquity as it stands to-day in the Louvre Museum at Paris. Two centuries later they appear in the Siloam Inscription (about B.C. 700), carved on the conduit leading to the Pool of Siloam in Jerusalem. After this date they appear on coins and later inscriptions, and, as just stated, in MSS. of the Samaritan Pentateuch. The Jewish story of the origin of the "square" writing, as the later Hebrew characters are called, is that Ezra brought it back with him from Babylon, and that it was forthwith adopted for general use. This is only an instance of the common habit of tradition, to assign to a single man and a single moment a change which must have been spread over several generations. The contemporary coins and inscriptions enable us to trace the process, though imperfectly. In the first place, the old stiff Hebrew characters were gradually modified, after the Exile, so as to make them more *cursive*, more easily written, that is, in running hand; a change partly due to the example of the contemporary Aramaic writing in Syria and Arabia. Then, by way of reaction from this, and with the intention, no doubt, of making the writing of the sacred books more beautiful, the square characters were developed, and were thenceforth adopted as the essential form for the manuscripts of the Scriptures. A similar phenomenon is seen in the case of the Greek Bible, where we find the handsomest uncial writing (*i.e.* in detached capital letters) springing up, in the fourth century, for use in great copies of the Bible in the midst of a very debased and unornamental style of cursive characters, of which many examples have come down to us on papyrus. In the case of the Hebrew writing, the change must have taken place before the time of our Lord, for the proverbial use of "jot" (=*yod*, the tenth letter in

* The Moabite stone was found by a German Missionary, Herr Klein, in 1868, in the possession of some Arabs. It was then perfect, but before it was acquired by M. Clermont-Ganneau for the Louvre Museum, the Arabs had broken it in pieces, and many of the fragments have never been recovered. It can, however, be restored by the help of a paper impression taken before it was broken.

THE MOABITE STONE—*Circ.* B.C. 890.

(*Original height, about* 4 *feet.*)

the Hebrew alphabet) to indicate a very small object (as in Matt. 5. 18) would only be possible after the adoption of the square characters, since in the earlier alphabet *yod* was by no means the smallest letter.

The Hebrew language.

The *language* in which the manuscripts we are examining are written is, of course, Hebrew, a branch of the great Semitic family of languages, which includes the Babylonian, Assyrian, Chaldæan, Phœnician, and other tongues spoken in Western Asia. It was the spoken language of Palestine down to the time of the Exile; and even after that date, when Aramaic was adopted for ordinary use, Hebrew remained the literary language of the educated Jews. It is written from right to left, not from left to right as in our modern European books. But the special peculiarity of it is that in its original state *only the consonants were written*, the vowels being left to be filled up by the reader's mind. In the Hebrew manuscript which we have supposed ourselves to be examining, the great letters which form the lines of the writing are all consonants. The vowels are indicated by the dots or points beneath these letters, and these vowel-points are only a comparatively late invention, as will be shown presently. This ancient practice of omitting the vowels is one fertile cause of varieties in the text, for it will readily be understood that doubts might often occur as to the proper vowels to be supplied to a group of consonants. To take a parallel from English, the consonants M R might be read either as m(a)r(e) or m(i)r(e) or m(o)r(e), and it is quite possible that in some cases the sense of the passage would not show for certain which way was right. A glance at the notes of the Variorum Bible will show that this danger is far from being imaginary; *e.g.*, in Deut. 28. 22, either "sword" or "drought" may be read, according to the vowels supplied; in Judg. 15. 16, "heaps upon heaps" or "I have flayed them"; in Isa. 27. 7, "them that are slain by him" or "those that slew him"; and see Gen. 49. 5 and Judg. 7. 13 for more extensive variations due to the same cause. Besides the vowel points, accents are also added, to indicate

the rhythmical pronunciation of each word; but these too are a comparatively late invention.

The main division of the Hebrew Old Testament is a classification of the books into three groups, known as the Law, the Prophets, and the Hagiographa, or sacred writings. The Law included the five books of Moses, which we now call the Pentateuch. The Prophets comprised the historical books of Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, which were known as "the Former Prophets"; and Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve Minor Prophets, known as "the Later Prophets." The Hagiographa consisted of the Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, 1 and 2 Chronicles. The origin of this classification and of the inclusion of several historical and prophetic books among the Hagiographa, is unknown; but it almost certainly implies that those books were written later, and were among the last to be recognised as inspired. Divisions of the books themselves into reading-lessons, paragraphs, and verses (very nearly corresponding to our modern verses) were made in very early times; but they are not of much importance to us here. They are indicated in the manuscripts by blank spaces of greater or lesser size.

Arrangement of the Books of the Old Testament.

So much for the external characteristics of the Hebrew manuscripts. What, now, is the history of the text of the books which these manuscripts enshrine?

The beginning of this history is necessarily obscure, because we do not know the dates at which the various books of the Old Testament were originally written. One school of critics tells us that the Pentateuch was written by Moses, substantially in the form in which we now have it, before the year 1400 B.C. The newer school is positive that, although the substance of the books is old, yet they were not finally put into their present shape until after the Exile, about B.C. 400, and that even the principal documents out of which they are composed were not written before B.C. 700. With these

Formation of the Hebrew Canon.

controversies respecting the dates of the various books we have nothing here to do. Even if we take the latest date, it is still far earlier than the earliest period at which we have any evidence as to the state of the text. The most we can do is to show, with some approach to definiteness, at what periods the various books were recognised as being inspired Scripture; and it is from that point that the care for their text may be supposed to have commenced.

It seems tolerably certain that the three divisions of the books of the Old Testament, mentioned just above, represent three stages in the process known as the formation of the Hebrew Canon of Scripture; that is, of the authorised list of books recognised as sacred and inspired. Whenever the books of the Pentateuch were written, it is at least certain that they, constituting the Law, were the first group of writings to be thus accepted. In the days of the kings it was possible for the "book of the Law" (perhaps meaning our Deuteronomy) to be lost and forgotten, and to be recovered as it were by accident (2 Kings **22.** 8); but the Captivity taught the Jews to be careful of their Scriptures, and the Canon of the Law may be taken as fixed about the time of the return from exile, possibly under the guidance of Ezra, to whom Jewish tradition assigned a special prominence in the work of collecting the sacred books.* From this time forth the five books of Moses were regarded as a thing apart. They were sacred; and by degrees the greatest care came to be devoted to copying them with perfect accuracy and studying minutely every word that they contained. There is reason to suppose that this extreme accuracy was not at first required or obtained; but in the time of our Lord it is clear that the text of the Law was held in the utmost veneration, and the

Its stages: 1. The Law.

* The Jews themselves attributed the formation of the whole Canon to Ezra, with the help of elders composing a body known as "The Great Synagogue"; but it has been shown that this body is an imaginary one, and it is now generally recognised that the formation of the Canon must have been gradual, following the stages here indicated.

class of the "scribes," whose special duty was to copy the sacred books, was fully established and held in considerable esteem.

The second group of books to obtain recognition as inspired, and to be adopted into the Canon, was that of the Prophets.

2. The Prophets. This must have taken place between the date of Malachi, the last of the Prophets, about 430 B.C., and the reference to "the twelve prophets" in Ecclesiasticus 49. 10, written about 180 B.C.; but the date cannot be fixed precisely. The remaining group, known as the Hagiographa, is of a miscellaneous character, and for some time the books composing it evidently circulated on much the same footing as other books which were eventually excluded from the Canon, such as Judith, Tobit, and Ecclesiasticus. When the final decision was reached, we cannot tell. On the one hand, the books which now form our Old Testament appear already to be distinguished from those which we class as Apocrypha before the time of our Lord;* on the other, a certain amount of discussion as to the inspiration of some of the books (such as the Song of Solomon) continued at least until the end of the first century after Christ.

3. The Hagiographa.

It is no part of our purpose here to discuss the question of the formation of the Hebrew Canon in all its details. The point of importance for us is that, taking the latest dates assigned by good authorities, the Law was fully recognised as inspired Scripture by about B.C. 450, the Prophets (including the earlier historical books) about B.C. 300, and the Hagiographa about B.C. 100. From these dates, then, at the latest, the special care for the preservation of the text of these books must be supposed to begin. It would seem, however, that this care was not at first so minute and painstaking as it afterwards became. During the early years of the

* It is noticeable that while there are many quotations in the New Testament from each group of books in the Old, there is not a single direct quotation from the Apocrypha. A similar distinction is found in Josephus and Philo. It was probably only in Alexandria that the apocryphal books had equal currency with the canonical.

return from the Captivity, and throughout the wars of the Maccabees, there may well have been little time to spare for the labours of scholarship, and the zeal of the Jews for their Scriptures may well have related rather to their general contents than to the exact details of their language. During the same period, too, it may be remembered, came the change from the old to the square Hebrew writing, which would naturally lead to errors in copying. With the return of peace, however, came greater attention to study, and in the famous schools of Hillel and Shammai, about the beginning of the Christian era, we may find the origin of the long line of Rabbis and scribes to whom is due the fixing of the Hebrew text in the form in which we now have it. The fall of Jerusalem (A.D. 70) and the destruction of Judæa as a nation only intensified the zeal of the Jews for their Bible; and the first centuries of the Christian era witnessed a great outburst of activity in the multiplication, the transmission, and the recording of traditional learning with respect to the Scriptures. The two great centres of Jewish scholarship were Palestine and Babylonia, the former having its headquarters successively at Jamnia and Tiberias, the latter in Babylon, where a Jewish colony had remained since the days of the Exile. It is from the records of these schools, each of which preserved to some extent distinct traditions of text and interpretation, that we derive our earliest direct knowledge of the Hebrew text as it existed among the Jews themselves. Indirect evidence for an earlier time may be derived, as we shall see, from the Samaritan and Greek translations which have come down to us from the pre-Christian period; but in the present chapter we are concerned with the Hebrew text alone.

History of the Hebrew text: 1. The Targums.

The earliest direct evidence which we possess as to the text current among the Jews themselves is that provided by the TARGUMS, or paraphrases of the Scriptures into the Aramaic dialect. After their return from the Captivity the Jews gradually adopted this language (a tongue closely related to Hebrew, being a kindred branch of the same Semitic family of speech, sometimes called, as in the

margins of our Bibles, Chaldee); and it became thenceforth the current language of ordinary life. Thus, it may be remarked by the way, it was the language commonly spoken in Judæa at the time of our Lord's life on earth. Meanwhile the ancient Hebrew remained as the language in which the sacred books were written, being studied and preserved by the educated and literary class among the Jews, but becoming continually less familiar to the common folk. Hence arose the necessity of paraphrasing the Scriptures into the current Aramaic tongue. At first these paraphrases were simply given by word of mouth, as in the scene described in Neh. 8. 1–8, when Ezra read the book of the Law before the people, "and Jeshua and Bani and Sherebiah . . . . the Levites, caused the people to understand the Law"; but subsequently the method of interpretation was reduced to a system, and written down, and this practically became the popular Bible of the Jewish nation. These written paraphrases are known as "Targums," the word itself probably meaning "paraphrase." In the form in which we now have them, they probably represent accumulated layers of tradition, going back to a time before the foundation of Christianity, of which they show no knowledge; but they did not reach their present shape until a much later date. The Palestinian and Babylonian schools possessed distinct Targums of their own. The best of those that have come down to us is the Babylonian Targum on the Pentateuch, which is ascribed to a writer named Onkelos (and hence is cited in the Variorum Bible as *Onk.*). The date of this is rather uncertain. Onkelos is sometimes identified with Aquila, the author of a very literal translation of the Old Testament into Greek (*see* p. 52), who lived in the second century after Christ; but the best opinion seems to be that this Targum was produced in its present shape about the third century, on the basis of an earlier paraphrase. It is a very simple and literal translation of the Pentateuch, and is for that reason the more useful as evidence for the Hebrew text from which it was taken. Of the other Targums (cited collectively as *Targ.* in the Variorum Bible) much the best is that which bears the name of Jonathan ben Uzziel, on

the Prophets (using that term in its technical sense, *see* p. 26). It was written about the fourth century, and is somewhat more free than that of Onkelos. There is also a Palestinian Targum on the Law which is ascribed, but falsely, to this same Jonathan (hence cited as *Ps.-Jon.*); but this, which was probably not written till the seventh century, and all the other Targums are of small critical value compared with those of Onkelos and Jonathan. It is not always possible to use the Targums as evidence for the Hebrew text of the sacred books on which they are based, since they at times paraphrase freely, inserting explanations, moderating strong expressions, and otherwise introducing alterations. It is, however, clear that the Hebrew text from which they were made (that is, the text current in Judæa about the end of the first century B.C., to which their tradition reaches back) was not identical with that which has come down to us. The student of the Variorum Bible will find many passages in which they are quoted as differing from the received text, sometimes for the better; *e.g.* Deut. **33.** 26; Josh. **9.** 4; Judg. **5.** 30; 2 Sam. **18.** 13; 1 Kin. **13.** 12; Ps. **100.** 3; Isa. **49.** 5; *etc.* They have this advantage at least over most of the other versions, that whenever we can be sure of the Hebrew text which they represent, we know that it was a text accepted by the leaders of criticism among the Jews themselves.

2. The Talmud.

The period of the Targums is overlapped by that of the TALMUD. While the Targumists paraphrased the Hebrew text, the scholars known as the Talmudists explained and commented on it. The fact that in ancient Hebrew writing the vowels were entirely omitted led, as explained above, to the occurrence of many words and phrases in which a different sense could be obtained according as different vowels were supplied. Hence plenty of scope was left to the ingenuity of the Talmudists, who gradually accumulated a mass of tradition concerning the proper reading and explanation of the text. It does not appear that they themselves did much towards fixing the actual text which appears in the manuscripts. On the

contrary, even in the earliest among the writings of the Talmud, the quotations from Scripture generally agree with our received text; the existence of a settled text of the Scriptures seems to be implied, and the most minute rules are laid down to ensure the faithful copying of this text by the scribes. The Talmudist scholars did not by any means confine their attention to textual matters; on the contrary, the Talmud contains the essence of many generations of traditional commentary of all kinds on the sacred books, concentrated and approved by the judgment of the leading scholars of the period.

The Talmudist period extends from about A.D. 270 to 500, and is succeeded by that of the MASSORETES. This is the final and decisive stage in the history of the Hebrew text. From about the beginning of the seventh century the scholars whom we now call the Massoretes set themselves to sift out from the mass of the Talmud the traditions which bore on the actual text of the sacred books. Hitherto, although the Talmudists had accumulated a great quantity of tradition concerning the correct vowel-punctuation of the Hebrew, the vowel-points had not been introduced into the manuscripts in use, and the textual traditions of the Talmudists were not separated from the exegetical or explanatory. The work of the Massoretes was to edit the Old Testament books in accordance with the traditions preserved in the Talmud. The head-quarters of the school of Jewish doctors which undertook this labour was at Tiberias; but it was not the work of a single generation or of a single place. The text was provided with points to indicate the vowels; and this in itself went far towards fixing the interpretation of doubtful passages. In addition, the body of traditional remarks handed down from previous generations was recorded, so far as it related to strictly textual matters, with additions by the Massoretes themselves, and the whole of this textual commentary received the name of the "Massorah," which means "tradition." So far were the Massoretes from introducing alterations into the actual text of the sacred books, that, even where the traditional text was plainly

3. The Massoretes.

wrong, they confined themselves to stating in the margin the reading which they held to be superior. Such variations were known by the names of Kri ("read") and Kthib ("written"), the latter being the reading of the text, the former that of the margin, which was to be substituted for the other when the passage was read. The Massorah is generally found in manuscripts in the margins of the pages, surrounding the text; and according as it is given in a fuller or a more abbreviated form it is called the Greater or the Lesser Massorah. Sometimes both are found together. Thus in our illustration of a Hebrew MS. (Plate IV.) the Lesser Massorah is written in the margins to the left of the columns, and the Greater Massorah at the top and bottom of the page.

Besides recording varieties of reading, tradition, or conjecture, the Massoretes undertook a number of calculations which do not enter into the ordinary sphere of textual criticism. They numbered the verses, words, and letters of every book. They calculated the middle word and the middle letter of each. They enumerated verses which contained all the letters of the alphabet, or a certain number of them; and so on. These trivialities, as we may rightly consider them, had yet the effect of securing minute attention to the precise transmission of the text; and they are but an excessive manifestation of a respect for the sacred Scriptures which in itself deserves nothing but praise. The Massoretes were indeed anxious that not one jot nor tittle—not one smallest letter nor one tiny part of a letter—of the Law should pass away or be lost.

The importance of the Massoretic edition to us lies in the fact that it is still the standard text of the Hebrew Bible. *All the extant manuscripts of the Hebrew Old Testament contain substantially a Massoretic text.*

The extant Hebrew Text entirely Massoretic.

When once that revision was completed, such precautions were taken to secure its preservation, to the exclusion of any other form of text, as to make it certain that the text has been handed down to us, not indeed without any errors or variations, but without essential corruption. Extraordinary care was taken to secure perfect accuracy in the transcription

of the sacred books. Especially was this the case with the *synagogue rolls*, or copies of the Pentateuch intended for use in the synagogues. These were written on skins, fastened together so as to form a roll, never in modern book form. Minute regulations are laid down in the Talmud for their preparation.

The copying of Hebrew Manuscripts.

"A synagogue roll must be written on the skins of clean animals, prepared for the particular use of the synagogue by a Jew. These must be fastened together with strings taken from clean animals. Every skin must contain a certain number of columns, equal throughout the entire codex.* The length of each column must not extend over less than forty-eight, or more than sixty lines; and the breadth must consist of thirty letters. The whole copy must be first lined; and if three words be written in it without a line, it is worthless. The ink should be black, neither red, green, nor any other colour, and be prepared according to a definite receipt. An *authentic* copy must be the exemplar, from which the transcriber ought not in the least to deviate. No word or letter, not even a *yod*, must be written from memory, the scribe not having looked at the codex before him. . . . . Between every consonant the space of a hair or thread must intervene; between every word the breadth of a narrow consonant; between every new *parshiah*, or section, the breadth of nine consonants; between every book, three lines. The fifth book of Moses must terminate exactly with a line; but the rest need not do so. Besides this, the copyist must sit in full Jewish dress, wash his whole body, not begin to write the name of God with a pen newly dipped in ink, and should a king address him while writing that name he must take no notice of him. . . . . The rolls in which these regulations are not observed are condemned to be buried in the ground or burned; or they are banished to the schools, to be used as reading-books."†

* "Codex" is a Greek word, meaning properly a manuscript arranged in book form. It is, however, often used simply as equivalent to "manuscript" generally.

† Davidson, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, 1856, p. 89.

Private or common copies were not subject to such precise regulations. They are written in book form, sometimes on vellum, sometimes on paper. Inks of various colours are used, and the size of the columns is not necessarily uniform. The Hebrew text is often accompanied by an Aramaic paraphrase, arranged either in a parallel column or between the lines of the Hebrew. In the upper and lower margins (generally speaking) the Great Massorah may be written; in the external side margins are notes, comments, corrections, and indications of the divisions of the text; between the columns is the Lesser Massorah. Vowel points and accents, which are forbidden in synagogue rolls, are generally inserted in private copies; but they were always written separately, after the consonant-text had been finished.

It is under conditions such as these that the Massoretic text has been handed down, from manuscript to manuscript, until the invention of printing. Now what of the actual manuscripts which are still in existence, stored away among the treasures of our great libraries?

Extant Hebrew MSS. late,

It is generally rather a shock when one first learns that the oldest extant manuscripts of the Hebrew Old Testament are no earlier than the ninth century after Christ. That is to say, they are some five hundred years later than the earliest manuscripts of the Greek New Testament, and that although the books of the New Testament were written several centuries later than those of the Old. Over a thousand years separate our earliest Hebrew manuscripts from the date at which the latest of the books contained in them was originally written. It is a disquieting thought to those who know how much a text may be corrupted or mutilated in the course of transmission by manuscript over a long period of time; how easy it is for copyists to make mistakes, and how difficult it often is to correct them subsequently. In the case of the Old Testament, however, there are several considerations which greatly mitigate this disquietude, and which account for the disappearance of the earlier manuscripts.

In the first place, the extreme care with which manuscripts were written, as described above, is a guarantee against serious errors having crept into all the copies which have come down to us. The comparison of existing manuscripts does indeed show that, in spite of all precautions, variations have arisen; but as a rule they are not of much importance. Scholars are generally agreed that from a comparison of manuscripts, especially of those from the ninth to the twelfth centuries, which are the oldest that we have, the Massoretic text can be ascertained with almost complete certainty. The Massoretic text, as we have seen, is substantially the same as that which we find used by the writers of the Talmud, and the way in which the writers of the Talmud speak of it shows that it had been in existence for some time previously. We are thus able to conclude that the manuscripts which we now possess have preserved for us a text which was current in or soon after the time of our Lord. One eminent modern writer declares that all our existing Hebrew manuscripts descend from a single copy made in the reign of Hadrian (A.D. 102–117), at the time of the great persecution of the Jews by that emperor; and most scholars would agree that the origin of the Massoretic text goes back, at any rate, to somewhere about that time. It is for the period before that date that the evidence of the Hebrew manuscripts fails us. They do not carry us back so far as the time of the actual composition of the several books of the Old Testament; but within their limits their evidence may be accepted as trustworthy.

but faithful.

The same extreme care which was devoted to the transcription of manuscripts is also at the bottom of the disappearance of the earlier copies. When a manuscript had been copied with the exactitude prescribed by the Talmud, and had been duly verified, it was accepted as authentic and regarded as being of equal value with any other copy. If all were equally correct, age gave no advantage to a manuscript; on the contrary, age was a positive disadvantage, since a manuscript was liable to become defaced or damaged in the

Destruction of older copies.

lapse of time. A damaged or imperfect copy was at once condemned as unfit for use. Attached to each synagogue was a "Gheniza," or lumber-cupboard, in which defective manuscripts were laid aside; and from these receptacles some of the oldest manuscripts now extant have in modern times been recovered. Thus, far from regarding an older copy of the Scriptures as more valuable, the Jewish habit has been to prefer the newer, as being the most perfect and free from damage. The older copies, once consigned to the "Gheniza," naturally perished, either from neglect or from being deliberately buried when the "Gheniza" became overcrowded.

The absence of very old copies of the Hebrew Bible need not, therefore, either surprise or disquiet us. If, to the causes already enumerated, we add the repeated persecutions (involving much destruction of property) to which the Jews have been subject, the disappearance of the ancient manuscripts is adequately accounted for, and those which remain may be accepted as preserving that which alone they profess to preserve, namely the Massoretic text. There is consequently not much to be said in the way of description of individual manuscripts. When we come to speak of the Greek text, whether of the Old or of the New Testament, we shall find it both interesting and important to describe the chief manuscripts with some minuteness, in respect of their age, their comparative value, and the groups or families into which they fall. In none of these respects is it possible to distinguish effectually between Hebrew manuscripts. The reader of the Variorum Bible will easily see this for himself; for whereas in the New Testament the readings of a considerable number of manuscripts are cited individually, each manuscript being distinguished by its own letter, in the Old Testament no manuscript is named individually. Since all represent the same type of text, and none is conspicuously older than the rest, there is little opportunity for marked pre-eminence. Moreover, even the best authorities differ widely both as to the age and the relative value of different copies, so that we have no certain ground beneath our feet.

The points to be taken into consideration in examining a Hebrew manuscript are the following; but it will be seen that their importance is not very great:—First, whether it was intended for public or private use; since those intended for the service of the synagogue, like the great leather rolls of the Law, are most likely to be accurately copied. Next, its age; but on this head it is difficult to arrive at any certainty. Many manuscripts contain a statement of their date; but these statements are extremely misleading and of doubtful authenticity. Sometimes we do not know by what era the date is calculated; sometimes the date is evidently that of the manuscript from which it was copied, not of the manuscript itself; sometimes, unfortunately, the date is simply fraudulent. And it is not possible always to test such statements by the handwriting of the manuscript, as can generally be done with Greek writings. The best authorities differ so widely (in the case of one well-known manuscript, one good authority assigns it to the tenth century, and another to the fourteenth, while another copy has been assigned to various dates between the sixth and the fifteenth centuries) as to prove that the science of dating Hebrew writing is very imperfect. It is more possible to distinguish the country in which a manuscript has been written; but even so our advantage is small; for while the Jews themselves have generally held manuscripts written in Spain to be the best, two most distinguished scholars (the Englishman Kennicott, and the Italian De Rossi) prefer those which were made in Germany. Finally, manuscripts may be distinguished as containing an Eastern or a Western text, the former being derived from the school of Babylonia, the latter from that of Palestine. Each of these schools had its own Talmud, each had a different system of vowel-punctuation, and each had a certain number of textual variations peculiar to itself, which are recorded in several manuscripts; but these very rarely affect the sense to any material extent.

Classification of Hebrew MSS.

Probably the oldest manuscript now in existence of any part of the Hebrew Bible is one that was recently acquired by the British

PLATE IV.

HEBREW MS. 9TH CENT.

(Original size, 16¼ in. × 13 in.)

Museum, and of which a page is reproduced in Plate IV. It is not dated, but its writing is of an earlier type than that of the earliest copies of which the precise date is known, and it is consequently supposed to have been written not later than the ninth century. It contains the Pentateuch, written in book form (not as a roll), and is imperfect at the end. Both Greater and Lesser Massorah have been added in the margins, the former at the top and bottom, the latter at the side. The text is furnished with vowel-points and accents; the Massorah is without them in some places, but in others, contrary to the usual practice, it has them. The passage shown in the plate is the end of Genesis and the beginning of Exodus (Gen. **50.** 23—Exod. **2.** 14).

The chief extant MSS.

The oldest manuscript containing a precise statement of its date which can be trusted is the St. Petersburg manuscript of the Prophets. This was written in the year 916, and contains the "Later Prophets," written on vellum, in double columns, with the Massorah between, below, and on the outer margin. The accents and vowel-points are written above the letters, instead of below, according to a system in use at Babylon. The text is correctly written, and furnishes a strong proof of the truth of the assertion that all extant Hebrew MSS. are descended from a single copy; for although it contains an Eastern text, while the commonly-received text is based on Western MSS. (no Babylonian MSS. having been known to exist until within the last thirty years), and although it only came to light quite recently, long after the formation of the received text, yet on a comparison of it with a standard edition of the latter in a single book, that of Ezekiel (in which the Massoretic text is certainly often corrupt), it was found to contain only *sixteen* real variations from it.* Similarly, the British Museum MS. of the Pentateuch is substantially in full agreement with the received text.

Although these two copies have been described as the oldest

* Cornill, *Das Buch des Propheten Ezechiel*, p. 9.

now in existence, there are many others which *claim* a considerably earlier date. There are quite a large number of such in Russia, one of which purports to have been *corrected* in the year 580, while others are dated 489, 639, 764, 781, 789, 798, besides many of the ninth and tenth centuries. Unfortunately these dates are universally discredited, and most of them are known to be due to the fraudulent enterprise of a Jew named Firkowitzsch. A manuscript in the Cambridge University Library bears the date of 856, and the correctness of this date has been maintained by at least one capable scholar; but it is not generally accepted. Of other manuscripts perhaps the most notable are (1) the Codex Ben-Asher, now at Aleppo, supposed to have been written in the tenth century, and held to be one of the best authorities for the text of the Old Testament, though both its age and its value have been strongly questioned; (2) Codex Laudianus, at Oxford, containing the whole Old Testament except a large part of Genesis, numbered 1 by Kennicott, and held by him to have been written in the tenth century and to contain a very important text; (3) No. 634 in the list of De Rossi, containing the Pentateuch, assigned by him to the eighth century, by others to the tenth or later. It seems useless to extend the list, in view of the great doubts attaching to all dates, and to the general unimportance of the divergencies.

One other source of knowledge for the Hebrew text should, however, be mentioned, namely, readings quoted in the Middle Ages from manuscripts since lost. The chief of these is a manuscript known as the Codex Hillelis, which was at one time supposed to date back to the great teacher Hillel, before the time of our Lord. It is, however, probable that it was really written after the sixth century. It was used by a Jewish scholar in Spain, and a considerable number of its readings have been preserved by references to it in various writers. Other lost manuscripts are sometimes quoted, but less often, and their testimony is less important.

MSS. now lost.

The first portion of the Hebrew Bible to appear in print was the

Psalms, which issued from the press, probably at Bologna in Italy, in 1477. The first complete Old Testament followed in 1488, at Soncino. Both these editions were due to Jews. The first edition prepared by a Christian scholar was that which appeared in the great Bible printed by Cardinal Ximenes at Alcala (and hence known as the Complutensian Bible, from Complutum, the Latin name of Alcala), in Spain, during the years 1514–1517. In this Bible the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin texts were printed side by side; and it forms, as will be seen more fully hereafter, a most important landmark in the story of the beginnings of Biblical study in modern Europe. It was not, however, until the end of the eighteenth century that scholars fairly took in hand the critical study of the Hebrew text. The first collection of the evidence was made by Bishop Kennicott, who published at Oxford in 1776–80 the readings of no less than 634 Hebrew manuscripts (giving, however, only the consonants, without vowel points). He was followed, in 1784–8, by the Italian scholar De Rossi, who published collations of 825 more manuscripts. De Rossi used better MSS., on the whole, than Kennicott, but the general result of the labours of both is the same. It is to them that the proof is due of the fact that all Hebrew manuscripts represent the same text, namely the Massoretic, and that without substantial variation. Other manuscripts have come to light since their time, notably in Russia, where a number of MSS. of the Babylonian type were discovered within our own day; but, as has been shown above in the case of the most important of these, the St. Petersburg MS. of the Prophets, the conclusion established by Kennicott and De Rossi remains undisturbed.

The printed Hebrew text.

The result of our examination of the Hebrew text is, then, this. We have manuscripts which collectively give us a good representation of a text which reached its final shape about the seventh century. We also have evidence that the scholars who made this final revision did not substantially alter the text which had been in use for some five

Summary of results.

centuries previously. We may therefore be satisfied that the text of our Old Testament has been handed down without serious change from about A.D. 100. Further back we cannot go with the aid of the Hebrew manuscripts alone. The great, indeed all-important, question which now meets us is this—Does this Hebrew text, which we call Massoretic, and which we have shown to descend from a text drawn up about A.D. 100, faithfully represent the Hebrew text as originally written by the authors of the Old Testament books? To answer this question it is necessary to bring up our second line of authorities, described in Chapter II. We must refer to those translations of the Old Testament into other languages which were made before the date at which we have arrived. We must see what evidence they can give us as to the Hebrew text from which they were translated, and examine the extent and credibility of that evidence. In this way alone can we hope to bridge over the gap in our knowledge between the actual composition of the books of the Old Testament and the text whose descent from about the first century of the Christian era has been traced in this present chapter.

CHAPTER V.

THE ANCIENT VERSIONS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

IN August 1883 the world was startled by the announcement of a discovery which, if it were authentic, seemed to go far towards bridging the great gap in our knowledge of which we spoke at the end of the last chapter. This was no less than some fragments of a manuscript of the Old Testament purporting to have been written about eight hundred years before Christ, which their owner, a Jew of the name of Shapira, stated that he had obtained from some Arabs about five years before. The material was old leather, and the writing was similar to that of the Moabite Stone. The contents were striking enough. They purported to be portions of the Book of Deuteronomy, but with many remarkable variations. To the Ten Commandments was added an eleventh, and the language of the others was altered and amplified. In these strips of leather there was enough to cast doubt upon the whole of the received text of the Old Testament and to discredit the whole science of textual criticism. The sensation, however, only lasted a few days. Evidences of forgery soon began to pour in; and the final blow was given when it was shown that the strips of leather on which the characters were written had been cut from the margins of an ordinary synagogue roll.

There is, indeed, no probability that we shall ever find manuscripts of the Hebrew text going back to a period before the formation of the text which we know as Massoretic. We can only arrive at an idea of it by a study of the earliest translations made from it; and our task in the present chapter is to describe these translations in turn.

§ 1.—The Samaritan Pentateuch.

The version of the Old Testament which possesses the longest pedigree is that which owes its existence to the Samaritans.

Its origin.

Strictly speaking, it is not a version at all, as it is in the Hebrew tongue, though written in a different character from that of the extant Hebrew MSS. It is written in the *old* Hebrew character, such as it was before the adoption by the Jews of the square characters, as described in the last chapter (p. 21). The precise origin of this separate Samaritan Bible has been a subject of dispute; but the most probable account is that it takes its rise in the events described in Neh. **13.** 23–30, namely, the expulsion by Nehemiah of those Jews who had contracted marriages with the heathen. Among those expelled was a grandson of the high-priest Eliashib, whose name, as we learn from Josephus, was Manasseh. This Manasseh, in indignation at his expulsion, took refuge among the Samaritans, and set up among them a rival worship to that at Jerusalem. The Samaritans, whom we know from 2 Kings **17.** 24–41 to have been foreigners imported into the country of the Ten Tribes by the king of Assyria, and there, presumably, to have mingled with the scanty remnant of Israelites, had at first incorporated the worship of Jehovah, as the God of the land, into the worship of their own gods; and later, on the return of the Jews from captivity, had been willing to join in the rebuilding of the Temple at Jerusalem, but had been refused permission. Since this repulse they had been bitterly hostile to the Jews, and the schism of Manasseh gave them a head and a rival worship, which embittered and perpetuated the quarrel. Manasseh obtained leave from Darius Nothus, king of Persia, to set up a temple on Mount Gerizim, which became the centre of the new religion and the rival of Jerusalem. He had brought with him, it is believed, the Hebrew Pentateuch, and this, with certain alterations (notably the substitution of Gerizim for Ebal in Deut. **27.** 4 as the hill on which the memorial altar should be placed), became the sacred book of the

Samaritans. As we have seen in the last chapter, probably this was the only part of the Old Testament which had at that time been definitely recognised as inspired Scripture by the Jews themselves; and when the Prophets and Hagiographa were subsequently added to the Canon, the Samaritans refused to accept them. They refused also to accept the square Hebrew characters adopted by the Jews; and we may be quite certain that they would pay little respect to any alterations in the text, if such there were, which were made by Jewish scribes and scholars after the date of the original secession.

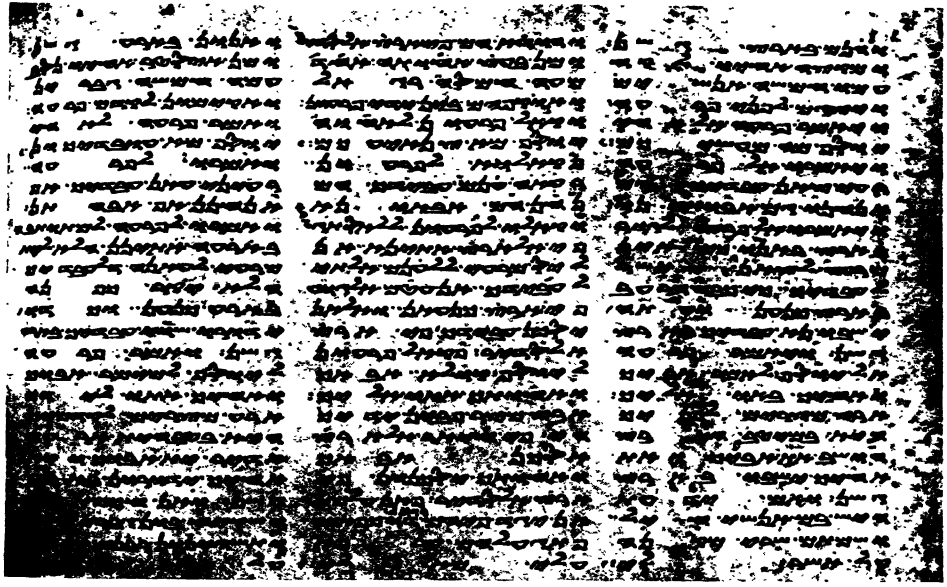
So far, then, it appears as if we had, in the Samaritan Pentateuch, an invaluable means of testing the extent of the variation which the Hebrew text has undergone since the days of Nehemiah. We have an independent tradition, coming down from about B.C. 408 (the date of Manasseh's secession), without any contact with the Hebrew text, preserving the original form of writing, and thereby avoiding one considerable source of possible error and corruption. No wonder that when, in 1616, the first copy of the Samaritan Bible came to light many scholars thought that they had obtained evidence for the original text of the Old Testament far preferable to that of the Hebrew manuscripts. The Samaritan community had existed from the days of its first settlement by Sargon of Assyria until then, and it exists still, a little community of about a hundred persons, settled at Nablous, the ancient Shechem, and still observing the Mosaic Law; but none of their sacred books had come to light until, in that year, a copy was obtained by Pietro della Valle. Several other copies have since been secured by travellers and are now in European libraries. The first printed edition was issued in the Paris Polyglott Bible in 1632, and for generations a hot controversy raged among Biblical scholars as to the comparative value of the Samaritan and Hebrew texts. At length, in 1815, it was settled, for the time, by an elaborate examination of all the variations by the great Hebrew scholar Gesenius, whose verdict was wholly against the Samaritan version. He divided the variations into groups, according to their character, and argued that

Its discovery.

in hardly a single instance was a Samaritan reading to be preferred to that of the Hebrew. This opinion has held the field until the present day; but there seems to be a disposition now to question its justice.

The Samaritan version has been estimated to differ from the Hebrew in about 6,000 places. The great majority of these are of very trifling importance, consisting of grammatical alterations or the substitution of Samaritan idioms for Hebrew. Others (as in Deut. **27.** 4, quoted above) are alterations of substance, so as to suit Samaritan ideas of ritual or religion. Others contain supplements of apparent deficiencies by the help of similar passages in other books, repetitions of speeches and the like from parallel passages, the removal of obscurities or insertion of explanatory words or sentences, or distinct differences of reading. In all these latter cases there may evidently be two opinions as to whether the Samaritan or the Hebrew reading is preferable. The apparent deficiencies in the Hebrew may be real, the obscurities may be due to error, and the Samaritan text may be nearer to the original language. This probability is greatly increased when we find that in many passages where the Samaritan version differs from the Hebrew, the Greek Septuagint version (of which we shall speak presently) agrees with the former. For example, the Samaritan and Hebrew texts differ very frequently as to the ages of the patriarchs mentioned in the early chapters of Genesis. Gesenius classified these variations as alterations introduced on grounds of suitability; but it is at least possible that they are not alterations at all, but the original text, and that the numbers have become corrupt in the Hebrew text; and this possibility is turned into a probability when we find the Septuagint supporting the Samaritan readings. There is no satisfactory proof of either the Septuagint or the Samaritan text having been corrected from the other, nor is it in itself likely; and their independent evidence is extremely difficult to explain away. Hence scholars are now becoming more disposed to think favourably of the Samaritan readings. Many of them may be errors, many more may be unimportant, but there remain several which

Its character.



SAMARITAN PENTATEUCH—A.D. 1227.

(Original size of page, 13½ in. × 10½ in.; of part reproduced, 6¼ in. × 9 in.)

are of real value. The editors of the Variorum Bible give thirty-five variations of the Samaritan text in the five books of the Pentateuch as being either equal or superior to the Hebrew readings. Among these may be mentioned, for the sake of example, Gen. **4.** 8, where the Samaritan has "Cain said to Abel his brother, Let us go into the field"; **47.** 21, "As for the people he made slaves of them," instead of "he removed them to cities"; Exod. **12.** 40, the 430 years of the sojourning of the children of Israel are said to have been in Egypt *and in Canaan* (thus agreeing with Gal. **3.** 17), instead of in Egypt only; Num. **4.** 14, the following words are added at the end of the verse, "And they shall take a cloth of purple, and cover the laver and his foot, and put it into a covering of seals' skins, and shall put them upon a frame"; and in Deut. **32.** 35 the first half of the verse runs "against the day of vengeance and recompence; against the time when their foot shall slip." These are perhaps the most notable of the Samaritan variants, and it is observable that in every case the Septuagint confirms them. The general result of the comparison of this and the other versions with the Hebrew text must be reserved to the end of the chapter; meanwhile it will be sufficient to observe that these variations, though sufficient to arouse our interest, are not serious enough to cause any disquietude as to the substantial integrity of the text of our Old Testament.

Its manuscripts.

No manuscript of the Samaritan Bible (so far as is known) is older than the tenth century. It is true the Samaritan community at Nablous cherishes a precious roll, which it maintains to have been written by Abisha, the great-grandson of Moses, in the thirteenth year after the conquest of Canaan; but this story, which rests on the authority of an inscription said to be found in the MS. itself, may very safely be dismissed. The MS., of which a photograph forms our frontispiece, is written in letters of gold, and is rolled upon silver rollers with round knobs at the top. The MS. of which we give a reproduction in Plate V. is at Rome, and is said to have been written in the year 1227. It will be seen that the three

columns are all in the same style of writing, but each contains a different dialect. The right-hand column contains the Hebrew text of Gen. 47. 1–6, as preserved among the Samaritans; it is, in fact, what is commonly called the Samaritan Version, and what we have been describing above. The left-hand column contains a Samaritan Targum, or paraphrase of the text in the current Samaritan dialect; and in the centre is an Arabic translation of the Samaritan version, originally made in the year 1070. All three columns are written in the Samaritan or old Hebrew characters, and represent the form of writing in which the books of the Old Testament were originally written down. All the existing manuscripts of the Samaritan version are written on either vellum or paper (in this instance vellum is used), in the shape of books (not rolls, with the exception of three rolls at Nablous), without any vowel-points or accents, but with punctuation to divide words and sentences. The whole of the Pentateuch is divided into 964 paragraphs.

§ 2.—The Septuagint and other Greek Versions.

Two considerations make the Samaritan version of the Old Testament less important than it would otherwise be. In the first place, it contains only the Pentateuch; and it is just this part of the Old Testament which is best preserved in the Hebrew text, and consequently needs least correction. Secondly, none of the extant copies of it is older than the tenth century, so that they are as far removed from the fountain head as the Hebrew manuscripts themselves. Neither of these drawbacks applies to the Greek version, of which we have now to speak. It is a complete translation of the Old Testament, containing, indeed, not only the books which now compose our Old Testament, but also those which, after a considerable period of uncertainty, were finally excluded from the Hebrew Canon and now constitute our Apocrypha. Further, it is preserved in several manuscripts of very great age, the earliest, as we shall see presently, going back to the fourth and fifth centuries after Christ. In every respect, both textually and historically, the Greek version of the Old Testament is by far the most important of all the ancient translations. On the one hand, it is our

chief means of testing the accuracy of the Massoretic Hebrew text, and of correcting it when it is wrong; and, on the other, it has been the Bible of Greek Christendom from the earliest age of Christianity down to this present day. It will consequently require and deserve a somewhat extended notice at our hands.

Origin of the Septuagint.

The first questions to be answered are those that relate to its origin. When was it made? Why was it made? For whom was it made? Curious as it may seem at first sight, this Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible was made in a land which was neither Greek nor Hebrew, namely Egypt. After the submission of Egypt to Alexander the Great, and the introduction of Greek settlers under Ptolemy, his lieutenant, Alexandria became the headquarters alike of the commerce and the literature of the East. Its population, mainly Greek, included also a large colony of Jews. Greek became the common language of intercourse between people of different nationalities in the East, and the Jews in Egypt learnt, before long, to use it as their native tongue. Hence there arose the necessity of having their Scriptures accessible in Greek; and the answer to this demand was the version known as the Septuagint. The story which was long current as to its origin is largely mythical, but it contains a kernel of truth. In a letter purporting to be written by one Aristeas to his brother Philocrates, in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus (B.C. 284–247), it is said that king Ptolemy, hearing of the Jewish Scriptures, and being urged by his librarian to obtain a copy of them for his great library at Alexandria, sent an embassy (of which the writer of the letter was one) to the high priest at Jerusalem with magnificent presents, begging him to send a copy of the sacred books, with a body of men capable of translating them. Thereupon six translators were selected from each of the twelve tribes and despatched to Alexandria, bearing with them a copy of the Law, written in letters of gold. They were splendidly received by the king, and, after a banquet and public display of their wisdom, set about their task of translation, working separately in the first instance, but afterwards comparing their results, and

finally producing the version which was thenceforth known as the Septuagint, or the Version of the Seventy. Later generations improved upon this story, until the legend ran that each of the seventy-two translators was shut up in a separate cell (or by pairs in 36 cells) and each produced a translation of the whole Old Testament in exactly seventy-two days; and when their translations were compared it was found that they all agreed precisely with one another, in every word and every phrase, thus proving that their version was directly inspired by God. This, however, is merely an exaggeration of the original story, which itself is now generally believed to be an exaggeration of the real facts, at least in respect of the special and magnificent patronage of Ptolemy. What is true is that the Septuagint version was made in or about his reign, in Alexandria, and that the Pentateuch was probably translated first. The other books were added later, by different translators and at different times. The style of translation differs so markedly in different books as to prove that the whole Testament cannot have been the work of a single group of translators, while some of the later books, such as Ecclesiasticus, were not even written at the time of which the story speaks.

Its contents.

The Septuagint version, as finally completed, contains not merely the books which now form our Old Testament, but also those which, since the Reformation, have been placed apart in the Apocrypha.* Some of these books (2 Esdras, the additions to Esther, Wisdom, part of Baruch, the

* It is unfortunate that the Apocrypha is generally omitted from copies of the English Bible. No doubt a little explanation of the nature of the books contained in it is needed by most people, but that information is now easily accessible in many popular handbooks, *e.g.*, in the Rev. C. H. H. Wright's article in the *Variorum Aids to the Bible Student*. The *Variorum Apocrypha*, also, by the Rev. C. J. Ball, can be confidently recommended as containing excellent critical and (in the form of "various renderings") explanatory notes. These are especially valuable, since, in the absence (as yet) of any Revised Version of the Apocrypha, the ordinary reader has no means of knowing how far the Authorised Version is trustworthy; and they also, of course, contain much which no Revised Version can possibly give.

Song of the Three Children, 2 Maccabees) never existed in Hebrew at all; but the others were originally written in Hebrew and circulated among the Jews for some time on very much the same footing as some of the books which form the section of the Hagiographa (p. 28). They never, however, attained the same position of authority, and when the Canon of the Old Testament was finally closed, they were left outside. From this point dates their disappearance in their Hebrew form; they ceased to be copied in Hebrew; and so they have come down to us only in the Greek, or in translations made from the Greek. Jerome rejected them from his Latin Bible because they were not extant in Hebrew; but the older Latin translations of them were subsequently incorporated into the Vulgate, and they have remained in the Latin Bible of the Roman Church to the present day. The Septuagint is, however, their real home, and there they take their proper places among the books of the Old Testament. The First Book of Esdras takes precedence of the Book of Ezra, of which it is an alternative version with some additions. After the Book of Nehemiah (which, in conjunction with the canonical Ezra, is called the Second Book of Ezra) come, in the principal manuscript of the Septuagint, the Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Job, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus (or the Wisdom of Sirach), Esther (including the parts now banished to the Apocrypha), Judith, Tobit. Then follow the Prophets; but Jeremiah is succeeded by Baruch, Lamentations, and the Epistle of Jeremiah (=Baruch, ch. 6), and Daniel by Susanna and Bel and the Dragon. Finally the Old Testament is concluded by the books of the Maccabees, of which there are, in some of the earliest copies, four instead of only two.

When the Septuagint translation was completed, it became at once the Bible of the Greek-speaking Jews, and circulated in Palestine and Asia as well as in Egypt, the home of its birth. At the time of our Lord's life on earth, Greek was the literary language of Palestine, as Aramaic was the spoken language of the

Adopted by Greek-speaking Jews and the Christian Church.

common people. Hebrew was known only to the small class of students, headed by the Rabbis and the scribes. All the books of the New Testament (with the possible exception of the Gospel of St. Matthew in its original form) were written in Greek; and most of the quotations from the Old Testament which appear in them are taken from the Septuagint version, not from the original Hebrew. As Christianity spread beyond the borders of Palestine, Greek was necessarily the language in which it appealed alike to the Jew and to the Gentile; and when, in speaking to the former, it based its claim on the fulfilment of prophecy, it was in the language of the Septuagint version that the prophecies were quoted. The Christian Church adopted the Septuagint as its own Book of the Old Covenant, and looked to that as its Bible long before it had come to realise that its own writings would take a place beside it as equally sacred Scripture.

The result of this appropriation of the Septuagint by the Christian Church was that the Jews cast it off. When the Christians in controversy pressed them with quotations from the Prophets, of which the fulfilment had been found in Jesus Christ, the Jews took refuge in a denial of the accuracy of the Septuagint translation. In the second century of our era this repudiation took form in the production of rival versions. The Hebrew text had been fixed, in the form in which it has come down to us, in the preceding century, and what was now needed was a faithful translation of this into Greek for the use of Greek-speaking Jews. The production of such a translation was the work of AQUILA, who may be identical with the Onkelos to whom is ascribed the principal Targum on the Pentateuch (*see* p. 30). The name is the same, in a Latin dress, and the spirit in which the translation was executed is the same. The version of Aquila is an exceedingly bald and literal rendering of the Hebrew, adhering to the original so closely as to lose most of the Greek idiom, and often falling into obscurity and even nonsense. Aquila is said to have been a disciple of the celebrated

Rival translations in the 2nd cent.

1. Aquila.

Rabbi Akiba, the chief and leader of the extremest anti-Christian Jews at the end of the first century, and his version, which must have been made somewhere about the year 150, became the official Greek translation of the Scriptures in use among the non-Christian Jews. Later in the same century another translation was made, upon the opposite side, by THEODOTION, a Christian, said to have been a native of Ephesus.

2. Theodotion.

Theodotion's translation resembled Aquila's in being based upon the authorised Jewish text of the Old Testament (though retaining the apocryphal additions to the Book of Daniel), but was exactly contrary in its treatment of it, being very free in its rendering of the original. Naturally enough, it received no countenance from the Jews, but it obtained much popularity among Christians, and exercised a considerable influence upon the subsequent history of the Septuagint. Notably was this the case in respect of the Books of Daniel and Job. Theodotion's version of Daniel was so much preferred to that of the Septuagint, that it actually took its place in the manuscripts of the Septuagint itself, and the original Septuagint version has only come down to us in one single copy, written in the ninth century. In the case of Job, the Septuagint version did not contain many passages (amounting to about one-sixth of the book in all) which appear in the received or Massoretic text of the Hebrew; and these were supplied in the Septuagint from the version of Theodotion. It is possible that something of the same sort may have occurred in other books, but the proof is at present incomplete. Yet one other Greek version of the Old Testament remains to be mentioned, that of SYMMACHUS, which was made about the year 200. The special feature of this translation is the literary skill and taste with which the Hebrew phrases of the original are rendered into good and idiomatic Greek. In this respect Symmachus approaches nearer than any of his rivals to the modern conception of a translator's duty; but he had less influence than any of them on the history of the Greek Bible. Curiously enough, he had more influence upon the Latin

3. Symmachus.

Bible; for Jerome made considerable use of him in the preparation of the Vulgate.

At the beginning of the third century there were thus three Greek versions of the Old Testament in existence, besides the Septuagint itself. The next step, and one of much importance in the history of the Greek text, was taken by the great Alexandrian scholar, ORIGEN, whose life occupies the first half of the third century (A.D. 186–253). Finding all these various, and often conflicting, versions of the Scriptures existing side by side, he determined to draw them together, and to try to use them for the production of one more perfect version than them all. Accordingly, with that stupendous energy which earned for him the admiration of his contemporaries and of posterity, he set about the colossal work to which was given the name of the *Hexapla*, or "sixfold" version of the Old Testament Scriptures. In six parallel columns, at each opening of his book, were arrayed the following six different versions:—(1) The Hebrew text then current (substantially identical with the Massoretic text); (2) the Hebrew text in Greek letters; (3) the Greek translation of Aquila (placed here as being the nearest to the Hebrew in fidelity); (4) the translation of Symmachus; (5) the Septuagint, as revised by Origen himself; (6) the translation of Theodotion, coming last in the series as being the furthest removed in style from the original.* The last four columns seem to have existed in a separate form, known as the *Tetrapla*, or fourfold version, which was probably a later reproduction in handier size of the more important part of Origen's work; but in any case the Hexapla, whether earlier or later, is the complete and authoritative form of it. So huge a work as this (the Old Testament is rarely

Revisions of the Septuagint: 1. Origen's Hexapla.

* In some books (chiefly the poetical ones, it would seem) three other Greek versions were appended. These were obscure translations which Origen had discovered, and their importance seems to have been small. Very little of them has been preserved, and their authors do not seem to have been known to Origen himself. They are simply called the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh versions.

contained entire in any manuscript in a single version, and this contained it in six!) was not likely to be copied as a whole. The original manuscript still existed at Cæsarea at the beginning of the seventh century, but it perished shortly afterwards, and of all its columns, except the fifth, no complete representation has come down to us. It is with this fifth column, however, that we are principally concerned, since it contained Origen's edition of the Septuagint, and this edition had a considerable influence on the text of the version in subsequent ages. Unfortunately, Origen's efforts were not directed towards the recovery of the original form of the Septuagint, but at bringing it into harmony with the Hebrew text then current, and to do this he introduced alterations into it with the utmost freedom. At the same time he tried to indicate all such alterations by the use of certain symbols. Passages occurring in the Septuagint which were not found in the Hebrew were marked by an *obelus* (-); passages occurring in the Hebrew but not in the Septuagint were inserted in the latter from the version of Theodotion, such insertions being marked by an *asterisk* (※ or ⁜); a *metobelus* (✓) in each case marking the end of the passage in question. For Origen's purpose, which was the production of a Greek version corresponding as closely as possible with the Hebrew text as then settled, this procedure was well enough; but for ours, which is the recovery of the original Septuagint text as evidence for what the Hebrew was before the formation of the Massoretic text, it was most unfortunate, since there was a natural tendency for his edition to be copied without the critical symbols, and thus for the additions made by him from Theodotion to appear as part of the genuine and original Septuagint. This has certainly happened in some cases; it is difficult to say with certainty in how many. Fortunately we are not left without some means of discovering these insertions, for in the year 617, shortly before the disappearance of the original manuscript of the Hexapla, Bishop Paulus, of Tella in Mesopotamia, made a Syriac translation of the column containing the Septuagint, copying faithfully into it the critical symbols

of Origen; and a copy of part of this, written in the eighth century, is still extant (in the Ambrosian library at Milan), containing the Prophets and most of the Hagiographa.* For the Pentateuch the chief authority is a Greek manuscript at Leyden, written in the fifth century, and known as the Codex Sarravianus; and a few other manuscripts exist, likewise containing an Origenian text, some of which will be described below. There are thus fair means for recovering the Septuagint column of Origen's great work. The versions of Aquila, Theodotion, and Symmachus have, however, for the most part perished. No manuscript exists which contains any continuous portion of them, except those parts of Theodotion which were incorporated in the received text of the Septuagint; but a very large number of individual readings have been preserved in the margin of Septuagint MSS., and these have been collected and arranged with great skill and care in the two portly volumes of Dr. Field's edition of the Hexapla, published by the Oxford University Press in 1875.

Origen's own colossal work went to the ground, but the part of it which was most important in his eyes, and the ultimate object of the whole—the revised text of the Septuagint—survived, and had a most noteworthy influence on the subsequent history of the version. At the beginning of the third century, we find a sudden crop of new editions of the Septuagint, all more or less affected by his work. Three such are known to us, and they are of great importance for our present purpose, as we shall see when we come to describe the form in which the Septuagint has come down to us.

Reproduced by Eusebius and Pamphilus.

These three editions are those of (1) Eusebius of Cæsarea, (2) Lucian, (3) Hesychius. EUSEBIUS of Cæsarea, the first great historian of Christianity, with the assistance of his friend Pamphilus, produced

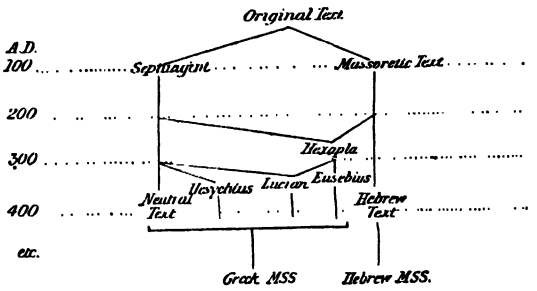
* The Ambrosian MS. contains Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, and the Prophets. The first volume of this MS. was in existence in 1674, but has since disappeared. On the other hand, fragments of other MSS. have been discovered, and are now in the British Museum, containing Exodus and Ruth complete, and portions of Genesis, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, and 1 and 2 Kings.

Origen's text of the Septuagint (the fifth column of the Hexapla) as an independent edition, with alternative readings from the other versions in the margin.

2. Lucian. Lucian of Samosata, a leading scholar at Antioch, produced another edition, of which the most marked characteristic was his habit, when he found different words or phrases in different copies, to combine them into a composite phrase, and so to preserve both. In the next chapter we shall see reason to believe that a similar course has been followed in the case of the New Testament at some period of its history. Lucian suffered martyrdom during the persecution of Maximus, in A.D. 311; and the same fate is believed to have befallen Hesychius, the author of the third edition of the Septuagint during the period of which we are speaking. Of the character of this version very little is known at present; but there is reason to hope that a fuller study of the extant manuscripts of the Septuagint may increase our knowledge of it. These three editions were practically contemporary, and must all have been produced about the year 300. Each circulated in a different region. The edition of Eusebius and Pamphilus was generally used in Palestine; that of Lucian had its home in Antioch, and was also accepted in Constantinople and Asia Minor, while Hesychius was a scholar of Alexandria, and his edition circulated in Egypt.

3. Hesychius.

The following diagram will roughly illustrate the origin of these three editions, and their respective degrees of approach to the Hebrew text:—



After the beginning of the fourth century the Septuagint, so far as we know, underwent no further revision, and it is unnecessary to trace its history beyond this point. In one form or another, and gradually becoming corrupted in all by the errors of copyists, it continued to be, as it is to this day, the Old Testament of the Greek or Eastern Church. We have now to begin at the other end, and ask in what form it has come down to us, and what means we have of ascertaining its original text. And the method of this inquiry must be exactly the same as we have already applied in the case of the Hebrew text, and as we shall again have to apply when we come to the Greek text of the New Testament. We have to ask, primarily, in what manuscripts it has come down to us, what are their age and character, and into what groups they can be divided; and then it will be necessary to ask further whether any light can be thrown upon its history by the translations which have been made from it in ancient times, and by the quotations made from it by the early Christian Fathers.

The present state of the Septuagint.

We have seen in the last chapter that no copy of the Hebrew Bible now extant was written earlier than the ninth century, while those of the Samaritan Pentateuch only go back to the tenth. The oldest copies of the Greek Bible are, however, of far greater antiquity than this, and take rank as the most venerable, as well as the most valuable, authorities for the Bible text which now survive. The oldest and best of them contain the New Testament as well as the Old, and will have to be described again in greater detail (since the New Testament portion has generally been more minutely studied than the Old) in a subsequent chapter. But a short account of them must be given here.

MSS. of the Septuagint.

Greek manuscripts are divided into two classes, according to the style of their writing. Putting aside those written on papyrus (of which, so far as the Bible is concerned, only a few small fragments have as yet been discovered), it may be said broadly that all the earlier manu-

Uncial and cursive MSS.

scripts, from the fourth century to the ninth, are written in what is known as *uncial* writing, and all the later ones, from the ninth century to the invention of printing, in *cursive* or *minuscule* writing. In uncial writing all the letters are large and are formed separately (*see* Plates VI., VIII.—XIII.); minuscules are small (*see* Plate XIV.), and are generally linked together in a running hand, whence they have received the name of cursive (= "running"), which is their commoner, but less exact, designation. For convenience of reference, each manuscript has, in addition to its name, a letter or number by which it is commonly denoted. Uncial manuscripts are indicated by capital letters, cursives (in the case of the Septuagint) by numbers. The former, being the older, are generally the most valuable, and they alone require or deserve individual description. About thirty such manuscripts exist for the Septuagint, but many of these are mere fragments, containing only a few leaves, and only two are even approximately complete. The following is a list of them, in the alphabetical order of the letters by which they are commonly indicated, with fuller descriptions of the most important:—

א (*Aleph*, the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet) stands for the famous **Codex Sinaiticus,** one of the two oldest copies of the Greek Bible. The story of the romantic discovery of this manuscript in the present century, when part of it was in the very act of being consumed as fuel, must be reserved for Chapter VII. For the present it must suffice to say that it was discovered by the great German Biblical scholar, Constantine Tischendorf, in 1844, in the monastery of St. Catherine, at Mt. Sinai. At his first visit he secured forty-three leaves belonging to the Old Testament, and presented them to his patron, King Frederick Augustus of Saxony, who placed them in the Court Library at Leipzig, where they still remain, with the name of the Codex Friderico-Augustanus. A subsequent visit brought to light 156 more leaves of the Old Testament and the whole of the New Testament; and these ultimately found a home in the Imperial Library at St. Petersburg, and are known as the Codex Sinaiticus. Parts of a few more

leaves were subsequently discovered in the bindings of other manuscripts in the library of Mt. Sinai. The manuscript was written in the fourth century, in a beautiful uncial hand; and it is extremely unfortunate that so much of the Old Testament has been lost. The parts which survive include fragments of Genesis **23, 24,** and of Num. **5, 6, 7**; 1 Chron. **9.** 27—**19.** 17; 2 Esdras [*i.e.* canonical Ezra] **9.** 9 to end; Nehemiah, Esther, Tobit, Judith, 1 Macc., 4 Macc., Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lament. **1.** 1—**2.** 20, Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, Nahum to Malachi, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Job. Four different scribes were employed on the writing of it, besides several correctors. A facsimile of a page of this beautiful and most valuable manuscript is given in Plate VIII.

A. **Codex Alexandrinus,** in the British Museum. This was probably written in the first half of the fifth century, and contains the whole Bible, except Gen. **14.** 14–17; **15.** 1–5, 16–19; **16.** 6–9; 1 Kings **12.** 20—**14.** 9; Ps. **50.** 20—**80.** 11, and some parts of the New Testament, which have been lost through accidental mutilation. It includes all four books of the Maccabees, for which it is the principal authority. Before the Psalms are placed the Epistle of Athanasius to Marcellinus on the Psalter, and the summary of the contents of the Psalms by Eusebius. At the end of the Psalms is an additional psalm (the 151st), which is found in some other early manuscripts, and a number of canticles, or chants, extracted from other parts of the Bible (for instance, the songs of Moses, in Deut. **32,** of Hannah, in 1 Sam. **2.** 1–10, and the Magnificat) which were used in the services of the Church. The apocryphal Psalms of Solomon were originally added at the end of the New Testament, but the leaves containing them have been lost. For the history of the manuscript and a specimen of its writing, *see* pp. 128–132 and Plate IX.

B. **Codex Vaticanus,** in the Vatican Library at Rome. It contains the whole Bible, written in the fourth century, and is at once the oldest and probably the best extant copy of the Septuagint. It is nearly perfect, wanting only Gen. **1.** 1—**46.** 28; 2 Kings **2.** 5–7,

10–13; Ps. **106.** 27—**138.** 6 of its original contents, so far as the Old Testament is concerned; but the Prayer of Manasses and the books of Maccabees were never included in it. The text of the current editions of the Septuagint are mainly derived from this manuscript. (*See* pp. 132–137 and Plate X.)

C. **Codex Ephraemi,** in the National Library at Paris. (*See* pp. 137–139 and Plate XI.) This is a *palimpsest;* that is, the original writing has been partially washed or scraped out in order that the vellum might be used again to hold some other work,—in this case a theological treatise. The result is that only parts of the original writing can now be read; and, in addition, most of the leaves containing the Old Testament have been lost. The 64 leaves which remain contain parts of Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, and the Song of Solomon, written in the fifth century.

The manuscripts hitherto mentioned were originally complete Greek Bibles, containing both the Old and the New Testaments. Those which follow do not appear ever to have included the New Testament, and many of them only a portion of the Old.

D. **The Cotton Genesis.** One of the most lamentable sights in the Manuscript Department of the British Museum is that of the charred remains of many manuscripts of the greatest value which were burnt in the fire among Sir R. Cotton's books in 1731. Perhaps the most valuable of all the volumes then destroyed was this copy of the Book of Genesis, written in a fine uncial hand of the fifth century, and adorned with 250 illustrations in a manner evidently derived directly from the ancient Greek style of painting. The remains of this once beautiful manuscript still show the general character of the writing and the miniatures, but in a lamentably shrunken and defaced condition. Fortunately the manuscript had been examined and its text carefully collated by Grabe before the fire; and from this collation its evidence for the text of Genesis is now known.

E. **The Bodleian Genesis,** at Oxford. Written in the eighth

century, but though thus considerably later than the copies hitherto mentioned, it contains a good text. The following passages are wanting, owing to mutilation of the manuscript: Gen. **14.** 6—**18.** 24, **20.** 14—**24.** 54, **42.** 18 to end of book.

F. **Codex Ambrosianus,** at Milan. Written in the fifth century, with three columns to the page, and having (what is very unusual in early manuscripts) punctuation, accents, and breathings by the original scribe. It contains Gen. **31.** 15—Josh. **12.** 12, with many losses, however, from mutilation, and small fragments of Isaiah and Malachi. Its evidence is valuable, and where A and B differ it generally agrees with A.

G. **Codex Sarravianus,** at Leyden: a very fine manuscript, probably of the fifth century, though it has sometimes been attributed to the fourth. It is written with two columns to the page, and (like the Vatican and Sinaitic MSS. above) has no enlarged initials. It contains the Pentateuch, with portions of Joshua and Judges, and its special characteristic is that it contains a *Hexaplar* text. It is provided with Origen's asterisks and obeli; but, unfortunately, as in all other MSS. of this class, these symbols have been very imperfectly reproduced, so that we cannot depend absolutely on it to recover the text as it was before Origen's additions and alterations. Twenty-two leaves of this MS. are at Paris, where they have sometimes been named the **Codex Colbertinus,** and one more is at St. Petersburg.

H. **Codex Petropolitanus,** at St. Petersburg, of the sixth century; contains part of the Book of Numbers.

I. A Bodleian MS. of the Psalms (including, like A, the canticles), of the ninth century. It was wrongly included by Holmes and Parsons among the cursive MSS., and numbered 13. In its margin many readings are given from Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, and from the "fifth" and "seventh" versions (*see* p. 54).

K. A MS. at Leipzig, of the seventh century, containing fragments of Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, and Judges.

L. **The Vienna Genesis**: a splendid MS. at Vienna, written in silver letters upon purple vellum, and adorned with illustrations, which, like those of D, recall the classical style of painting. It is of the fifth or sixth century, and contains only the Book of Genesis. A fine photographic facsimile of the whole of this MS. has just been published.

M. **Codex Coislinianus,** at Paris; a handsome MS. of the seventh century, containing the earlier books of the Old Testament, from Genesis to 1 Kings **8.** 40, though mutilated in places. This MS. belongs to the same class as G, containing a Hexaplar text.

N. **Codex Basiliano-Vaticanus,** at Rome and Venice; written in sloping uncials of the eighth or ninth century. It consists of two volumes, both of which have, unfortunately, been much mutilated. In their present condition, the first (at Rome) contains from Lev. **13.** 59 to the end of Chronicles (with some lacunas), 2 Esdras (*i.e.* the canonical Ezra) **5.** 10—Neh. **7.** 3, and Esther; the second (at Venice) begins with Job **30.** 8, and contains the rest of Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Minor Prophets, Major Prophets, Tobit, Judith, and the four books of the Maccabees. Until quite recently the two volumes were regarded as different MSS., and the second had assigned to it a distinct letter, V, and was entitled **Codex Venetus.** In conjunction with B, this was used for the Roman edition of the Septuagint, published in 1587, which has been the edition in common use down to the present day. The person who examined it for Holmes and Parsons omitted to tell the editors that it was written in uncials, and it consequently appears in their list among the cursives, with the number 23, while its first volume takes its proper place among the uncials.

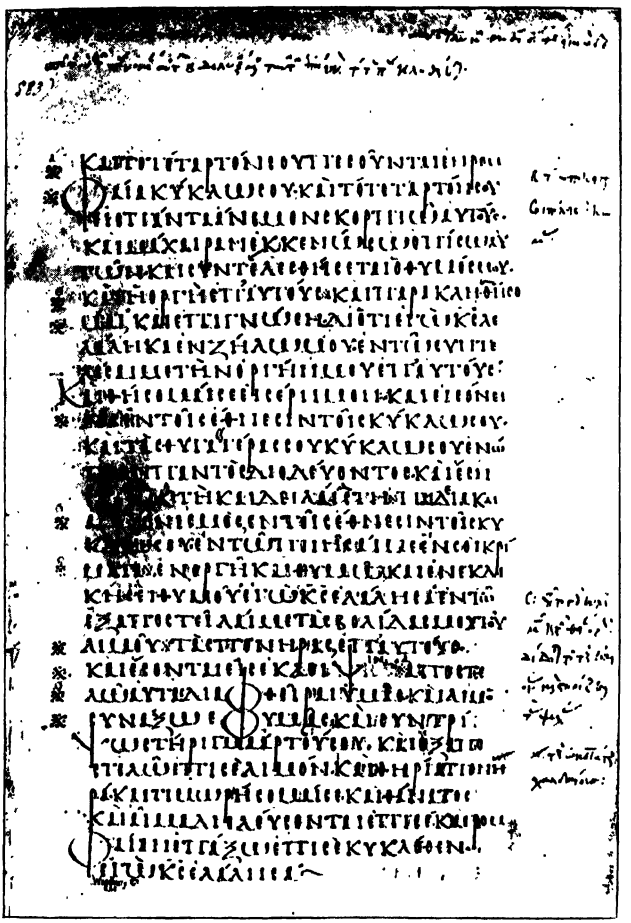
O. **Codex Dublinensis Rescriptus,** at Trinity College, Dublin. This is a *palimpsest*, like C, but consists of only eight leaves, containing portions of Isaiah, written early in the sixth century. Its special value is due to the fact that it was written in Egypt and apparently provides us with information as to the text of the edition by Hesychius, which circulated in that country.

P. Fragments of Psalms, at Emmanuel College, Cambridge; originally reckoned by Holmes and Parsons among the cursives, as No. 294, but subsequently placed among the uncials (No. IX.).

Q. **Codex Marchalianus,** in the Vatican Library at Rome. This is a most valuable copy of the Prophets, written in Egypt in the sixth century, in a fine bold uncial hand. The editor of this manuscript, Dr. Ceriani, has shown that the text, as originally written, is that of Hesychius; and its value is still further increased by the fact that an almost contemporary hand has added a great number of various readings in the margin from a copy of the Hexaplar text. These marginal readings include the additions made by Origen, generally accompanied by the proper critical marks (the obelus or asterisk), together with readings from Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion. Plate VI. gives a representation of a page of this manuscript (the whole of which has been published in a photographic facsimile) containing Ezek. 5. 12–17.* In the margin will be seen several asterisks, which are repeated in the line itself at the point at which the insertion begins (*e.g.*, lines 6, 10), and before the beginning of each line of the passage affected, while the *metobelus*, indicating the close of the inserted passage, is represented by a sort of semi-colon (*e.g.*, lines 2, 7). In most cases the name of the version from which the inserted passage was taken is indicated by an initial in the margin, α standing for Aquila (*e.g.*, line 1), θ for Theodotion (lines 6, 11, 15, 17, 22), and σ or $\sigma\upsilon$ for Symmachus. Where Hesychius has introduced words on his own account which were not in the original Septuagint, the asterisk indicating such words has been written by the original scribe, and has ample space allowed it in the writing; but the great majority of the critical signs have been added by the reviser, and show that the insertion had already been made by Origen in his Hexaplar text, which

* A papyrus fragment of this same passage, also containing the Hexaplar text and symbols, has lately been acquired in Egypt by Mr. B. P. Grenfell, and is now in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. It was apparently written about the fourth century.

PLATE VI.



CODEX MARCHALIANUS—6TH CENT.

(*Original size*, 11½ *in.* × 7 *in.*)

Hesychius often followed. The small writing in the margin consists of notes added in the thirteenth century, of no textual importance.

R. **Verona Psalter,** containing both Greek and Latin versions of the Psalms, written in the sixth century. Several canticles are added, as in A, and the 151st Psalm has been supplied by a later hand. The Greek is written in Latin letters.

T. **Zurich Psalter,** in its original state a splendid manuscript, written in silver letters with gold initials upon purple vellum. Several leaves are now missing. The canticles are included. Written in the seventh century, and often agrees with the readings of A in doubtful passages.

U. **Papyrus Psalter,** in the British Museum ; thirty-two leaves of papyrus, containing Ps. **11.** 2—**19.** 6 ; **21.** 14—**35.** 6, written in a sloping hand, probably of the seventh century. Its readings are often unique, and sometimes agree with the Hebrew against all other MSS. of the Septuagint.

V. **Codex Venetus,** in the library of St. Mark's at Venice ; *see* N, above.

W. Fragments of Psalms, at Paris, of the ninth century. Included by Holmes and Parsons among the cursives, as No. 43.

X. A MS. in the Vatican at Rome, containing most of Job, of the ninth century. Included by Holmes and Parsons among the cursives, as No. 258.

Y. **Codex Taurinensis,** at Turin, of the ninth century, containing the Minor Prophets.

Z^a, Z^b, Z^c, Z^d, Z^e, are small fragments of various books, of slight importance.

Γ (*Gamma*, the third letter of the Greek alphabet, those of the Latin alphabet being now exhausted). **Codex Cryptoferratensis,** at Grotta Ferrata, in Italy ; a *palimpsest*, containing the Prophets, written in the eighth or ninth century. Much of the original writing has been hopelessly obliterated. It is remarkable that most of the Greek manuscripts in the monastery of Grotta Ferrata are palimpsests, showing how scarce vellum was there, and how

the literary activity of the monks caused them to use the same sheets twice over, and sometimes even thrice.

Δ (*Delta*, the fourth letter of the Greek alphabet). Fragments of Bel and the Dragon, according to the version of Theodotion, written in the fifth century, if not earlier; in the Bodleian Library at Oxford.

Π (*Pi*, the sixteenth letter of the Greek alphabet). Fragments of the 4th Maccabees, of the ninth century, at St. Petersburg.

Other fragments, and perhaps even larger MSS., will no doubt come to light from time to time; indeed, the British Museum has recently acquired some leaves of a Psalter, written in a very rough hand of Egyptian type, and perhaps of the seventh or eighth century, which has not yet appeared in any published list. But the catalogue here given shows the material now available to the student of the Septuagint in the shape of uncial manuscripts. The most important of them are, no doubt, B, A, and (where it is available) ℵ, and, in their own special departments, G and Q.

The cursive manuscripts of the Septuagint are far too numerous to be described in detail. In the great edition of Holmes and Parsons no less than 308* such manuscripts are described, and their various readings quoted. It may be of some interest, however, as showing the amount of evidence available for each part of the Old Testament to indicate which manuscripts contain, in full or in part, each of the chief groups of books. The following 63 MSS. contain the Pentateuch, or part of it; Nos. 14–20, 25, 28–32, 37, 38, 44–47, 52–59, 61, 64, 68, 71–79, 82–85, 105–108, 118, 120–122, 125–136. Fifty-five contain the historical books; 15, 16, 18, 19, 29, 30, 44, 52–59, 63, 64, 68, 70–72, 74–77, 82, 84, 85, 92, 93, 98, 106–108, 118–121, 123, 128, 131, 134, 144, 158, 209, 236, 237, 241–249, besides one (No. 62) which contains only the Books of Maccabees. The Psalms are preserved in no less than 128 copies, *viz.*: 13, 21, 27, 39, 43, 55, 65–67, 69, 70, 80, 81, 99–102, 104, 106, 111–115,

The cursive MSS.

* Nominally 313, but five of them (13, 23, 43, 258, 294) are really uncial MSS., as has been mentioned above.

140–146, 150–152, 154, 156, 162–197, 199–206, 208, 210–219, 222, 223, 225–227, 262–294. The Prophets appear, more or less perfectly, in 62 manuscripts, *viz.*: 22–24, 26, 33–36, 40–42, 45, 48, 49, 51, 61, 62, 68, 70, 86–88, 90, 91, 93, 95–97 104–106, 109, 114, 130, 132, 144, 147–149, 153, 185, 198, 228–233, 238–240, 301–311. Finally there are 39 manuscripts containing the books of the Hagiographa; 55, 68, 70, 103, 106, 109, 110, 137–139, 147, 149, 155, 157, 159–161, 248–261, 295–300, 307[a], 308[a]. It is not to be supposed that this exhausts the entire stock of cursives now known to exist; but it is probably sufficient for all practical purposes. The value of the cursives only appears when they can be divided into groups, showing common descent from one or other of the ancient editions of the Septuagint which have been described above. How far this is at present feasible will be shown presently.

Such are the manuscripts on which scholars must depend for recovering the genuine text of the Greek Old Testament. It will be useful to describe briefly what has been done in this direction, as showing the kind and the amount of labour which scholars have bestowed on the task of making the text of the Bible as accurate as possible in every point. The first printed edition of the Septuagint was made by the Spaniard, Cardinal Ximenes, who combined the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin versions of the Bible in the four volumes known as the Complutensian Polyglott (1514–1517). His Greek text was mainly based on two late MSS. in the Vatican, now known as 108 and 248. In 1518 the great printer Aldus issued an edition based on MSS. then at Venice. But the most important edition in early times is the Roman, published under the patronage of Pope Sixtus in 1587. This edition, which rests mainly on the great Codex Vaticanus (B), though with many errors and divergencies,* has remained since then the standard text of the Septuagint. In 1707–1728 a very good edition of the Codex Alexandrinus (A), supplemented from other MSS. where A is deficient, was published

Printed editions.

* It has been estimated that the Roman text differs from that of B in over 4000 places.

by the Anglo-Prussian scholar Grabe. But the greatest work on the Septuagint which has yet appeared is that which R. Holmes and J. Parsons produced at Oxford in 1798–1827. In this colossal work the Roman text of 1587 is reprinted without variation, but in the critical notes are given the various readings of no less than 325 manuscripts. Unfortunately many of these MSS. were very imperfectly examined by the persons employed for the task by the editors, so that much of the work will have to be done over again; but the edition of Holmes and Parsons remains the only one which gives a general view of the manuscript evidence, and has been the basis of all study of the Septuagint text since their day. Of later editors it is only necessary to mention Tischendorf, who in 1850 issued a revision of the Roman text, with variants from ℵ, A, and C, (seventh edition in 1887, by Dr. Nestle); Field, who edited the remains of the Hexapla in 1875; Lagarde, who in 1883 published an attempt to recover the edition of Lucian, besides many other valuable contributions to the criticism of the Septuagint; and Dr. Swete, of Cambridge, who has just completed (1887–1894) an edition giving the text of the Septuagint according to the best MS. extant in each part (B, wherever it is available, elsewhere ℵ or A), with all the variants in three or four of the next best manuscripts. This is likely to remain the standard edition of the Septuagint for the use of scholars, until it is superseded by the larger Cambridge edition now in preparation, which will contain the same text with a very much larger apparatus of various readings, gathered from a selected number of MSS. representing all the different types of text.

The work, indeed, which remains to be done in connection with the text of the Septuagint is still very considerable. One would wish, first of all, to disengage the editions of Eusebius, Lucian, and Hesychius, and thereby to see what was the state of the Septuagint text at the end of the third century. Then we want to go further back, and discover, if possible, what the original text was like when it left the hands of the translators themselves. And when

How to recover the original text.

that is done we still have to ask the question which is the ultimate cause of all our interest in the Septuagint—What does this original text tell us as to the character of the Hebrew text from which it was taken?

For the first part of this inquiry scholars have already collected considerable materials. The manuscripts of the Septuagint, when closely examined, are found to fall into certain groups which point to several different centres of origin; and, chiefly by the evidence afforded by quotations in the writings of the early Fathers whose places of residence we know, it is possible to localise these centres, and thereby to say that one group represents the Antiochian edition of Lucian, and another the Alexandrian edition of Hesychius.

Reconstruction of the three editions.

The most recognisable of the three editions is that of Eusebius and Pamphilus, which in fact reproduced the text fixed by Origen. For this the leading authorities are the Syriac translation by Bishop Paulus of Tella, which contains the Prophets and Hagiographa, with Origen's apparatus of asterisks and obeli; the Codex Sarravianus (G), containing the Pentateuch, with parts of Joshua and Judges; the Codex Coislinianus (M), containing the same books, together with those of Samuel and Kings; the cursive MSS. known as 86 and 88, containing the Prophets; and the copious marginal notes in the Codex Marchalianus (Q), which give Hexaplar readings with an indication of the author (Aquila, Symmachus, or Theodotion) from whom they were taken. Lagarde also refers to a manuscript in private hands, which certainly contains this edition, but it has not yet been identified or published.

1. Eusebius.

Of the other two editions, the most recognisable is that of Lucian. Certain direct references to it in early writers, and the statement that it was the standard text in Antioch and Constantinople, have enabled modern editors to recognize it in certain extant manuscripts, and in the copious Biblical quotations of Chrysostom and Theodoret. The first suggestion to this effect seems to have been made by Dr. Ceriani, of

2. Lucian.

Milan, and it was simultaneously worked out by Field, in the Prolegomena to his *Hexapla*, and by Lagarde, who produced a text of half the Old Testament (Genesis–Esther) according to this edition, the completion of it being prevented by his lamented death. No uncial MS. contains a Lucianic text, with the exception of the Codex Venetus (V, or N). In the books Genesis–Judges it appears in the cursives 19, 108, 118; in the historical books, 19, 82, 93, 108, 118; in the Prophets, 22, 36, 48, 51, 93, 144, 231, 308. The text of the Hagiographa has not yet been investigated. A Lucianic text also appears in the Gothic and old Slavonic versions, and in the first printed edition of the Septuagint—the Complutensian, which was mainly taken from the MS. known as 108.

3. Hesychius.

The edition of Hesychius remains, and the identification of this is still involved in some uncertainty. As the edition which circulated in Egypt, it seems likely that it would be found in MSS. written in that country, in the Coptic versions, which were made from the Septuagint for the use of the native Egyptians, and in the writings of the Alexandrian Fathers, such as Cyril. Good authorities differ, however, as to the Greek manuscripts in which this edition is to be looked for. Ceriani assigns to it the Codex Alexandrinus (A), the original text of the Codex Marchalianus (Q), the Dublin fragments of Isaiah (O), and the cursives 26, 106, 198, 306 (all of the Prophets). The able German professor, Cornill, however, also dealing with MSS. containing the Prophets, finds the Hesychian version in 49, 68, 87, 90, 91, 228, 238, with the Coptic, Ethiopic, Arabic, and Old Latin versions. These are akin to the above-mentioned group represented by A, 26, etc., but have (in his opinion) more of the appearance of an authorised edition, in which marked peculiarities of text, such as there are in A, are not to be expected. The question cannot be solved without further investigation, to which it may be hoped that the forthcoming large Cambridge edition will considerably contribute.

It will be observed that only a comparatively small number of manuscripts can be definitely assigned to one or other of the

ancient editions. The rest are, for the most part, later copies containing mixed and corrupt texts, which will be of little use towards the recovery of the original form of the Septuagint. There remain, however, some of the early uncial manuscripts, including the oldest of all, the great Codex Vaticanus (B). Cornill at one time suggested that B was based on the edition of Eusebius, with the omission of all the passages therein marked by asterisks as insertions from the Hebrew; but this view has been abandoned, and it is more probable (as stated by Dr. Hort) that it is akin to the manuscripts which Origen used as the foundation of his Hexapla. Origen would, no doubt, have taken as his basis of operations the best copies of the Septuagint then available; and if B is found to contain a text like that used by Origen, it is a strong testimony in its favour. Hence it is commonly held to be, on the whole, the best and most neutral of all the manuscripts of the Septuagint; and it is a happy accident that it has formed the foundation of the commonly received text, that namely of the Roman edition of 1587. Between B and A the differences of reading are sometimes very strongly marked, and the divergencies have not yet by any means been explained. All conclusions are at present tentative and provisional, and the best scholars are the least positive as to the certainty of their results. Of the other great manuscripts, ℵ seems to contain a text intermediate between A and B, though in the Book of Tobit it has a form of the text completely different from both. Ceriani considers that it shows some traces of Hesychian influence. He makes the same claim for C; but of this the fragments are so scanty that it is difficult to arrive at any positive conclusion.

Texts of the great uncials.

But although many points of detail still remain obscure, we yet know quite enough about the Septuagint to be able to state broadly the relation in which it stands to the Massoretic Hebrew text. And here it is that the great interest and importance of the Septuagint becomes evident. Rightly or wrongly, it is certain that the Septuagint differs from the Massoretic text to a very marked

Comparison of Septuagint with Massoretic text.

extent. Words and phrases constantly differ; details which depend upon figures and numbers, such as the ages of the patriarchs in the early chapters of Genesis, show great discrepancies; whole verses, and even longer passages, appear in the one text and not in the other; the arrangement of the contents of several books varies very largely. The discrepancies are least in the Pentateuch, the words of which were no doubt held most sacred by all Jews, and so would be less likely to suffer change either in the Hebrew or in the Greek. But in the Books of Samuel and Kings, the Septuagint departs frequently from the Massoretic text; the student of the Variorum Bible may be referred for examples to 1 Sam. **4.** 1; **5.** 6; **10.** 1; **13.** 1, 15; **14.** 24, 41; **15.** 13; 2 Sam. **4.** 6–7; **11.** 23; **17.** 3; **20.** 18, 19; 1 Kings **2.** 29; **8.** 1; **12.** 2, 3, 4–24. In the narrative of David and Goliath the variations are especially striking; for the best MSS. of the Septuagint omit 1 Sam. **17.** 12–31, 41, 50, 55–58, together with **18.** 1–5, 9–11, 17–19, and the rest of the references to Merab. In the Book of Job there is good reason to believe that the original text of the Septuagint omitted nearly one-sixth of the whole (*see* p. 76). In Jeremiah the order of the prophecies differs greatly, chapters **46**–**51** being inserted (in a different order) after chapter **25.** 11, while the following passages are altogether omitted: **10.** 6–8, 10; **17.** 1–4; **27.** 1, 7, 13, and a great part of 17–22; **29.** 16–20; **33.** 14–26; **39.** 4–13. Even if we reduce the number of minor variations as much as possible (and very many of them may be due to mistakes on the part of the Septuagint translators, to different methods of supplying the vowels in the Hebrew text, to different divisions of the words of the Hebrew, or to a freedom of translation which amounts to paraphrase), yet these larger discrepancies, the list of which the reader of the Variorum Bible may easily increase for himself, are sufficient to show that the Hebrew text which lay before the authors of the Septuagint differed very considerably from that which the Massoretes have handed down to us. What the explanation of this difference may be, or which of the two texts is generally to be preferred, are questions to which it would be rash,

in the present state of our knowledge, to pretend to give a decided answer. Some statement of the case is, however, necessary for those who wish to understand what the evidence for our present Old Testament text really is; but it will be better to postpone the discussion of it until we have completed the list of the versions from which some light upon the question may be expected. Some of them help us to reconstruct the text of the Septuagint; others tell us of the condition of the Hebrew text at a later date than those at which the Samaritan and the Greek versions were made; all in some degree help forward our main purpose,—the history of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament.

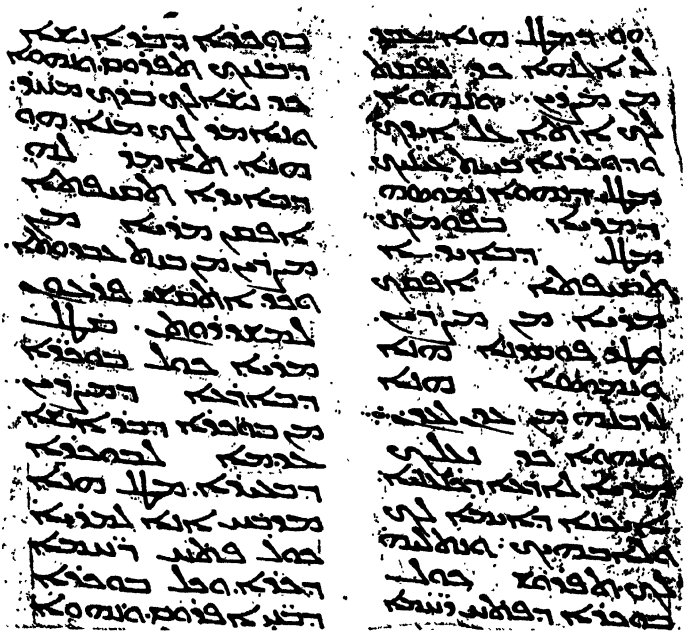
§ 3.—Other Eastern Versions.

The Syriac Version.—The two versions of which we have hitherto spoken, the Samaritan and the Greek, were made before the institution of Christianity. It is otherwise with all the remaining versions of the Old Testament. Outside the Jewish and Samaritan communities there was no desire to know the Hebrew Scriptures until Christianity came, preaching the fulfilment of those Scriptures and the extension of their promises to all nations. As the Christian missionaries spread abroad from Judæa into the surrounding countries, fulfilling their Master's last command to preach the Gospel to every people, they necessarily referred much to the history of the nation among which He wrought His ministry, and to the prophets who had prepared His way before Him. Hence there arose a demand for translations of the Hebrew Scriptures into the languages of every country in which Christianity was preached; and the versions of which we have now to speak were all the offspring of that demand. The first of these in geographical nearness to Judæa was the Syriac. Syriac is the language of Syria and Mesopotamia, which lie north and north-east of Palestine, and, with some slight differences of dialect, it was the actual language commonly spoken in Palestine (and there known as Aramaic) at the time of our Lord's life on earth. In the case of the New Testament, as we shall see,

several translations into Syriac were made; but of the Old Testament there was (apart from the version of Origen's Hexaplar text, mentioned above, p. 55, and some other late translations from the Septuagint, of which only fragments remain) only one, and that the one which, in both Old and New Testament, is and always has been the standard version of all the Syriac Churches. It is known as the Peshitto, or "Simple" version, but the exact explanation of the name is unknown. It was probably made in the second or third century after Christ; certainly not later, since in the fourth century we find it quoted and referred to as an authority of long standing. A considerable number of copies of it are known, most of them forming part of a splendid collection of Syriac manuscripts which were secured for the British Museum in 1842 from the monastery of St. Mary Deipara, situated in the Nitrian desert in Egypt. Among these is the manuscript of which a part is reproduced in Plate VII., which has the distinction of being the oldest copy of the Bible in any language of which the exact date is known. It was written in the year 464, and contains the Books of Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy; the part here reproduced being Exod. **13.** 8–17. We thus have direct evidence of the text of this version in the fifth century, and in the century before that we find copious quotations from it in the writings of two Syrian Fathers, Ephrem and Aphraates.

The Peshitto version omits the books of the Apocrypha, and hence was evidently taken from Hebrew MSS. after the Canon of the Hebrew Scriptures had been finally fixed. It also was originally without the Chronicles, which were added to it (from a Jewish Targum) at a later time. The cause of the omission is not known, and it may have been due simply to a belief that the Jewish history was sufficiently represented by the Books of Kings. The whole translation is from the Hebrew, but the translators have been rather free in their renderings, and seem also to have been acquainted with the Septuagint. The books of the Apocrypha (except 1 Esdras and perhaps Tobit) were added at an early date,

PLATE VII.



PESHITTO SYRIAC MS.—A.D. 461.

(*Original size of page*, 10¾ *in.* × 8¾ *in.*: *of part reproduced*, 6¼ *in.* × 6¼ *in.*)

and they now appear in all the earlier Syriac MSS. which make any pretence to contain a complete Old Testament. The Syriac version of these books is often useful in correcting errors which have found their way into the Greek text.* At a later date the whole version was revised by comparison with the Septuagint; and hence it is not very trustworthy as evidence for the Hebrew text, and its agreements with the Septuagint cannot be taken with any certainty as independent confirmations of its reading.

The Coptic Versions (*see* Plates XVI. & XVII.).—Coptic is the language which was used by the natives of Egypt at the time when the Bible was first translated for their use. It is, indeed, a modified form of the language which had been spoken in the country from time immemorial; but about the end of the first century after Christ it began, owing to the influence of the great number of Greeks settled in Egypt, to be written in Greek characters, with six additional letters, and with a considerable admixture of Greek words. It is to this form of the language that the name of Coptic was given, and it continues to the present day to be used in the services of the Christian Church in Egypt. There were, however, differences in the dialects spoken in different parts of the country, and consequently more than one translation of the Scriptures was required. The number of these dialects is still a matter of uncertainty, for the papyri discovered in Egypt of late years have been, and still are, adding considerably to our knowledge of them; but it appears that four or five different versions of the New Testament have been identified, and three of the Old. Only one of these, however, has survived complete, though there are very considerable fragments of another.

The Coptic versions of the Bible are more important for the New Testament than for the Old, and it will consequently be convenient to treat of them at greater length in the chapter dealing with the versions of the New Testament. In the Old Testament

* Especially in the Book of Ecclesiasticus, in which the Syriac version must have been made from the Hebrew original, now lost; *see* the Variorum Apocrypha and the editor's preface.

they were made from the Septuagint, and consequently their evidence is mainly valuable for the purpose of restoring the Greek text, and only indirectly for the Hebrew text which lies behind the Greek. For the student of the Septuagint, however, they should be of considerable service. As it is probable that they were taken from the edition of the Septuagint current in Egypt, which was that of Hesychius, they should give valuable assistance in identifying and recovering the text of that edition. The two most important of the Coptic versions are (*a*) the *Memphitic* or *Bohairic Version*, current in Lower or Northern Egypt, and (*b*) the *Thebaic* or *Sahidic Version*, current in Upper or Southern Egypt. Of these the Bohairic alone is complete, having been ultimately adopted as the standard Bible for all Egypt; but the Sahidic exists in very considerable fragments. One portion of the Sahidic version is of especial interest; for within the last few years copies of the Book of Job in this version have been discovered containing a text which bears every mark of being its original form. It is shorter than the received text by about one-sixth, omitting in all about 376 verses, but the passages which disappear are in many cases inconsistent with the general argument of the book, and appear to have been inserted by Jewish scholars who did not understand, or did not approve of, the plan of the poem as it was originally written. Indeed the whole Sahidic Old Testament seems to have been at first free from Hexaplar additions, but to have been subsequently revised from MSS. containing these additions, presumably copies of the Hesychian text which was current in Egypt. Both versions appear to have been made in the third century, if not earlier, the Bohairic being probably the first in order of time. Of the third version, (*c*) the *Middle Egyptian*, only a few fragments have as yet been discovered.

The Ethiopic Version.—With the versions of Egypt may naturally go the version of Ethiopia; but it will require only a brief notice. The Ethiopian manuscripts (most of which were acquired by the British Museum at the time of the Abyssinian war in 1867) are of very late date, but the original translation was probably

made in the fourth century after Christ. This version was, no doubt, made from the Septuagint; but it has been questioned whether the extant MSS. really represent this translation, or a much later one, made in the fourteenth century from the Arabic or Coptic. The fact is that at present little can be said to be known about the version at all. Both Old and New Testament are preserved to us entire, though in very late manuscripts, but they have never been properly edited.

The remaining Oriental versions may be dismissed in a few words. A few fragments remain of the **Gothic** version, made for the Goths in the fourth century by their bishop, Ulfilas, while they were still settled in Mœsia, the modern Servia and Bulgaria. Its chief interest lies in the fact that it was taken from a copy of the Lucianic edition of the Septuagint.

The **Armenian, Arabic, Georgian,** and **Slavonic** versions were all made from the Septuagint, but they appear to be of little critical value.

§ 4.—The Latin Versions.

(*a*) **The Old Latin Version.**—When Christianity reached Rome, the Church which was founded there was at first more Greek than Latin. St. Paul wrote to it in Greek, the names of most of its members, so far as we know them, are Greek, and its earliest bishops were Greek: one of them, Clement, wrote an epistle to the Corinthians in Greek which is found along with the books of the New Testament in one of the earliest Greek Bibles, the Codex Alexandrinus. There was therefore at first no necessity for a Latin version of the Scriptures; and the necessity, when it arose, was felt less in Rome itself than in the Roman province of Africa. It is in this province, consisting of the habitable part of northern Africa, lying along the southern coast of the Mediterranean, that a Latin Bible first makes its appearance.

The importance of the Old Latin version, as it is called, to distinguish it from the later version of St. Jerome, is much greater in the New Testament than in the Old. In the former,

it is the earliest translation of the original Greek which we possess, and is an important evidence for the state of the text in the second century. In the latter it is only a version of a version, being made from the Septuagint, not from the original Hebrew. Historically, moreover, it is of less importance; for it was almost entirely superseded by the version of Jerome, and it exists to-day only in fragments. No entire manuscript survives of the Old Testament in this version; a few books only, and those chiefly of the Apocrypha, exist complete; for the rest we are indebted for most of our knowledge of this version to the quotations in the early Latin Fathers.

The Old Latin version of the New Testament was extant in Africa in the second century after Christ, and it is probable that the translation of the Old Testament was made at the same time, since it is almost certain that a complete Latin Bible was known to Tertullian (about A.D. 200). Whether the first translation was actually made in Africa, it is impossible to say, for want of positive evidence; but this view is commonly held and is at least probable. What is certain is that the version exists in two different forms, probably representing two independent translations, known, from the regions in which they circulated, as the *African* and the *European*; and that a revised form of the latter was current in Italy towards the end of the fourth century, and was known as the *Italic*. The original translation was rough and somewhat free; in the Italic edition the roughnesses are toned down and the translation revised with reference to the Greek. As the translation was originally made before the time of the various editions of Origen, Lucian, and Hesychius, its evidence, wherever we possess it, is useful as a means to the recovery of the earlier form of the Septuagint; and it is observable that its text is akin to that which appears in the Codex Alexandrinus, which seems to indicate an Egyptian origin. Unfortunately it is available only to a limited extent. The apocryphal books of Esdras, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, and Maccabees, together with the additions to Daniel and Esther, were not translated or

revised by Jerome, and consequently the Old Latin versions of these books were incorporated in the later Latin Bible and remain there to this day.* The Psalter survives in a very slightly altered form; and Job and Esther are preserved in some ancient manuscripts. With these exceptions, the books of the Old Testament are known to us only in the scanty fragments of three manuscripts and the quotations of the Fathers; and though the latter are copious, they are an uncertain and insufficient basis for general criticism.

(*b*) **The Vulgate.**—It is very different when we come to the great work of St. Jerome, which, in the main, continues to be the Bible of the Roman Church to this day. Its origin is known to us from the letters and prefaces of its author; its evidence is preserved to us in hundreds and even thousands of manuscripts of all ages from the fourth century to the fifteenth. Its historical importance is enormous, especially for the Churches of Western Europe; for, as we shall see in the progress of our story, it was the Bible of these Churches, including our own Church of England, until the time of the Reformation. We shall have to trace its history in the later chapters of this book; for the present we are concerned with the story of its birth.

By the end of the fourth century the imperfections of the Old Latin version had become evident to the leaders of the Roman Church. Not only was the translation taken from the Greek of the Septuagint, instead of the original Hebrew, but the current copies of it were grossly disfigured by corruptions. The inevitable mistakes of copyists, the omissions and interpolations of accident or design, the freedom with which early translators handled the text of their original, the alterations of revisers, and the different origin of the African and European forms of the version, all contributed to produce a state of confusion and

* The Old Latin version of Ecclesiasticus enables us to correct a disarrangement which has taken place in the text of the Septuagint. In the Greek version, chap. **30.** 25—**33.** 13*a* is placed after chap. **36.** 16*a*, which is plainly wrong. The Latin version has preserved the true order, which has been followed in our Authorised Version.

distortion intolerable to an educated Churchman. Hence about the year 382 Pope Damasus appealed to the most capable Biblical scholar then living, Eusebius Hieronymus, whom we know better under the abbreviated form of his name, Jerome, to undertake a revision of the Latin Bible.

Jerome.

Jerome was born in 346, a native of Stridon in Pannonia, not far from the modern Trieste. Throughout his life he was devoted to Biblical studies. In 374 he set himself to learn Hebrew, then a very rare accomplishment in the West, taking as his teacher a converted Jew. His first Biblical undertaking, however, was not connected with his Hebrew studies. The existing Latin Bible was a translation from the Greek throughout, in the Old Testament as well as in the New, and all that Pope Damasus now invited Jerome to do was to revise this translation with reference to the Greek. He began with the Gospels, of which we shall have to speak later; but about the same time he also made his first revision of the Psalter. He produced eventually no less than three versions of the Psalms, all of which are still extant. The first was this very slight revision of the Old Latin version, with reference to the Septuagint, and is known as the *Roman* Psalter; it was officially adopted by Pope Damasus, and still remains in use in the cathedral of St. Peter at Rome. The second, made between 387 and 390, was a more thorough revision, still with reference to the Septuagint; but Jerome attempted to bring it into closer conformity with the Hebrew by using Origen's Hexaplar text and reproducing his asterisks and obeli; this version was first adopted in Gaul, whence it is known as the *Gallican* Psalter, and it has held its place as the Psalter in general use in the Roman Church and in the Roman Bible from that day to this, in spite of the superior accuracy of the third version which Jerome subsequently published. This is known as the *Hebrew* Psalter, being an entirely fresh translation from the original Hebrew. It is found in a fair number of manuscripts of the Vulgate, often in parallel

His translation of the Gospels.

His three Psalters.

columns with the Gallican version, but it never attained to general usage or popularity.

About the time when Jerome produced his Gallican Psalter, he also revised some of the other books of the Old Testament, such as Job (which alone now survives in this form), with reference to the Hexaplar text; but it would appear that this undertaking was not carried to completion. It is probable that Jerome, as his knowledge of Hebrew increased, grew dissatisfied with the task of merely revising the Old Latin translation with reference to a text which itself was only a translation. He had completed the revision of the New Testament on these lines; but with the Old Testament he resolved to take in hand an altogether new translation from the Hebrew. He appears to have felt no doubt as to the superiority of the Hebrew text over the Greek, and in all cases of divergence regarded the Hebrew as alone correct. This great work occupied him from about the year 390 to 404; and separate books or groups of books were published as they were completed. The first to appear were the Books of Samuel and Kings, next the Prophets, and lastly the Pentateuch, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, and Esther.

His Old Testament.

In the prefatory letters prefixed to these books, Jerome tells us much of his work and its reception. In spite of much individual support which he received, the general attitude towards it was one of great hostility. The sweeping nature of the changes introduced, the marked difference in the text translated, alienated those who had been brought up to know and to love the old version, and who could not understand the critical reasons for the alteration. Jerome felt this opposition keenly, and raged against what he regarded as its unreasonableness; and his sensitiveness, not to say irritability, finds vigorous expression in his prefaces. We who have seen the introduction of a Revised Bible in our own country, intended to supersede the version to which England has been devotedly attached for centuries, can understand the difficulties which surrounded the work of Jerome. Gradually, as we shall see

Reception of his version.

in a later chapter, the superior accuracy and scholarship of his version gave it the victory, though not in a perfect or complete form. The Gallican Psalter continued to hold its own, and was never replaced by the version from the Hebrew. The apocryphal books he wished to reject entirely, because they found no place in the current Hebrew Bible. He did indeed consent reluctantly to make a very hurried translation of the Books of Judith and Tobit; but the remaining books he left untouched. In spite of this, they continued to find a place in the Latin Bible; and the Vulgate, as finally adopted by the Roman Church, contains these books in the form in which they had stood, before the days of Jerome, in the Old Latin version. In the rest of the Old Testament, Jerome's version ultimately superseded the Old Latin, and in the New Testament his revision of the Old Latin held its ground. To this composite Bible, consisting partly of unrevised translations from the Greek, partly of revised translations from the same, and partly of translations from the Hebrew, was given in later days, when it had been generally accepted in Western Europe, the name of the "Vulgate," or commonly received translation; and of this, the Bible of our own country until the Reformation, and of the Roman Church until to-day, we shall have much to say hereafter as we trace its history through the centuries. We shall also reserve for later chapters an account of the chief manuscripts in which it is now preserved. In the present chapter we have to do with it only as it affords evidence which may help us to recover the original Hebrew text of the Old Testament.

In this respect its importance is not to be compared with that of the Septuagint. The Hebrew text accessible to Jerome was practically identical with that which is accessible to ourselves; for although the Massoretes themselves are later in date than Jerome by several centuries, yet, as we have seen, the text which they stereotyped had come down practically unchanged since the beginning of the second century after Christ. Hence the version of Jerome is of little help to us in our attempt to recover the Hebrew text as it existed in the centuries before the

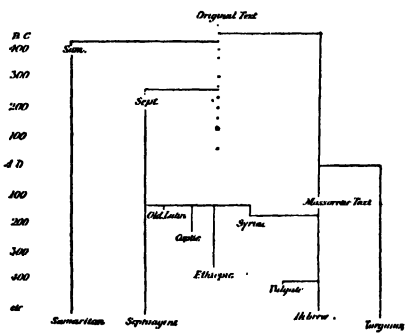
Its character.

Christian era; on the other hand, if the Massoretic text is in itself superior to the Greek version as a whole, then the Vulgate is a more satisfactory national Bible than the Septuagint. The translation itself is of unequal merit; some parts are free to the verge of paraphrase, others are so literal as to be nearly unintelligible; but on the whole the wôrk is one of very great merit, and justifies the commanding position which Jerome holds among the Fathers of the Roman Church. Jerome was, indeed, for the West what Origen was for the East,—the greatest Biblical scholar which the Church produced before the revival of learning at the end of the Middle Ages.

§ 5.—Condition of the Old Testament Text.

The Vulgate is the last of the versions of the Old Testament which need be mentioned here; and now we come back to the question with which we ended the preceding chapter. What light, after all, do these versions throw on the text of the Old Testament? Do they help us to get behind the Massoretic text, and see what the words of the Scriptures were when they were first written down? And, if so, does this earlier evidence confirm the accuracy of the Massoretic text, or does it throw doubt upon it? With the answer to this question we can close our examination of the Old Testament text.

A diagram may serve to summarise, in broad outline, the information which has been given above.



In the first place it will be clear that some of the versions we have described must be excluded on the ground that they are not translations of the Hebrew at all. Thus the Coptic, Ethiopic, Gothic, Armenian, Arabic, Georgian, Slavonic, and Old Latin versions were made from the Greek of the Septuagint; and they can only indirectly help us to recover the original Hebrew. Their value is that they help us to restore the original text of the Septuagint; and from the Septuagint we may get on to the Hebrew. In the next place, the Peshitto Syriac and the Latin Vulgate, though translated from the Hebrew, were translated at a time when the Hebrew text was practically fixed in the form in which we now have it. The Peshitto was made in the second or third century, the Vulgate at the end of the fourth; but we have already seen that we can trace back the Massoretic text to about the beginning of the second century. In some cases, when the Hebrew has been corrupted at a comparatively late date, these versions may show us the mistake; but their main value arises from the fact that, at the time when they were made, the Hebrew vowel-points were not yet written down, but were supplied in reading the Scriptures according to the tradition current among the Jews. Hence the Peshitto and the Vulgate show us in what way the absent vowels were supplied at a date very much earlier than any of our existing manuscripts. The same is the case with the Greek versions of Aquila, Theodotion, and Symmachus. They were made from the Hebrew, but from a Hebrew text too late to be of much service to us in our present inquiry.

Most of the versions too late to help us.

There remain the Samaritan and the Septuagint versions. Of these the Samaritan is the oldest; and as it is not really a translation into a different language, but a direct descendant of the original Scriptures in the same language and written in the same characters, its evidence might be expected to be of exceptional value. Unfortunately, however, it relates only to the Pentateuch; and we have seen (p. 72) that it is exactly here that help is least required, and

Evidence of the Samaritan Pentateuch.

that the variations of the Samaritan text, even where they appear to be right, are not of very great or striking importance. With the Septuagint it is quite otherwise. It contains all the books of the Old Testament, including those which the Jews finally refused to accept as inspired; and its variations are, in many of the books, both numerous and important. The real question to be debated, then, is this: Does the Septuagint or the Massoretic text represent most accurately the words and form of the Old Testament Scriptures as they were originally written?

Septuagint *v.* Massoretic.

So far as the weight of authority goes, the preponderance is decidedly in favour of the Hebrew. Origen and Jerome, the two greatest Biblical scholars of antiquity, deliberately abandoned the original Septuagint and its descendants, the translations made from it, in order to produce versions which should correspond as nearly as possible with the Hebrew. So, too, in the modern world, all the translators of the Bible whose scholarship was equal to it went to the Hebrew for their text of the Old Testament, while those who could not read Hebrew fell back upon the Vulgate, which was itself translated from the Hebrew. Our own Authorised and Revised Bibles, as well as nearly all the translations which preceded them, rest almost entirely upon the Massoretic text, and only very rarely follow the versions in preference to it. And this is very natural; for the Old Testament books were written in Hebrew, and it seems reasonable to suppose that they would be best represented in the Hebrew manuscripts. In the case of no other book in the world should we look to a translation rather than to copies in the original language for the best representation of the contents of the work. Since the last century, however, there have been scholars who have maintained that the Septuagint comes nearer to the original Hebrew than do the Hebrew manuscripts of the Massoretic family; and this view has recently been urged with much vigour and plausibility in an English journal.*

* By Sir Henry Howorth, M.P., F.R.S., in the *Academy*, 1893–4.

It would be absurd to attempt to decide the point authoritatively in such a work as this; but the conditions of the problem can be stated, and the apparent course of the controversy indicated in brief.

The Hebrew text sure to be corrupted;

In the first place it is only natural that the Hebrew text should have suffered considerable corruption. If we take the year 100 after Christ as representing the date to which we can trace back the existence of the Massoretic text, there is still a gap of many centuries before we reach the dates at which most of the books were composed. Nearly a thousand years separate us from the earliest of the Prophets, and even if we accept the latest date which modern criticism assigns to the composition of the Pentateuch in its present form, there are still more than five hundred years to be accounted for. It would be contrary to reason to suppose that the text had been handed down through all these centuries without suffering damage from the errors of scribes or the alterations of correctors, especially when we remember that in the course of that period the whole style of writing had been changed by the introduction of the square Hebrew characters, that the words were not divided from one another, and that the vowels were not yet indicated by any marks. It is thus natural in itself that the Hebrew text as we have it now should need some correction. It is also natural that the Septuagint version, which we can trace back to an origin more than 350 years earlier than the Massoretic text, should in some cases enable us to supply the needed correction. The text of the Septuagint may itself have suffered much corruption between the time of its composition and the time to which our direct knowledge of it goes back; but it is contrary to reason to suppose that it has always been corrupted in those places where the Hebrew has been corrupted, and that it does not sometimes preserve the right reading where the Hebrew is wrong.

A partial confirmation of this conclusion is provided by the Targums, the earliest portions of which go back a century or more before the formation of the Massoretic text. In these there are

indications that the text on which they were based, though very like the Massoretic text, was not identical with it. We can, however, go further, and show that there is a much larger number of passages in which corruption has almost certainly taken place between the date at which the Septuagint was written and that at which the Massoretic text was formed. It would need an entire treatise to do this thoroughly, but the reader of the Variorum Bible will find a considerable number of places noted in which the reading of the Septuagint makes better sense than that of the Hebrew. In not a few passages the Hebrew gives no natural meaning at all; for instance, Ex. **14.** 20; 1 Sam. **13.** 21; **27.** 10 (where even the Authorised Version departs from the Massoretic text); much of 1 Kings **6** & **7**; Job **3.** 14; **35.** 15, and many other passages indicated in the Variorum Bible. In other places verses are supplied by the Septuagint which are not in the Hebrew; in these it will be a matter for critics to decide in each case whether the Hebrew has wrongly omitted words, or the Septuagint wrongly inserted them, but it is not likely that the answer will always be the same. A list of some such passages has already been given on p. 72. Again, take the larger variations there mentioned in the Books of Jeremiah and Job. In the former the arrangement found in the Septuagint is by many scholars considered preferable to that of the Hebrew, and its text in many doubtful passages appears to be superior. In Job the proof is even more complete; for a large number of passages in it, which had already been believed, on the ground of their style, to be later additions to the Hebrew, have recently been shown to have been absent from the original text of the Septuagint, and to have been added by Origen in his Hexapla, with the usual marks indicating that they had been introduced by him from the Hebrew. Once more, in the Pentateuch we find the Septuagint and the Samaritan version often agreeing in opposition to the Hebrew; and since there is no reasonable ground for asserting that either of these translations was influenced by the other, we can only suppose that in such passages they represent the original reading of the Hebrew, and

and certainly corrupt in some places.

that the Massoretic text is corrupt. To this it may be added that the "Book of Jubilees," a Jewish work written not long before the fall of Jerusalem (A.D. 70) and containing a modified version of the story of Genesis, frequently supports the Septuagint and Samaritan readings in preference to those of the Hebrew.

But the Septuagint not always trustworthy.

It seems, then, reasonable to conclude that in many cases the Septuagint certainly contains a better text than the Hebrew; and if this is so, it is likely that it is often right in passages where we are not able to decide with certainty between alternative readings. Can we go further and say that it is *generally* so, and that wherever the two differ, the presumption is in favour of the Septuagint? Certainly not, without considerable qualifications. There can be no doubt, first, that the Septuagint as originally written contained many mistakes; and, secondly, that the text of it has been much corrupted in the course of ages. It must be remembered that the Septuagint was translated from a Hebrew text in which the words were not separated from one another and were unprovided with vowel points. Hence some of the differences between the Septuagint and the Hebrew do not imply a difference of reading at all, but simply a difference in the division of the letters into words or in the vowel points supplied. Sometimes the one may be right and sometimes the other; but in any case the difference is one of *interpretation*, not of *text*. Then, again, there can be no doubt that the authors of the Septuagint made many actual mistakes of translation. Hebrew, it must be remembered, was not their habitual language of conversation; it was a matter of study, as old English is to scholars to-day, and it was quite possible for them to mistake the meaning of a word, or to confuse words which were written or spoken nearly alike. The possibility of such mistakes must be borne in mind, and only a good Hebrew scholar can warn us of them.*

It is a more difficult point to decide whether the authors of

* Some interesting examples of errors caused by the Greek translator having misunderstood the Hebrew, or having supplied the wrong vowel points, are given in the preface to the *Variorum Apocrypha*.

the Septuagint made deliberate additions to the text. Translators held a different view of their rights and duties from that which would be accepted to-day. They thought themselves at liberty to add explanatory words and phrases, to paraphrase instead of adhering closely to their original, to supplement what they believed to be omissions (often by incorporating words from other passages where the same or similar events were recorded, as from Kings into Chronicles, and *vice versâ*), perhaps even to insert incidents which they believed to be true and edifying. This would seem to be the case with the additions to the Books of Daniel and Esther, which the Jews refused to accept as part of the inspired Scriptures, and which have been banished to the Apocrypha in the English Bible. In smaller details, the authors of the Septuagint seem at times to have softened down strong expressions of the Hebrew, no doubt from a feeling that the more refined literary taste of Alexandria would be offended by them.

Additions in Septuagint.

As to the corruptions of the Septuagint text, the history of it in the preceding pages explains these sufficiently. It is no easy task, in many places, to be sure what the true reading of the Septuagint is. Some manuscripts represent the text of Origen, in which everything has been brought into conformity with the Hebrew as it was in his day; many are more or less influenced by his text, or by the versions of Aquila and Theodotion. Some represent the edition of Lucian; others that of Hesychius. Even those which belong to none of these classes do not agree among themselves. The great manuscripts known as A and B frequently differ very markedly from one another, and ℵ sometimes stands quite apart from both. It is clear that in many cases it is impossible to correct the Hebrew from the Greek until we have first made sure what the Greek reading really is.

Corruptions of Septuagint text.

One further possibility remains to be considered, that of deliberate falsification of either Greek or Hebrew for party purposes. Such accusations were made, both by Christians and by Jews,

in the early centuries of the Church's history, when the Jews held to the Hebrew text as it was fixed about A.D. 100, and the Christians to the Septuagint. They have been renewed from time to time; and, quite lately, Sir H. Howorth, in his contention for the superiority of the Septuagint, has declared the Massoretic text to have been deliberately altered by the Jews with an anti-Christian purpose. But the proof for so serious a charge is wholly lacking. It is true that the Hebrew Bible as we know it assumed its present form at a time when the antagonism between Jew and Christian was strongly marked, and probably under the direction of the Rabbi Akiba, the great leader of the extreme party of the Jews at the end of the first century. At such a time and under such a leader it might seem not impossible that an attempt would be made to remove from the Old Testament those passages and expressions to which the Christians referred most triumphantly as prophecies of Christ. The best answer to such a charge is that these passages have not been removed, and that the differences between the Massoretic text and the Septuagint are by no means of this character. Nothing can have been gained, from the party point of view, by altering the order of the prophecies of Jeremiah, or by expanding the Book of Job. The Books of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus, which were ejected from the Hebrew text and retained in the Greek, do not testify of Christ more than the undisputed books which remain in both. The Christians had less reason to feel special interest in the Books of the Maccabees than the patriotic Jews. Indeed, it is untrue to say that the books of the Apocrypha were at this time ejected from the Hebrew Bible; the fact being that they had never formed part of it, and were never quoted or used on the same level as the books recognised as inspired. It is true that one verse has dropped out of a long list of towns (after Josh. **15.** 59), in which was contained (as the Septuagint shows; *see* Variorum footnote) the name of "Ephratah, which is Bethlehem," by the help of which the reference to Ephratah in Psalm **132.** 6 might be

Deliberate falsification of Hebrew not proven.

interpreted as a prophecy of our Lord's birth at Bethlehem; but seeing that the same identification is repeated in four other places, including the much more strongly Messianic passage in Micah 5. 2, the omission in Joshua alone would be perfectly useless for party purposes, and may much more fairly be explained as an accident. It is needless to add that the greater prophecies of the Messiah, such as the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, stand quite untouched in the Hebrew, and that the vast majority of the differences between the Hebrew and the Greek throughout the Old Testament could have no possible partisan motive whatever.

Summing-up.

The authors of our Revised Version of the Old Testament, while recognising the probable existence of earlier editions of the Hebrew differing from the Massoretic text, yet declare that "the state of knowledge on the subject is not at present such as to justify any attempt at an entire reconstruction of the text on the authority of the versions," and have consequently "thought it most prudent to adopt the Massoretic Text as the basis of their work, and to depart from it, as the Authorised Translators had done, only in exceptional cases." There can be no doubt that they did rightly. The versions have as yet been too insufficiently studied to justify a general use or a rash reliance upon them. When the text of the Septuagint, in particular, has been placed on a satisfactory footing (to which it is to be hoped the forthcoming Cambridge edition will greatly contribute) it will be time enough to consider how far its readings may be taken in preference to those of the Hebrew. It is probable that eventually a much fuller use will be made of the Septuagint than has hitherto been the case, and those have done good work who have called attention, even in exaggerated tones, to the claims of the ancient Greek version; but no general substitution of the Greek for the Hebrew as the prime authority for the text of the Old Testament will be possible unless the universal assent of students be won to the change. It will not be enough for one section of specialists to take up the cry, and, proclaiming themselves to be the only advanced and unprejudiced school, look down

upon all others as unenlightened laggards. Such schools and such cries, stimulative as they are of thought and of work, are for the moment only. If the Massoretic text is ever to be driven from the assured position of supremacy which it has held since the days of Origen and of Jerome, it will only be when the great bulk of sober criticism and the general intelligence of Biblical students have been convinced that the change is necessary. It is very doubtful whether such a conviction will ever be reached ; and meanwhile the plain student of the Bible may take comfort in the thought that, however interesting in detail the variations between the versions and the Hebrew may be, they touch none of the great fundamental teachings of the Old Testament. The history of the Chosen People remains the same ; the moral eloquence of prophet and psalmist is unaltered ; and still the Old Testament Scriptures testify of Christ, as they have always testified.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TEXT OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

WHEN we pass from the Old Testament to the New, we pass from obscurity into a region of comparative light. Light, indeed, is plentiful on most of its history; our danger is rather lest we should be confused by a multiplicity of illumination from different quarters, as the electric search-lights of a fleet often bewilder those who use them. We know, within narrow limits, the dates at which the various books of the New Testament were written; we have a multitude of manuscripts, some of them reaching back to within 250 years of the date of the composition of the books; we have evidence from versions and the early Christian writers which carry us almost into the apostolic age itself. We shall find many more disputes as to *minor* points concerning the text of the New Testament than we do in the Old, just because the evidence is so plentiful and comes from so many different quarters; but we shall find fewer doubts affecting its general integrity.

The books of the New Testament were written between the years 50 and 100 after Christ. If anyone demurs to this lower limit as being stated too dogmatically, we would only say that it is not laid down in ignorance that it has been contested, but in the belief that it has been contested without success. But this is not the place for a discussion on the date of the Gospels or Epistles, and if anyone prefers a later date, he only shortens the period that elapsed between the composition of the books in question and the date at which the earliest manuscripts now extant were written. The originals of the several books have long ago disappeared. They must have perished in the very infancy of the Church; for no

The original MSS.

allusion is ever made to them by any Christian writer.* We can however, form some idea of what they must have looked like. Each book, we must remember, was written separately, and there can have been no idea at first of combining them into a single collection corresponding in importance and sacredness to the Law, the Prophets, and the Hagiographa. St. Luke merely wrote down, as many had taken in hand to do before, a memoir of our Lord's life; St. Paul wrote letters to the congregation at Rome or at Corinth, just as we write to our friends in Canada or India. The material used was, no doubt, papyrus (*see* p. 21); for this was the common material for writing, whether for literary or for private purposes, though parchment was used at times, probably, as the instructions of the Talmud at a later date imply, for more important documents, such as the sacred books of the Old Testament. Thus, when St. Paul directs Timothy to bring with him "the books, but especially the parchments," the latter may well have been copies of parts of the Old Testament; the rest must have been works written on papyrus, but of what nature we cannot tell. His own letters would certainly have been written on papyrus; and the discoveries of the last fifty, and especially of the last five, years have given us back not a few books and letters written on this material by inhabitants of the neighbouring country of Egypt at this very time. The elder of the church in Western Asia who arose in his congregation to read the letter of St. Paul which we know as the Epistle to the Ephesians, must have held in his hand a roll of white or light yellow material about four feet in length and some ten inches in height. The Acts of the Apostles might have formed a portly roll of thirty feet, or might even have been divided into two or more sections. Even had the idea been entertained of making a collection of all the books which now form our New Testament, it would have been quite impossible to have combined them in a single volume, so long as papyrus was the material employed.

* A very rhetorical passage in Tertullian may be ignored.

But in fact the formation of a single "New Testament" was impossible, so long as no decision had been reached by the Church to distinguish between the inspired and the uninspired books. The four Gospels had indeed been marked off as a single authoritative group early in the second century; and the epistles of St. Paul formed a group by themselves, easily recognisable and generally accepted. But in the second and third and even in the fourth century the claims of such books as 2 and 3 John, 2 Peter, Jude, and the Apocalypse were not admitted by all; while other early Christian writings, such as the Epistle of Clement, the epistle which passed by the name of Barnabas, and the "Shepherd" of Hermas, ranked almost, if not quite, on the same footing as the canonical books. All this time it is highly improbable that the sacred books were written otherwise than singly or in small groups. Only when the minds of men were being led to mark off with some unanimity the books held to be authoritative, are collected editions, as we should now call them, likely to have been made. Only gradually did men arrive at the conception of a Canon, or authoritative collection, of the New Testament which should rank beside the Canon of the Old.

Complete New Testaments impossible at first.

We need, then, feel no surprise either at the fact that all the manuscripts of the first three centuries have (so far as we know) perished, or at the great quantity of various readings which we find to have come into existence by the time our earliest extant manuscripts were written. The earliest Christians, a poor, scattered, often illiterate body, looking for the return of their Lord at no distant date, were not likely either to care sedulously for minute accuracy of transcription, or to preserve their books religiously for the benefit of posterity. Salvation was not to be secured by exactness in copying the precise order of words; it was the substance of the teaching that mattered, and the scribe might even incorporate into the narrative some incident which he believed to be equally authentic, and think no harm in so doing. So divergent readings would spring up, and different texts would become current in

different regions, each manuscript being a centre from which other copies would be taken in its own neighbourhood. Persecution, too, had a potent influence on the fortunes of the Bible text. On the one hand, an edict such as that of Diocletian in 303, ordering all the sacred books of the Christians to be burnt, would lead men to distinguish between the sacred and non-sacred books, and so assist the formation of an authoritative Canon. On the other hand, numberless copies must have been destroyed by the Roman officials during these times of persecution, the comparison of copies with a view to removing their divergencies must have been difficult, and the formation of large and carefully written manuscripts must have been discouraged.

The change comes with the acceptance of Christianity by the Emperor Constantine in A.D. 324. Christianity ceased to be persecuted and became the religion of the Empire. Its books needed no longer to be concealed; on the contrary, a great demand for additional copies must have been created to supply the new churches and the new converts. The Emperor himself instructed Eusebius of Cæsarea, the great historian of the early Church, to provide fifty copies of the Scriptures for the churches of Constantinople; and the other great towns of the Empire must have required many more for their own wants. Here then, and possibly not before, we may find the origin of the first collected New Testaments; and here we are already in touch with the earliest manuscripts which have come down to us, from which point the chain of tradition is complete as far as our own days.

Careful copying of texts begins in fourth century.

The oldest manuscripts of the Greek New Testament now in existence were written in the fourth century. Two splendid volumes, one now in the Vatican Library at Rome, the other at St. Petersburg, are assigned by all competent critics to this period. Two more were probably written in the fifth century; one of these is the glory of our own British Museum, the other is in the National Library at Paris. In addition to these there are perhaps twelve very fragmentary

Transmission from 4th to 15th century.

manuscripts of the same century which contain only some small portions of the New Testament. From the sixth century twenty-seven documents have come down to us, but only five of these contain so much as a single book complete. From the seventh we have eight small fragments; from the eighth six manuscripts of some importance and eight fragments.* So far the stream of tradition has run in a narrow bed. Time has, no doubt, caused the destruction of many copies; but it is also probable that during these centuries not so many copies were made as was the case subsequently. The style of writing then in use for works of literature was slow and laborious. Each letter was a capital, and had to be written separately; and the copying of a manuscript must have been a long and toilsome task. In the ninth century, however, a change was made of great importance in the history of the Bible, and indeed of all ancient Greek literature. In place of the large capitals hitherto employed, a smaller style of letter came into use, modified in shape so as to admit of being written continuously, without lifting the pen after every letter. Writing became easier and quicker; and to this fact we may attribute the marked increase in the number of manuscripts of the Bible which have come down to us from the ninth and tenth centuries. From this point numeration becomes useless. Instead of counting our copies by units we number them by tens and scores and hundreds, until by the time that printing was invented the total mounts up to a mass of several thousands. And these, it must be remembered, are but the remnant which has escaped the ravages of time and survived to the present day. When we remember that the great authors of Greek and Latin literature are preserved to us in a mere handful of copies, in some cases indeed only in one single manuscript, we may

* It must be understood that the dates here given are not absolutely certain. Early manuscripts on vellum are never dated, and their age can only be judged from their handwriting. But the dates as here stated are those which have been assigned by competent judges, and may be taken as approximately correct.

feel confident that in this great mass of Bible manuscripts we have much security that the true text of the Bible has not been lost on the way.

With the invention of printing in the fifteenth century a new era opens in the history of the Greek text. The earliest printed document (so far as Europe is concerned) was issued in the year 1454; and the first complete book produced by the printing press was, rightly enough, the Bible, in 1456. This, however, was a Latin Bible; for Latin was, in the fifteenth century, the language of literature in Western Europe. Greek itself was little known at this date. It was only gradually that the study of it spread from Italy (especially after the arrival there of fugitives from the East, when the Turkish capture of Constantinople overthrew the Greek Empire) over the adjoining countries to the other nations of the West. It was not until the sixteenth century had begun that there was any demand for a printed Greek Bible; and the honour of leading the way belongs to Spain. In 1502, Cardinal Ximenes formed a scheme for a printed Bible containing the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin texts in parallel columns. Many years were spent in collecting and comparing manuscripts, with the assistance of several scholars. It was not until 1514 that the New Testament was printed, and the Old Testament was only completed in 1517. Even then various delays occurred, including the death of Ximenes himself, and the actual publication of this edition of the Greek Bible (known as the Complutensian, from the Latin name of Alcala, where it was printed) only took place in 1522: and by that time it had lost the honour of being the first Greek Bible to be given to the world.

The earliest printed texts.

That distinction belongs to the New Testament of the great Dutch scholar, Erasmus. He had been long making collections for an edition of the Bible in Latin, when in 1515 a proposal was made to him by a Swiss printer, named Froben, to prepare an edition in Greek which should anticipate that which Ximenes had in hand.

Erasmus' Greek Testament, 1516.

Erasmus consented; the work was rapidly executed and as rapidly passed through the press; and in 1516 the first printed copy of the New Testament in the original Greek was given to the world. The first edition was full of errors of the press, due to the failure of a subordinate who had been entrusted with the duty of revising the sheets; but a second edition quickly followed, and a third, and a fourth, each representing an advance in the direction of a more accurate text. Erasmus' first edition was based on not more than six manuscripts at the most, and of these only one was either ancient or valuable, and none was complete, so that some verses of the Apocalypse were actually re-translated by Erasmus himself into Greek from the Latin; and, what is more remarkable, some words of this translation, which occur in no Greek manuscript whatever, still hold their place in our received Greek text. That text is, indeed, largely based on the edition of Erasmus. The work of Ximenes was much more careful and elaborate; but it was contained in six large folio volumes, and only 600 copies were printed, so that it had a far smaller circulation than that of Erasmus. The great printer-editor, Robert Estienne or Stephanus, of Paris (sometimes anglicised as Stephens, without ground), issued several editions of the Greek New Testament, based mainly on Erasmus, but corrected from the Complutensian and from fifteen manuscripts, most of them comparatively late; and of these editions the third, printed in 1550, is substantially the received text which has appeared in all our ordinary copies of the Greek Bible in England down to the present day. On the Continent the received text has been that of the Elzevir edition of 1624, which differs very slightly from that of Stephanus, being in fact a revision of the latter with the assistance of the texts published in 1565–1611 by the great French Protestant scholar Beza.

The received text.

Such is the history of our received text of the Greek New Testament; and it will be obvious from it how little likelihood there was that it would be a really accurate representation of the original language. For

Its deficiencies.

fourteen hundred years the New Testament had been handed down in manuscript, copy being taken from copy in a long succession through the centuries, each copy multiplying and spreading errors (slight, indeed, but not unimportant in the mass) after the manner described in our first chapter. Yet when the great invention of printing took place, and the words of the Bible could at last be stereotyped, as it were, beyond the reach of human error, the first printed text was made from a mere handful of manuscripts, and those some of the latest and least trustworthy that existed. There was no thought of searching out the oldest manuscripts and trusting chiefly to them. The best manuscripts were still unknown to scholars or inaccessible, and the editors had to content themselves with using such later copies as were within their reach, generally those in their native town alone. Even these were not always copied with such accuracy as we should now consider necessary. The result is that the text accepted in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, to which we have clung from a natural reluctance to change the words which we have learnt as those of the Word of God, is in truth full of inaccuracies, many of which can be corrected with absolute certainty from the vastly wider information which is at our disposal to-day. The difference between the Authorised Version and the Revised Version shows in great measure the difference between the text accepted at the time of the first printed editions and that which commends itself to the best modern scholars. We do not find the fundamentals of our faith altered, but we find many variations in words and sentences, and are brought so much nearer to the true Word of God, as it was written down in the first century by Evangelist and Apostle.

What, then, are the means which we have for correcting the "received text," and for recovering the original words of the New Testament? This question will be answered more fully in the next two chapters; but it will be useful to take a brief survey of the ground before us first, and to arrange in their proper groups

Means for amending it.

the materials with which we have to deal. As was explained in the second chapter, the evidence by which the Bible text is examined and restored is threefold. It consists of (1) MANUSCRIPTS, (2) VERSIONS, (3) Quotations in the FATHERS.

1. **Manuscripts.**—The early papyrus manuscripts of the New Testament have all perished (unless indeed some are still lying buried in the soil of Egypt, which is far from improbable), and all the extant manuscripts are written on vellum, with the exception of a few scraps of papyrus, not earlier than the earliest vellum MSS., and some quite late copies, which are on paper. They are divided into two great classes, according to the style in which they are written, namely UNCIALS and CURSIVES. Uncials are those written throughout in capital letters, each formed separately (*see* Plates VI., VIII.—XIII.). Cursives are those written in smaller letters and in a more or less running hand (*see* Plate XIV.). As explained above (p. 59), uncial manuscripts are the earliest, running from the fourth century (and doubtless earlier if earlier MSS. should be found) to the ninth, while cursives range from the ninth to the fifteenth, and even later, wherever manuscripts were still written after the invention of printing.*

Uncial manuscripts, being the oldest, are also the rarest and the most important. Including even the smallest fragments, only one hundred and twelve uncial manuscripts of the Greek New Testament are known to exist, and of these only two contain all the books of it, though two more are nearly perfect. The books of the New Testament, before

Uncial MSS.

* This sharp distinction in time between uncial and cursive writing does not apply to papyri. Here we find cursive writing side by side with uncial from the earliest times at which Greek writing is known to us (the third century B.C.). The reason for the difference in the case of vellum MSS. is simply that vellum was only employed for books intended for general use, and for such books uncial writing was regularly used until the ninth century, because it was the most handsome style. In the ninth century an ornamental style of running-hand was invented, and this superseded uncials as the style usual in books. A cursive hand must always have existed for use in private documents, where publication was not intended.

they were gathered into one collection, were formed into four groups, *viz.* Gospels, Acts and Catholic Epistles, Pauline Epistles, Apocalypse; and most manuscripts contain only one, or at most two, of these groups. Uncial manuscripts are distinguished for purposes of reference by capital letters of the Latin, Greek, or Hebrew alphabets, such as A, B, Δ, ℵ, *etc.*, as the reader may see by looking at the notes on any page of the New Testament in the Variorum Bible. Reserving a full description of these manuscripts for the next chapter, it will be sufficient for the present to say that the most important of them are those known as B (Codex Vaticanus) and ℵ (Codex Sinaiticus), which are assigned to the fourth century; A (Codex Alexandrinus) and C (Codex Ephraemi), of the fifth century; D (of the Gospels), D_2 (Pauline Epistles), and E_2 (Acts and Catholic Epistles), of the sixth century. These are the main authorities upon which the text of the New Testament is based, though they need to be supplemented and reinforced by the testimony of the later copies, both uncial and cursive.

Cursive MSS.

Cursive manuscripts are enormously more common than uncials. The earliest of them date from the ninth century, and from the tenth century to the fifteenth the cursives were the Bible of Eastern Europe. Many have no doubt perished; but from the fact of their having been written nearer to the times of the revival of learning many have been preserved. Every great library possesses several of them, and many are no doubt still lurking in unexamined corners, especially in out-of-the-way monasteries in the East. The latest enumeration of those whose existence is known gives the total as 2429, besides 1273 Lectionaries, or volumes containing the lessons from the New Testament prescribed to be read during the Church's year. Even deducting duplicates, where a manuscript has been counted more than once owing to its containing more than one of the above-mentioned groups (each of which has a separate series of numbers), the total comes to just over 3000. They are referred to simply by numbers; for instance, Evan. 100 means cursive manuscript No. 100

of the Gospels,* Act. 100 = cursive No. 100 of the Acts and Catholic Epistles, Paul. 100 = cursive No. 100 of the Pauline Epistles, Apoc. 100 = cursive No. 100 of the Apocalypse, Evst. (*i.e.* Evangelistarium) 100 = lectionary of the Gospels No. 100, and Apost. 100 = lectionary of the Acts and Epistles No. 100. Thus if a manuscript contains more than one of these groups of books, it appears in more than one list, and generally with a different number in each; for instance a certain manuscript in the British Museum, which contains the whole New Testament (a very rare occurrence, only about thirty MSS. in all being thus complete), is consequently described as Evan. 584, Act. 228, Paul. 269, Apoc. 97. These, however, are minutiæ which concern only the Biblical scholar. The cursive manuscripts, with few exceptions, are rarely quoted as authorities for the text. Their importance is chiefly collective, as showing which of two readings, where the leading uncials are divided, has been adopted in the great mass of later copies. In the Variorum Bible it has rightly been thought best to omit all mention of them, as needlessly cumbering the critical notes. The vast majority of cursives contain substantially the same type of text, that, namely, which appears in the received text and is translated in our Authorised Version. The cursives which appear to contain a better and an older form of the text, approximating to that of the leading uncials, are those known as Act. 61 and Evan. 33 (= Act. 13 = Paul. 17); next to these, Evan. 1, 13, 81, 157, 209; Act. 31, 44, 137, 180.

2. **Versions.**—The most important versions, or translations of the New Testament into other languages, are the Syriac, Egyptian, and Latin. They will be described in detail in the next chapter but one, but a short statement of their respective dates is necessary here, in order that we may understand the history of the New Testament text. As soon as Christianity spread beyond the borders of Palestine there was a necessity for translations of the Scriptures

* *Evan.* stands for Evangelium, the Latin form of the Greek word which we translate "Gospel."

into all these languages. Syria was the nearest neighbour of Palestine, Egypt a prominent literary centre and the home of many Jews, while Latin was the language of Africa and Italy and the West of Europe generally. At first, no doubt, Christian instruction was given by word of mouth, but in the course of the second century written translations of most, at any rate, of the New Testament books had been made in these languages; and these versions are of great value to us now, since from them we can often gather what reading of a disputed passage was found in the very early copies of the Greek Testament from which the original translations were made. In SYRIAC four versions are known to have been made: (1) the *Old Syriac*, of the Gospels only; (2) the *Peshitto*, the standard translation of the whole Bible into Syriac; (3) the *Harkleian*, a revision made by Thomas of Harkel in A.D. 616 of an earlier version made in A.D. 508; (4) the *Palestinian*, an independent version from the Greek, extant in fragments only, and of doubtful date. Of these the Old Syriac and the Peshitto are much the most important. In Egypt no less than five versions were current in different dialects of the COPTIC or native tongue, but only two of these are at present known to be important for critical purposes: (1) the *Memphitic* or *Bohairic*, belonging to Lower Egypt; (2) the *Thebaic* or *Sahidic*, of Upper Egypt. Both of these appear to have been made about the beginning of the third century, or perhaps earlier; but the Thebaic exists only in fragments. The LATIN versions are two in number, both of great importance: (1) the *Old Latin*, made early in the second century, and extant (though only in fragments) in three somewhat varying shapes, known respectively as African, European, and Italian; (2) the *Vulgate*, which is the revision of the Old Latin by St. Jerome at the end of the fourth century. Other early translations of the Scriptures exist in various languages—Armenian, Ethiopian, Arabic, and Gothic; but these are neither so early nor so important as those we have mentioned. The Old Syriac, Peshitto, Memphitic, Thebaic, Old Latin, and Vulgate versions are referred to in the notes of the Variorum Bible, and

they are unquestionably the most important of the versions for the purposes of textual criticism.

3. **Fathers.**—The evidence of early Christian writers for the text of the New Testament begins to be available about the middle of the second century. The most important are Justin Martyr (died A.D. 164); Tatian, the author of a famous Harmony of the Gospels, recently recovered in an Arabic translation (died A.D. 172); Irenæus, bishop of Lyons, who flourished about A.D. 178; Clement of Alexandria, at the end of the century; Hippolytus of Rome and Origen of Alexandria, in the first half of the third century; and the two great Latin writers of Africa, Tertullian and Cyprian, the former at the beginning of the third century, and the latter about the middle of it. Later still we have the great scholars, Eusebius of Cæsarea in the first half of the fourth century, and Jerome in the second. The evidence of the Fathers has, however, to be used with care. As has been already explained (p. 16), copyists were liable to alter the words of a Scriptural quotation in the Fathers into the shape most familiar to themselves, so that the evidence of a Father is less trustworthy when it is in favour of a commonly accepted reading than when it is against it; and further, the early writers were apt to quote from memory, and so to make verbal errors. When, however, we can be sure that we have a quotation in the form in which the Father actually wrote it (and the context sometimes makes this certain), the evidence is of great value, because the Father must have been copying from a manuscript of the Bible much older than any that we now possess. There is also this further advantage, that we generally know in what part of the world each of the Fathers was writing, and so can tell in what country certain corruptions of the text began or were most common. This is a very important consideration in the part of the inquiry to which we are now coming.

Now when we have got all this formidable array of authorities,—our three thousand Greek manuscripts, our versions in half-a-dozen languages, and all the writings of the Fathers—what more can be done? Are we simply to take their evidence on each

disputed passage, tabulate the authorities for each various reading, and then decide according to the best of our judgment which reading is to be preferred in each several case? Well, very much can be, and very much has been done by this method. Allowing proper weight for the superior age of the leading uncial manuscripts, so that the evidence of the uncials shall not be overborne by the numerical preponderance of late cursives, a mere statement of the authorities on either side will often be decisive. Thus, if we find in Mark 7. 19 that eight of the later uncials and hundreds of cursives have the received reading, "purging all meats," while ℵ, A, B, E, F, G, H, L, S, X, Δ, and three Fathers have a slight variety which gives the sense, "This he said, making all meats clean," no one will doubt that the superiority, both of authority and of sense, is on the side of the latter, even though the numerical preponderance of MSS. is with the former; and consequently we find that all editors and the Revised Version have rejected the received reading. This is only one instance out of a great many, which the reader of the Variorum Bible or of any critical edition can easily pick out for himself, in which a simple inspection of the authorities on either side and of the intrinsic merit of the alternative readings is sufficient to determine the judgment of editors without hesitation.

But is it possible to go beyond this? Can we, instead of simply estimating our authorities in order of their age, arrange them into groups which have descended from common ancestors, and determine the age and character of each group? It is obvious that no manuscript can have greater authority than that from which it is copied, and that if a hundred copies have been taken, directly or indirectly, from one manuscript, while five have been taken from another which is older and better, then if we find the hundred supporting one reading, while the five support another, it is the five and not the hundred which we ought to follow. In other words, the number of manuscripts in a group which has a common parentage proves nothing, except that the form of text represented by that

Grouping of authorities.

group was preferred in former times; which may or may not be an important factor of the evidence. It does not in itself prove superiority in either age or merit. The question then arises, is it possible to arrange the authorities for the text of the New Testament in groups of this kind? The general answer of critics, tacitly at least, has been, No. It has been very rare, in the history of Biblical criticism, to find an editor forming his manuscripts into groups. They have generally been content to use the best manuscripts that were available to them, and to judge each on its own merits, or even, at times, to decide every question according to numerical preponderance among a small number of selected manuscripts.

One critic of earlier days, however, Griesbach by name, at the end of the last century, essayed the task of grouping, and two distinguished Cambridge scholars of our own day, Bishop Westcott and the late Professor Hort, have renewed the attempt with much greater success. They believe that by far the larger number of our extant MSS. can be shown to contain a revised (and less original) text; that a comparatively small group has texts derived from manuscripts which escaped, or were previous to, this revision; and that, consequently, the evidence of this small group is almost always to be preferred to that of the great mass of MSS. and versions. It is this theory, which has been set out with conspicuous learning and conviction by Dr. Hort, that we propose now to sketch in brief; for it appears to mark an epoch in the history of New Testament criticism.

Westcott and Hort's theory.

An examination of passages in which two or more different readings exist shows that one small group of authorities, consisting of the uncial manuscripts B, ℵ, L, a few cursives such as Evan. 33, Act. 61, and the Memphitic and Thebaic versions, is generally found in agreement; another equally clearly marked group consists of D, the Old Latin and Old Syriac versions, and cursives 13, 69, 81 of the Gospels, 44, 137, and 180 of the Acts, and Evst. 39, with a few

Groups of MSS. in N.T.

others more intermittently; while A, C (generally), the later uncials, and the great mass of cursives and the later versions form another group, numerically overwhelming. Sometimes each of these groups will have a distinct reading of its own; sometimes two of them will be combined against the third; sometimes an authority which usually supports one group will be found with one of the others. But the general division into groups remains constant and is the basis of the present theory.

Combined or "conflate" readings.

Next, it is possible to distinguish the origins and relative priority of the groups. In the first place, many passages occur in which the first group described above has one reading, the second has another, and the third combines the two. Thus in the last words of St. Luke's Gospel (as the Variorum Bible shows), ℵ, B, C, L, with the Memphitic and one Syriac version, have "blessing God"; D and the Old Latin have "praising God"; but A and twelve other uncials, all the cursives, the Vulgate and other versions, have "praising and blessing God." Instances like this occur, not once nor twice, but repeatedly. Now it is in itself more probable that the combined reading in such cases is later than, and is the result of, two separate readings. It is more likely that a copyist, finding two different words in two or more manuscripts before him, would put down both in his copy, than that two scribes, finding a combined phrase in their originals, would each select one part of it alone to copy, and would each select a different one. The motive for combining would be praiseworthy,—the desire to make sure of keeping the right word by retaining both; but the motive for separating would be vicious, since it involves the deliberate rejection of some words of the sacred text. Moreover we know that such combination was actually practised; for, as has been stated above, it is a marked characteristic of Lucian's edition of the Septuagint.

At this point the evidence of the Fathers becomes important as to both the time and the place of origin of these combined (or as Dr. Hort technically calls them "conflate") readings. They

are found to be characteristic of the Scripture quotations in the works of Chrysostom, who was bishop of Antioch in Syria at the end of the fourth century, and of other writers in or about Antioch at the same time; and thenceforward it is the predominant text in manuscripts, versions, and quotations. Hence this type of text, the text of our later uncials, cursives, early printed editions, and Authorised Version, is believed to have taken its rise in or near Antioch, and is known as the "Syrian" text. The type found in the second of the groups above described, that headed by D, the Old Latin and Old Syriac, is called the "Western" text, as being especially found in Latin manuscripts and in those which (like D) have both Greek and Latin texts, though it is certain that it had its origin in the East, probably in or near Asia Minor. There is another small group, earlier than the Syrian, but not represented continuously by any one MS. (mainly by C in the Gospels, A. C, in Acts and Epistles, with certain cursives and occasionally ℵ and L), to which Dr. Hort gives the name of "Alexandrian." The remaining group, headed by B, may be best described as the "Neutral" text.

Localisation of groups by aid of the Fathers.

Now among all the Fathers whose writings are left to us from before the middle of the third century (notably Irenæus, Hippolytus, Clement, Origen, Tertullian, and Cyprian), we find readings belonging to the groups described as Western, Alexandrian, and Neutral, but *no distinctly Syrian readings*. On the other hand we have seen that in the latter part of the fourth century, especially in the region of Antioch, Syrian readings are found plentifully. Add to this the fact that, as stated above, the Syrian readings often show signs of having been derived from a combination of non-Syrian readings, and we have strong confirmation of the belief, which is the corner-stone of Dr. Hort's theory, that the Syrian type of text originated in a revision of the then existing texts, made about the end of the third century in or near Antioch. The result of accepting this conclusion obviously is, that where the Syrian text differs from

The "Syrian" readings latest.

that of the other groups, it must be rejected as being of later origin, and therefore less authentic; and when it is remembered that by far the greater number of our authorities contain a Syrian text, the importance of this conclusion is manifest. In spite of their numerical preponderance, the Syrian authorities must be relegated to the lowest place.

Of the remaining groups, the Western text is characterised by considerable freedom of addition, and sometimes of omission.

The "Western" group.

Whole verses, or even longer passages, are found in manuscripts of this family, which are entirely absent from all other copies. Some of them will be found enumerated in the following chapter in the description of D, the leading manuscript of this class. It is evident that this type of text must have had its origin in a time when strict exactitude in copying the books of the New Testament was not regarded as a necessary virtue. In early days the copies of the New Testament books were made for immediate edification, without any idea that they would be links in a chain for the transmission of the sacred texts to a distant future; and a scribe might innocently insert in the narrative additional details which he believed to be true and valuable. Fortunately the literary conscience of Antioch and Alexandria was more sensitive, and so this tendency did not spread very far, and was checked before it had greatly contaminated the Bible text. Western manuscripts often contain old and valuable readings, but any variety which shows traces of the characteristic Western vice of amplification or explanatory addition must be rejected, unless it has strong support outside the purely Western group of authorities.

There remain the Alexandrian and the Neutral groups. The Alexandrian text is represented, not so much by any individual

The "Alexandrian" group.

MS. or version, as by certain readings found scattered about in manuscripts which elsewhere belong to one of the other groups. They are readings which have neither Western nor Syrian characteristics, and yet differ from what appears to be the earliest form of the text; and

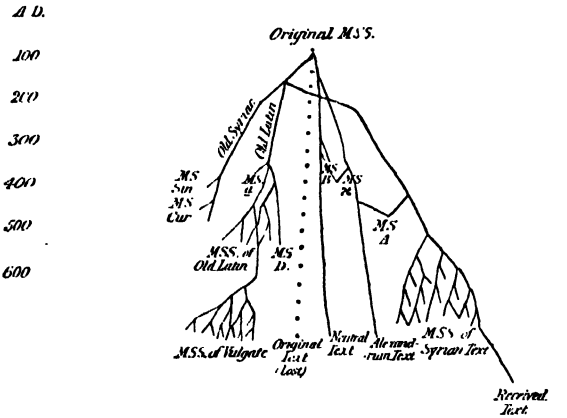
being found most regularly in the quotations of Origen, Cyril of Alexandria, and other Alexandrian Fathers, as well as in the Memphitic version, they are reasonably named Alexandrian. Their characteristics are such as might naturally be due to such a centre of Greek scholarship, since they affect the style rather than the matter, and appear to rise mainly from a desire for correctness of language. They are consequently of minor importance, and are not always distinctly recognisable.

The Neutral text, which we believe to represent most nearly the original text of the New Testament, is chiefly recognisable by the absence of the various forms of aberration noticed in the other groups. Its main centre is at Alexandria, but it also appears in places widely removed from that centre. Sometimes single authorities of the Western group will part company with the rest of their family and exhibit readings which are plainly both ancient and non-Western, showing the existence of a text preceding the Western, and on which the Western variations have been grafted. This text must therefore not be assigned to any local centre. It belonged originally to all the Eastern world. In many parts of the East, notably in Asia Minor, it was superseded by the text which, from its transference to the Latin churches, we call Western. It remained pure longest in Alexandria, and is found in the writings of the Alexandrian Fathers, though even here slight changes of language were introduced, to which we have given the name of Alexandrian. Our main authority for it at the present day is the great Vatican manuscript known as B, and this is often supported by the equally ancient Sinaitic manuscript (ℵ), and by the other manuscripts and versions named above (p. 107). Where the readings of this Neutral text can be plainly discerned, as by the concurrence of all or most of these authorities, they may be accepted with confidence in the face of all the numerical preponderance of other texts; and in so doing lies our best hope of recovering the true words of the New Testament.

The "Neutral" group.

The following diagram may perhaps serve to make more clear

the various groups of textual authorities, all more or less divergent from the true and original text. It must be understood, however, that it is only a very rough approximation to the facts, the intermixture of texts in all extant manuscripts being far too complicated to be represented by any diagram. The Western family is depicted on the left, the Syrian on the right, the Alexandrian and the Neutral between them.



Such is, in brief, the theory of Dr. Hort. Its importance in the history of the Bible text, especially in England, is evident when it is seen that it largely influenced the Revisers of our English Bible. The text underlying the Revised Version does not indeed go so far as that of Westcott and Hort in its departure from the received text and from the mass of manuscripts other than B, ℵ, and their fellows; but it is unquestionable that the cogent arguments of the Cambridge Professors had a great effect on the Revisers, and most of the leading scholars of the country have given in their allegiance to the theory. It is indeed on these lines alone that progress in Biblical criticism is possible. The mere enumeration of authorities for and against a disputed reading,—the acceptance of the verdict of a majority—is plainly impossible, since it would amount to con-

Importance of Westcott and Hort's theory.

structing our text from the latest and least original MSS. To select a certain number of the earliest MSS. and count their votes alone (as was done by Lachmann) is better; but this too is uncritical, and involves the shutting of our eyes to much light which is at our service. To estimate the intrinsic merit of each reading in a disputed passage, taking into account the *general* predominance of good authorities on one side or the other, is better still, and good critics have gone far by this method; but it still leaves much to the personal taste and judgment of the critic, which in the last resort can never be convincing. Only if our authorities can be divided into groups—if their genealogical tree, so to speak, can be traced with some approach to certainty, so that the earlier branches may be distinguished from the later,—only so is there any chance of our criticism advancing on a sound basis and being able to command a general assent.

Objections to it.

It is, however, only fair to admit that Dr. Hort's theory has not been accepted by all competent judges, and that some, notably Dr. Scrivener and Dean Burgon, are vehemently opposed to it (*are*, we may say, for though they, like the great scholar whom they criticised, have passed away from earth, their opinions and their writings live on). The main difficulty (and it is a real one) in the theory is that there is absolutely no historical confirmation of the Syrian revision of the text, which is its corner-stone. It is rightly urged that it is very strange to find no reference among the Fathers to so important an event as an official revision of the Bible text and its adoption as the standard text throughout the Greek world. We know the names of the scholars who made revisions of the Septuagint and of the Syriac version; but there is no trace of those who carried out the far more important work of fixing the shape of the Greek New Testament. Is not the whole theory artificial and illusory, the vain imagining of an ingenious mind, like so many of the products of modern criticism, which spins endless webs out of its own interior, to be swept away to-morrow by the ruthless broom of common sense?

Against this indictment may be placed the consideration that even if we can find no historical reference to a revision, yet the critical reasons which indicated the separation of the Syrian text from the rest, and its inferiority in date, remain untouched. "We still have the groups of authorities habitually found in conjunction; we still have the fact that the readings of the group we have called Syrian are shown by their intrinsic character to be probably later than the non-Syrian; and we still have the fact that readings of the Syrian type are not found in any authorities earlier than about A.D. 250. Unless these facts can be controverted, the division into groups and the relative inferiority of the Syrian group must be considered to be established. At the same time, if it is permissible to suggest a modification of Dr. Hort's theory, it does seem possible that the formal revision of the sacred text in or about Antioch may be a myth. Dr. Hort himself divides the revision into two stages, separated by some interval of time, and thus doubles the difficulty of accounting for the total absence of any mention of a revision. It seems possible that the Syrian text is the result rather of a process continued over a considerable period of time than of a set revision by constituted authorities. In the comparatively prosperous days of the third century the Church had leisure to collect and compare different copies of the Scriptures hitherto passing without critical examination. At a great centre of Christianity, such as Antioch, the principle may have been established by general consent that the best way to deal with divergencies of readings was to combine them, wherever possible, to smooth away difficulties and harshnesses, and to produce an even and harmonious text. Such a principle might easily be adopted by the copyists of a single neighbourhood, and so lead in time to the creation of a local type of text, just as the Western text must be supposed to have been produced, not by a formal revision, but by the development of a certain way of dealing with the text in a certain region. The subsequent acceptance of the Antiochian or Syrian type as the received text of the Greek New Testament

Consideration of objections.

would be due to the action of Constantine on the adoption of Christianity by the Empire. The fifty copies which Eusebius of Cæsarea caused to be made at the Emperor's command for the churches of Constantinople would naturally follow the texts current in his own neighbourhood and represented in the library of Pamphilus which existed at Cæsarea. But since Antioch was probably in more intimate connection with Syria and Palestine than was Alexandria, these texts would most naturally be of the Syrian type; and when Constantinople and Antioch led the way, the rest of the Greek world would be likely to follow.

It is at any rate certain that this one type of text predominated in the Eastern world from the fifth century onwards; that the Greek manuscripts which found their way westward at the close of the Middle Ages were entirely of this class, and that it was from these that the "received text" of the Greek Scriptures was constructed in the early days of printed editions. On the basis of this text our Authorised Version was made; and it still survives in all the ordinary printed copies of the Greek Testament. Only within the last two centuries, and especially within the last fifty years, has the attempt been seriously made to use all the available materials in order to correct this text and to get back as nearly as may be to the original language of the sacred books. It is always possible, and not even improbable, that the soil of Egypt, so fertile in discoveries, may yet be preserving for us copies on papyrus earlier than any manuscripts which we now possess; but, except for such external aid, the best hope for progress in textual criticism appears to lie along the track that has been opened out by the genius and learning of Dr. Hort.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER VI.

THE CHIEF EDITIONS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

THE earliest printed editions of the New Testament—those of Erasmus, Ximenes, Stephanus, and Beza—have been mentioned in the preceding chapter (pp. 98, 99), and there would be little profit or interest in a list of all the editions which have followed these down to the present day. But since certain editors stand out above their fellows by reason of their exceptional services towards the improvement of the text, and their opinions are often quoted among the authorities presented to the student in critical editions, it may be useful to give (mainly from the more detailed histories of Tregelles and Scrivener) some slight record of their labours, and of the principles adopted by them. It will not be inappropriate, in a history of the Bible text, to record the names of those who have especially devoted their lives to the task of freeing it from the errors of past ages, and the restoration of it, as near as may be, to its original truth.

There are two steps in this operation; first, the collection of evidence, and, secondly, the using of it. The "received text," as shown above, was based on the comparison of a few manuscripts, mostly of late date, and for more than a century the most pressing need was the examination of more and better manuscripts. BRIAN WALTON, afterwards Bishop of Chester, led the way in 1657, by publishing in his Polyglott Bible the readings of fourteen hitherto unexamined MSS., including the uncials, A, D, and D_2; but the real father of this department of textual criticism is JOHN MILL (1645–1710), of Queen's College, Oxford. Mill, in 1707, reprinted Stephanus' text of 1550, with only accidental divergencies, but added the various readings of nearly 100 manuscripts, and thereby provided all subsequent scholars with a broad basis of established evidence. RICHARD BENTLEY (1662–1742), the most famous of all English classical scholars, planned a critical edition of the New Testament in both Greek and Latin, and to that end procured

collations of a large number of good manuscripts in both languages; but an increasing sense of the complexity of the task, and the distraction of other occupations, prevented the completion of his work, and his masses of materials proved of little use. He had, however, stimulated others to carry on the task he left unfinished, and J. J. WETSTEIN (1693–1754), of Basle, who had originally worked for Bentley, made very large additions to the stores of manuscript evidence. His New Testament, published in 1751–2, quotes the readings of more than 300 MSS., including nearly all those which are now recognised as being of the greatest value. To this list some seventy more were added by C. F. MATTHÆI (1744–1811).

Meanwhile other scholars had begun to turn their attention to the use of the materials thus collected; and the pioneer of critical method was J. A. BENGEL, of Tübingen (1687–1752). To this scholar belongs the honour of having been the first to divide the manuscripts of the New Testament into groups. The great majority of MSS. he assigned to a group which he called the *Asiatic*, though its headquarters were at Constantinople, while the few better ones were classed as *African*. Bengel did not, however, advance far with this principle, and the first working out of it must be assigned to J. J. GRIESBACH (1745–1812), who made a careful classification of MSS. into three groups, the Alexandrian, the Western, and the Byzantine. These groups roughly correspond to the Neutral, Western, and Syrian groups of Dr. Hort, of whom Griesbach is the true forerunner. On the basis of this classification Griesbach drew up lists of readings which he regarded as, in greater or less degree, preferable to those of the received text, and so paved the way for the formal construction of a revised Greek Testament.

So far all editors had been content to reprint the received text of the New Testament, merely adding their collections of various readings in foot-notes; but with the nineteenth century a new departure was made, and we reach the region of modern textual criticism, of which the principle is, setting aside the "received

text," to construct a new text with the help of the best authorities now available. The author of this new departure was C. LACHMANN (1793–1851), who published in 1842–50 a text constructed according to principles of his own devising. Out of all the mass of manuscripts collected by Mill, Wetstein, and their colleagues, he selected a few of the best (A, B, C, and sometimes D, with the fragments P, Q, T, Z, in the Gospels; D, E_2, in the Acts; D_2, G_3, H_3, in the Pauline Epistles; together with some of the best MSS. of the Latin Vulgate, and a few of the Fathers), and from these he endeavoured to recover the text of the New Testament as it was current in the fourth century (when the earliest of these authorities were written) by the simple method of counting the authorities in favour of each reading, and always following the majority. Lachmann's method was too mechanical in its rigidity, and the list of his authorities was too small; at the same time his use of the best authorities led him to many unquestionable improvements on the received text. Lachmann was followed by the two great Biblical critics of the last generation, Tischendorf and Tregelles, who unite in themselves the two distinct streams of textual criticism, being eminent alike in the collection and the use of evidence. A. F. C. TISCHENDORF (1815–1874) published no fewer than eight editions of the Greek New Testament, with an increasing quantity of critical material in each; and the last of these (1864–72, with prolegomena on the MSS., versions, etc., by Gregory, in 1884–94) remains still the standard collection of evidence for the Greek text. Besides this, he published trustworthy editions of a large number of the best individual manuscripts, crowning the whole with his great discovery and publication of the Codex Sinaiticus, as described in the next chapter. Tischendorf's services in the publication of texts (including ℵ, C, D_2, E_2, L, and many more of the Greek New Testament, with the Codex Amiatinus of the Latin) are perfectly inestimable, and have done more than anything else to establish textual criticism on a sound basis. His use of his materials, in his revisions of the New Testament text, is less satisfactory, owing to the considerable fluctuations in

his judgments between one edition and the next; but here, too, his work has been very useful. S. P. TREGELLES (1813–1875) published only two MSS. in full, but collated very many with great accuracy, and used his materials with judgment in the preparation of a revised text. Like Lachmann, he based his text exclusively on the ancient authorities; but he used a larger number of them, paid much attention to the versions and Fathers, and did not tie himself down to obedience to a numerical majority among his witnesses. Like Tischendorf, he followed no principle of grouping in his use of his authorities, so that his choice of readings is liable to depend on personal preference among the best attested variants; but his experience and judgment were such as to entitle his opinion to very great weight.

Of WESTCOTT and HORT we have spoken at length in the preceding chapter, showing how they revived Griesbach's principle, and worked it out with greater elaboration and with a far fuller command of material. Their names close, for the present, the list of editors of the Greek New Testament whose attention has been directed especially to its text rather than (as with Alford, Lightfoot, Weiss, and others) its interpretation. It is right, however, to mention the names of one or two scholars who have devoted their attention to textual studies without actually publishing revised texts of their own. Chief among these is F. H. A. SCRIVENER, who, besides editing the manuscripts D and F_2 and collating a number of cursives, wrote, in his *Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament*, the standard history of the New Testament text. J. W. BURGON, Dean of Chichester, was another scholar of immense industry, learning, and zeal in textual matters, although his extreme distaste for innovations led him to oppose, rightly or wrongly, nearly every new departure in this field or in any other. To Scrivener and Burgon may especially be attributed the defence of the principle that *all* the available authorities should, so far as possible, be taken into consideration, and not only the most ancient. They attached much weight to the evidence of the great mass of MSS. headed by A and C, while they opposed the

tendency of Westcott and Hort, and their followers, to defer almost invariably to the testimony of B and ℵ. In this respect they are supported by J. B. M^{c}Clellan, who published in 1875 an English version of the Gospels, based upon a revision of the Greek, in which internal probability is taken as the most trustworthy guide in the selection between disputed readings; a principle which leaves much to the individual judgment, and incurs the danger of determining what it is right that God's Word should say, instead of patiently examining to see what it *does* say.

The foregoing list includes all the editors whom the reader may expect to find often quoted in any textual commentary on the Bible which he is likely to use, and may, it is hoped, help him to understand the principles on which their opinions are given. To the reader who wishes to find a statement of the evidence on all important passages in the New Testament, without wading through such a mass of material as that provided by Tischendorf, the following hints may be useful. The Cambridge school Greek Testament, edited by Scrivener, gives the received text, with notes stating the readings adopted by Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Westcott and Hort, and the Revised Version of 1881. The Oxford Greek Testament, which contains the received text as edited by Bishop Lloyd in 1828, has recently been provided by Prof. Sanday with an appendix containing an admirable selection of various readings, and a statement of the principal manuscripts, versions, Fathers, and editors in favour of each, and, in addition, a complete collation of the text of Westcott and Hort. This may be confidently recommended to students who wish for a handy critical edition of the Greek text. Finally, the student who prefers to use the English Bible will find a similar collection of evidence, amply sufficient for all practical purposes, and excellently selected by Prof. Sanday and Mr. R. L. Clarke, in the notes to the Variorum Bible; where he will likewise find notes which summarize the best opinions on the translation, as well as the text, of the most important passages about which there is any doubt.

CHAPTER VII.

THE MANUSCRIPTS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

THE romance of Biblical criticism is to be found in connection with the history of the manuscripts, and especially of the most ancient of them, from which the best of our knowledge is derived. Their fortunes, even in comparatively modern days, have often been full of interest; and from their venerable pages we can spell out something of their history in the distant ages in which they first saw the light. In this chapter we shall trace the history of a few of the most important of them, and shall give facsimiles of their outward appearance; so that to the reader who studies the pages of a critical Greek text or the Variorum edition of the English Bible, the symbols ℵ, A, B, C, D, and the rest which pervade its notes may be no longer meaningless combinations of letters, but may stand for separate books which he knows individually, and whose characteristics and peculiarities he has studied.

It has already been stated (p. 101) that Greek manuscripts are divided into two classes, known, according to the manner of their writing, as *uncials* or *cursives;* and that of these the uncials are at once the oldest and the most important. The uncials are known, for the sake of brevity, by the capital letters of the alphabet, though each of them possesses some special name as well. We shall now proceed to describe the best of them in the order of their alphabetical precedence. Some of them we have met already in our catalogue of the manuscripts of the Septuagint.

ℵ. **Codex Sinaiticus**; the last found of all the flock, yet one of the most important, and therefore (since the letters of the common alphabet had been already appropriated for other manuscripts) designated by its discoverer by the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, *Aleph*. The discovery of this manuscript, fifty-one

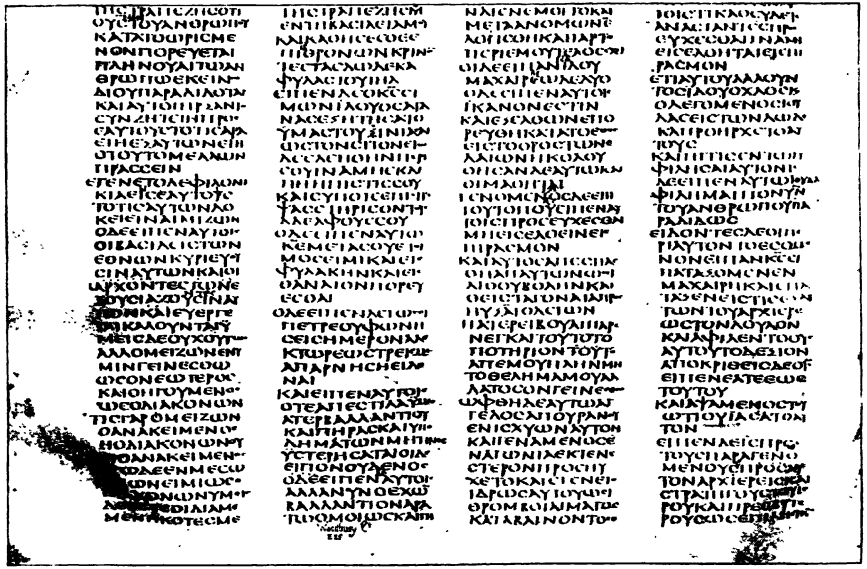
years ago, was the supreme triumph of the great Biblical scholar, Constantine Tischendorf. In the year 1844 he was travelling in the East in search of manuscripts, and in the course of his travels he visited the monastery of St. Catherine at Mount Sinai. He was taken into the library, and after surveying the books on the shelves he noticed a basket containing a large number of stray pages of manuscripts, among which he was astounded to behold several leaves of the oldest Greek writing he had ever set eyes on, and, as a short inspection proved, containing parts of the Greek Bible. No less than forty-three such leaves did he extract, and the librarian casually observed that two basket loads of similar waste paper had already been used to light the fires of the monastery. It is therefore not surprising that he easily obtained permission to keep the leaves which he had picked up; but when he discovered that some eighty more leaves of the Old Testament from the same manuscript were also in existence, difficulties were made about letting him see them; and he had to content himself with informing the monks of their value, and entreating them to light their fires with something less precious. He then returned to Europe, and having presented his treasure to his sovereign, King Frederic Augustus of Saxony, published its contents under the name of the Codex Friderico-Augustanus. These forty-three leaves belonged, like all that Tischendorf had yet seen or heard of, to the Old Testament, containing portions of 1 Chronicles and Jeremiah, with Nehemiah and Esther complete; they are now, as we have seen (p. 59), at Leipzig, separated from the rest of the volume to which they once belonged. In 1853 he returned to Sinai; but his former warning, and perhaps the interest aroused in Europe by the discovery, had made the monks cautious, and he could hear nothing more concerning the manuscript. In 1859 he visited the monastery once again, this time under the patronage of the Czar Alexander II., the patron of the Greek Church; but still his inquiries were met with blank negation, until one evening, only a few days before he was to depart, in the course of conversation with the steward of the monastery, he showed him a copy of his

recently published edition of the Septuagint. Thereupon the steward remarked that he too had a copy of the Septuagint, which he should like to show to his visitor. Accordingly he took him to his room, and produced a heap of loose leaves wrapped in a cloth; and there before the astonished scholar's eyes lay the identical manuscript for which he had been longing. Not only was part of the Old Testament there, but the New Testament, complete from beginning to end. Concealing his feelings, he asked to be allowed to keep it in his room that evening to examine it; leave was given, "and that night it seemed sacrilege to sleep." Then the influence of the Russian Emperor was brought into play. It was represented to the monks that it would be a most appropriate step to present the manuscript to the great protector of their Church. This reasoning, backed by whatever influence could be brought to bear, was successful; Tischendorf first obtained leave to have the manuscript sent after him to Cairo and copy it there; next to carry it with him to Russia for further study; and finally to lay it as a gift (in return for which presents were made to the monks by the Russian Government) at the feet of the Czar at St. Petersburg, in the library of which capital it has thenceforth remained.

The romance of the Codex Sinaiticus was not yet over, however. Since the year 1856 an ingenious Greek, named Constantine Simonides, had been creating a considerable sensation by producing quantities of Greek manuscripts professing to be of fabulous antiquity,—such as a Homer in an almost prehistoric style of writing, a lost Egyptian historian, a copy of St. Matthew's Gospel on papyrus, written fifteen years after the Ascension (!), and other portions of the New Testament dating from the first century. These productions enjoyed a short period of notoriety, and were then exposed as forgeries. Among the scholars concerned in the exposure was Tischendorf; and the revenge taken by Simonides was distinctly humorous. While stoutly maintaining the genuineness of his own wares, he admitted that he had written *one* manuscript which passed as being very ancient, and that was the

Codex Sinaiticus, the discovery of which had been so triumphantly proclaimed by Tischendorf! The idea was ingenious, but it would not bear investigation. Apart from the internal evidence of the text itself, the variations in which no forger, however clever, could have invented, it was shown that Simonides could not have completed the task in the time which he professed to have taken; and this little cloud on the credit of the newly-discovered manuscript rapidly passed away.

Plate VIII. gives a general idea of the appearance of this manuscript. The original size of the page is 15 inches by 13½ inches. There are four narrow columns to each page (the only known instance of so many), and the eight columns thus presented to the reader when the volume is opened have much of the appearance of the succession of columns in a papyrus roll; and it is not at all impossible that it was actually copied from such a roll. The vellum is made from the finest skins of antelopes, and is of excellent quality; the writing is large, clear, and good, without any attempt at ornamentation. The MS. originally contained the whole Greek Bible, but, as has been stated above (p. 59), only a part of the Old Testament escaped the waste-paper basket of the Sinai monastery. The New Testament is complete, and at the end are added two apocryphal works, which for a long time enjoyed almost equal credit with the New Testament books, but finally failed to obtain a position in the Canon, namely the Epistle of Barnabas and the "Shepherd" of Hermas. The original text has been corrected in many places, the various correctors being indicated in critical editions as $\aleph^a$, $\aleph^b$, $\aleph^c$, *etc.* The date of the manuscript is in the fourth century, probably about the middle or end of it. It can hardly be earlier than A.D. 340, since the divisions of the text known as the Eusebian sections are indicated in the margin of the Gospels, in a hand evidently contemporaneous with the text: and these sections, which are a device for forming a sort of Harmony of the Gospels, by showing which sections in each Gospel have parallel sections in any of the others, were due to the scholar Eusebius, who died about A.D. 340. On the other hand,



CODEX SINAITICUS—4TH CENT.

(*Original size of page*, 15 *in.* × 13½ *in.*; *of part reproduced*, 9 *in.* × 10½ *in.*)

the character of the writing shows that it can hardly be later than the fourth century. The oldest corrector, ℵ^{a}, is not much later than the manuscript itself, and must have made his corrections from a very good and ancient copy. ℵ^{b} is of the sixth century; ℵ^{c}, a very active corrector, of the seventh; the others, later and of small importance.

A study of the facsimile page will show something of the way in which manuscripts were written and corrected, besides providing a specimen of the readings of ℵ in an important passage. The page contains Luke 22. 20–52, though it has been necessary to omit eight lines from the top of each column in the plate. In *v.* 22 (the first line of the plate), ℵ has "for" (ὅτι) in place of the received text "and"; and, as the note in the Variorum Bible shows, ℵ is supported by B, D, and L among the principal MSS., while A heads the mass of later uncials and cursives which contain the "received" reading. Of the editors, Tischendorf, Tregelles, M^{c}Clellan, Westcott and Hort, and the Revised Version follow ℵ, while Lachmann and Weiss are on the other side. In l. 2 the scribe has accidentally omitted the little word μεν, and has added it above the line. At l. 14, which begins verse 24, will be seen an example of the usual procedure of ℵ in marking the beginning of a fresh paragraph by allowing the first letter to project into the margin, but without any enlargement. In l. 15 the original scribe had written εις εαυτους, which is found in no other MS., but it has been corrected to the usual εν αυτοις: there is practically no difference in sense. In ll. 22, 23 (verse 25) there is a more extensive alteration. The scribe began by writing και οι αρχοντες των εξουσιαζουσιν αυτων και ευεργεται καλουνται (= "and their rulers exercise authority over them and are called benefactors"), which makes nonsense; accordingly he (or a corrector) has cancelled the erroneous letters αρχοντες των by putting dots above them (a common method in Greek MSS.), has altered the verb into a participle by writing the letters ντες over the erroneous υσιν, and has cancelled και ("and") by dots above each letter, thus restoring the text to its proper form. In *v.* 31 (col. 2, l. 7) there is a

disputed reading, some authorities having the words "And the Lord said," as in our Authorised Version, while others omit them. The evidence is evenly balanced. Not only A and the mass of later MSS., but also ℵ, as our plate shows, and D give the disputed words (ειπεν δε ο κυριος), while B and L, with the two chief Coptic versions, omit them. Lachmann, Tregelles, and McClellan retain the words (*see* the Variorum note); Alford, Tischendorf, and Westcott and Hort reject them; and the Revisers have followed the latter, though the division of the best evidence must have made a decision difficult, ℵ and D being a fair set-off against B and L, even if the "Syrian" MSS. be disregarded.

Small alterations in the MSS. must be passed over briefly; they will be seen in col. 2, l. 37; col. 3, ll. 5, 6; col. 4, l. 36. The reader may also note the common practice of writing the last letters of a line very small, so as to get more into a line. But in verses 43, 44, a very important textual question arises. These verses contain the mention of the Bloody Sweat, and of the Angel who appeared to strengthen our Lord in His agony,—an incident, it is hardly necessary to say, of the deepest interest and value. Now these verses are omitted by the two great manuscripts A and B (so seldom found on the same side that their agreement is the more striking), and also by R and T, the valuable cursives 13 and 69, some MSS. of the Bohairic and Sahidic versions, and by some of the Fathers. Against these there were, before the discovery of ℵ, to be set only D and L among the better uncials, the Old Latin and Vulgate, the Peshitto Syriac, other MSS. of the Coptic versions, many Fathers, and the mass of later MSS. The better authorities might fairly be said to be against the genuineness of the verses; and it is consequently very satisfactory to find them contained in the two newly discovered witnesses, ℵ and the Curetonian Syriac.* They will be seen in the last ten lines of col. 3 on our plate. The reader who looks closely at it, however, will see that a faint row of dots has been placed above the first line of the passage, and equally faint hooks or commas at the beginning and end of each of these

* The latest discovery, however, the Sinaitic MS. of the Old Syriac, omits them.

lines. This shows that some corrector did not find the verses in the copy with which he was comparing the MS. and accordingly marked them as doubtful. Tischendorf believed the marks to be due to the first corrector of the MS., who certainly used a good and ancient copy, and accordingly in the Variorum note we find ℵ[a] enumerated among the authorities against the verses; but it is obviously difficult to be sure to what hand such simple marks are to be attributed. It is clear that the verses were absent from some very early copies: but it is also clear that some equally early ones contained them; and the majority of editors have shown a wise discretion in preferring the evidence in favour of their authenticity.

Our analysis of this single page of the Codex Sinaiticus will have shown the reader something of the task of the textual critic, and something of the variations which he meets in every MS.,—some of them being mere slips of the pen on the part of the scribe, while others testify to a real peculiarity of reading in the MS. from which this was copied. It remains to say something as to the general character of this ancient authority, and of the rank which critics assign it among the array of witnesses to the text of the New Testament.

Besides being one of the most ancient, the Codex Sinaiticus is also one of the most valuable texts of the New Testament. In many passages it is found in company with B, preserving obviously superior readings where the great mass of later manuscripts is in error. According to the analysis of Westcott and Hort, its text is almost entirely pre-Syrian; but it is not equally free from Western and Alexandrian elements. Especially in the Gospels, readings from these two sources are not unfrequent, Western readings being most prominent in St. John and in parts of St. Luke. One most noticeable case in which this manuscript is found in agreement with B is in the omission of the last twelve verses of St. Mark, in which ℵ and B stand alone against all the other extant manuscripts (with the partial exception of L), though with some important support from three versions and some of the Fathers. With respect to the agreement of ℵ and B one curious fact should,

however, be noticed; namely, that several pages of ℵ are actually written by the scribe who wrote B. This fact, which is admitted by competent scholars who have had the opportunity of judging, indicates some amount of community of origin; but it is at the same time evident that both were not copied from the same original, so that the independence of their testimony is not seriously impaired. The most that we learn is that both were probably written in the same country. What that country was is extremely doubtful. Dr. Hort is "inclined to surmise," from certain very slight indications of orthography, that they were written in the West, probably at Rome; and that the ancestors of B were also written in the West, while those of ℵ were written in Alexandria. On the other hand, forms of letters are occasionally found in B which are believed to be exclusively Egyptian; and the writing of ℵ bears a quite discernible resemblance to a hand which is found (at a considerably earlier date) in papyri from Egypt. Another eminent scholar, Prof. Rendel Harris, believes that both manuscripts came from the library of Pamphilus at Cæsarea, of which Eusebius made use; but this would not necessarily be inconsistent with their having been written in Egypt. On the whole, however, this is one of the cases where the only fair course is to admit ignorance, and to hope that future discoveries may in time bring fuller knowledge.

A. **Codex Alexandrinus.**—This is one of the chief treasures of the British Museum, where the volume containing the New Testament may be seen by every visitor in one of the show-cases in the Department of Manuscripts. Its history, at least in later years, is much less obscure than that of the Sinaiticus. In 1624 it was offered by Cyril Lucar, Patriarch of Constantinople, to Sir Thomas Roe, our ambassador in Turkey, for presentation to King James I. King James died before the manuscript started for England, and the offer was transferred to Charles I. In 1627 the gift was actually accomplished, and the MS. remained in the possession of our sovereigns until the Royal Library was presented to the nation by George II., when it entered its present home. Its earlier

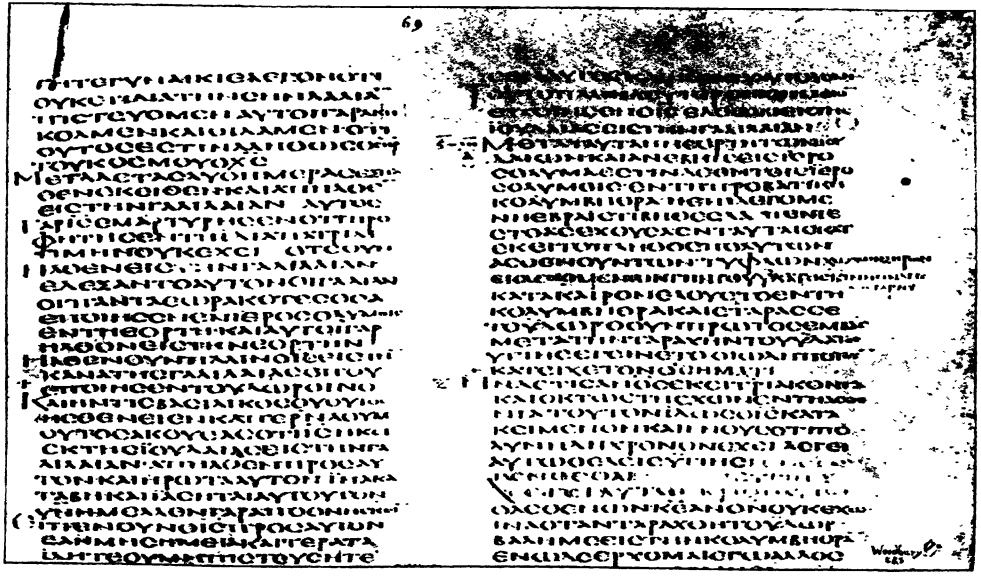
history is also partially traceable. Cyril Lucar brought it to Constantinople from Alexandria, of which see he had previously been Patriarch; and an Arabic note at the beginning of the MS., signed by "Athanasius the humble" (probably Athanasius III., Patriarch of Alexandria, who died about 1308), states that it was a gift to the Patriarchal cell in that town. A later Latin note adds that the gift was made in A.D. 1098, but the authority for this statement is unknown. Another Arabic note, written in the thirteenth or fourteenth century, states that the MS. was written by Thecla the martyr; and Cyril Lucar himself repeats this statement, with the additions that Thecla was a noble lady of Egypt, that she wrote it shortly after the Council of Nicæa (A.D. 325), and that her name was originally written at the end of the manuscript. This, however, was only tradition, since the end of the MS. had been lost long before Cyril's time. The authority for the tradition is quite unknown, and so early a date is hardly probable. The occurrence in the manuscript of treatises (*see* p. 60) by Eusebius (died A.D. 340) and Athanasius (died A.D. 376) makes it almost certain that it cannot be earlier than the middle of the fourth century, and competent authorities agree that the style of writing probably shows it to be somewhat later, in the first half of the fifth century. It is certain that the writing of this MS. appears to be somewhat more advanced than that of the Vaticanus or Sinaiticus, especially in the enlargement of initial letters and similar elementary ornamentation; but it must be remembered that these characteristics are already found in earlier MSS., and that similar differences between contemporary MSS. may be found at all periods. The dating of early Greek uncials on vellum is still very doubtful for want of materials to judge from, and it is possible that the tradition mentioned above is truer than is generally supposed; but for the present it is safer to acquiesce in the general judgment which assigns the manuscript to the fifth century.

Like the Codex Sinaiticus, it contained originally the whole Greek Bible, with the addition of the two Epistles of Clement of Rome, which in very early days ranked almost with the inspired

books: and, in addition, the table of contents shows that it originally included the Psalms of Solomon, the title of which, however, is so separated from the rest of the books as to indicate that they were regarded as standing on a different footing.

The Old Testament has suffered some slight mutilations, which have been described already; the New Testament more seriously, since the whole of St. Matthew's Gospel, as far as ch. **25.** 6, is lost, together with leaves containing John **6.** 50—**8.** 52 (where, however, the number of pages missing shows that the doubtful passage, **7.** 53—**8.** 11, cannot have been present when the MS. was perfect), and 2 Cor. **4.** 13—**12.** 6, one leaf of the first Epistle of Clement and the greater part of the second. The leaves measure 12¾ inches by 10½, having two columns to each page, written in a large and well-formed hand of round shape, with initial letters enlarged and projecting into the margin. The text has been corrected throughout by several different hands, the first being nearly or quite contemporary with the original scribe. The facsimile given in Plate IX. shows the upper part of the page containing John **4.** 42—**5.** 14. In col. 1, l. 6, it will be seen that this MS. contains the words "the Christ"; and a reference to the Variorum Bible foot-note shows that it is supported by C^3 (*i.e.* the third corrector of C), D, L (with the later MSS.), while ℵ, B, C (with the Old Latin, Vulgate, Bohairic, and Curetonian Syriac versions) omit the words, and are followed by all the editors except M^c^Clellan. Though D and L represent pre-Syrian testimony, the balance of that testimony, as contained in ℵ, B, and the versions, overweighs them.

More important readings will be seen in the second column, which contains the story of the cure of the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda. It will be seen (ll. 13, 14) that an alteration has been made in the MS., and that certain letters have been re-written over an erasure, while others are added in the margin. The words which are thus due to the corrector, and not to the original scribe, are those which are translated "halt, withered, *waiting for the moving of the water.* For an angel of the Lord." A close



CODEX ALEXANDRINUS—5TH CENT.

(*Original size of page*, 13 *in.* × 10 *in.*; *of part reproduced*, 6½ *in.* × 8 *in.*)

examination shows that the first and last parts of the passage originally occupied l. 14, before the erasure; but the words in italics are an addition which was not in the original text. They are also omitted (*see* the Variorum Bible foot-note) by ℵ, B, C, L, with the Curetonian Syriac and the Sahidic versions. They are found only in D, the corrections of A and C, and later MSS., and are thus inevitably omitted by nearly all the editors. With regard to verse 4 the distribution of evidence is different. It is omitted, like the former words, by ℵ, B, C, the Curetonian Syriac, most MSS. of the Bohairic and the Sahidic versions; and these are now joined by D, which in the previous case was on the other side. On the other hand, A and L have changed in the contrary direction, and are found to support the verse, in company with C^3, the later uncials, and all cursives but three, the Old Latin and Vulgate, and the Peshitto Syriac. Thus the versions are fairly equally divided; but ℵ, B, C, D form a very strong group of early authority, as against A and the mass of later MSS. L and the Old Latin are, in fact, the only witnesses to the verse which can be considered as pre-Syrian, and consequently we find the Revised Version omits the verse, in common with Tischendorf, Tregelles, and Westcott and Hort; Lachmann and M^{c}Clellan alone appearing on the other side.

Specimens of scribes' errors and their corrections may be seen in ll. 1, 2, 26–28. In the former the words first written have been erased, and the correct reading written above them; in the latter, some words had been written twice over by mistake (λεγει αυτω θελεις ὑγιης γενεσθαι λεγει αυτω θελεις νγιης γενεσθαι απεκριθη αυτω). The whole passage (from the first γενεσθαι) has been erased, and then correctly re-written, with a slight variation (λεγει for [illegible]); but as the correct reading was much shorter than that originally written, a considerable space is left blank, as the facsimile shows.

As regards the quality of the text preserved in the Codex Alexandrinus, it must be admitted that it does not stand quite so high as its two predecessors in age, ℵ and B. Different parts of

the New Testament have evidently been copied from different originals; but in the Gospels, at any rate, A is the oldest and most pre-eminent example of that revised "Syrian" text which (to judge from the quotations in the Fathers) had become the predominant text as early as the fourth century. It will often be found at the head of the great mass of later uncials and cursives which support the received text; and although it is much superior to the late cursives from which the "received text" was in fact derived, it yet belongs to the same class, and will be found oftener in agreement with the Authorised Version than with the Revised. In the Acts and Epistles its text is predominantly Alexandrian, with some Western readings; in the Apocalypse it belongs to the Neutral type, and is probably the best extant MS. of that book. The Epistles of Clement, which are very valuable for the history of the early Church, having been written about the end of the first century, were until quite recently not known to exist in any other manuscript. The Eusebian sections and canons, referred to above (p. 124), are indicated in the margins of the Gospels, which also exhibit the earliest example of a division into chapters. A similar division of the Acts and Epistles, ascribed to Euthalius of Alexandria, who wrote about A.D. 158, is not found in this manuscript; and this is an additional reason for believing it not to have been written later than the middle of the fifth century.

The Codex Alexandrinus was the first of the greater manuscripts to be made accessible to scholars. The Epistles of Clement were published from it by Patrick Young in 1633, the Old Testament by Grabe in 1707–1720, and the New Testament by Woide in 1786. In 1816–28 the Rev. H. H. Baber published the Old Testament in type resembling as closely as possible the writing of the original. Finally a photographic reproduction of the whole MS. was published in 1879–1883, under the editorship of Mr. (now Sir) E. Maunde Thompson, the present Principal Librarian of the British Museum.

B. **Codex Vaticanus**, the most ancient and most valuable of all the manuscripts of the Greek Bible. As its name shows, it is in

the great Vatican Library at Rome, which has been its home since about the year 1450 (certainly before 1475). There is, therefore, no story to tell of the discovery of this MS.; the interest which attaches to its history is of a different kind, and relates to the long struggle that was necessary before its contents were made accessible to scholars. For some reason which does not clearly appear, and which it is difficult to represent as very creditable to the heads of the Roman Church, the authorities of the Vatican Library put continual obstacles in the way of all who wished to study it in detail. A correspondent of Erasmus in 1533 sent that scholar a number of selected readings from it, as proof of its superiority to the received Greek text. In 1669 a collation (or statement of its various readings) was made by Bartolocci, but it was never published, and remained unknown until 1819. Other imperfect collations were made about 1720 and 1780. Napoleon carried the manuscript off as a prize of victory to Paris, where it remained till 1815, when the many treasures of which he had despoiled the libraries of the Continent were returned to their respective owners. While at Paris it was studied by Hug, and its great age and supreme importance were first fully made known; but after its return to Rome a period of seclusion set in. In 1843 Tischendorf, after waiting for several months, was allowed to see it for six hours. Next year De Muralt was permitted to study it for nine hours. In 1845 the great English scholar Tregelles was allowed indeed to see it but not to copy a word. His pockets were searched before he might open it, and all writing materials were taken away. Two clerics stood beside him and snatched away the volume if he looked too long at any passage! However, the Roman authorities now took the task in hand themselves, and in 1857 an edition by Cardinal Mai was published, which, however, was so inaccurate as to be almost useless. In 1866 Tischendorf once more applied for leave to edit the MS., but with difficulty obtained leave to examine it for the purpose of collating difficult passages. Unfortunately the great scholar so far forgot himself as to copy out twenty pages in full, contrary to the conditions under

which he had been allowed access to the MS., and his permission was naturally withdrawn. Renewed entreaty procured him six days longer study, making in all fourteen days of three hours each; and by making the very most of his time Tischendorf was able in 1867 to publish the most perfect edition of the manuscript which had yet appeared. An improved Roman edition appeared in 1868–81; but the final and decisive publication was reserved for the years 1889–90, when a complete photographic facsimile of the whole MS. made its contents once and for all the common property of all scholars.

The Codex Vaticanus originally contained the entire Greek Bible, but it has suffered not a little from the ravages of time. The beginning has been lost, as far as Gen. **46.** 28; in the middle, Psalms **106–138** have dropped out; at the end, the latter part of Hebrews (from Chap. **9.** 4), the Catholic Epistles, and the whole of the Apocalypse have disappeared.* Each page measures 10½ by 10 inches. The vellum is beautifully fine, and is said to be made from antelopes' skins. The writing (*see* Plate X.) is in small and delicate uncials, perfectly simple and unadorned, with three columns to the page. There are no enlarged initials, no stops or accents, no divisions into chapters or sections such as are found in later MSS., but a different system of division peculiar to this manuscript. Unfortunately, the beauty of the original writing has been spoilt by a later corrector, who, thinking perhaps that the original ink was becoming faint, traced over every letter afresh, omitting only those letters and words which he believed to be incorrect. Thus it is only in the case of such words that we see the original writing untouched and uninjured. An example may be seen in the thirteenth and fourteenth lines from the bottom

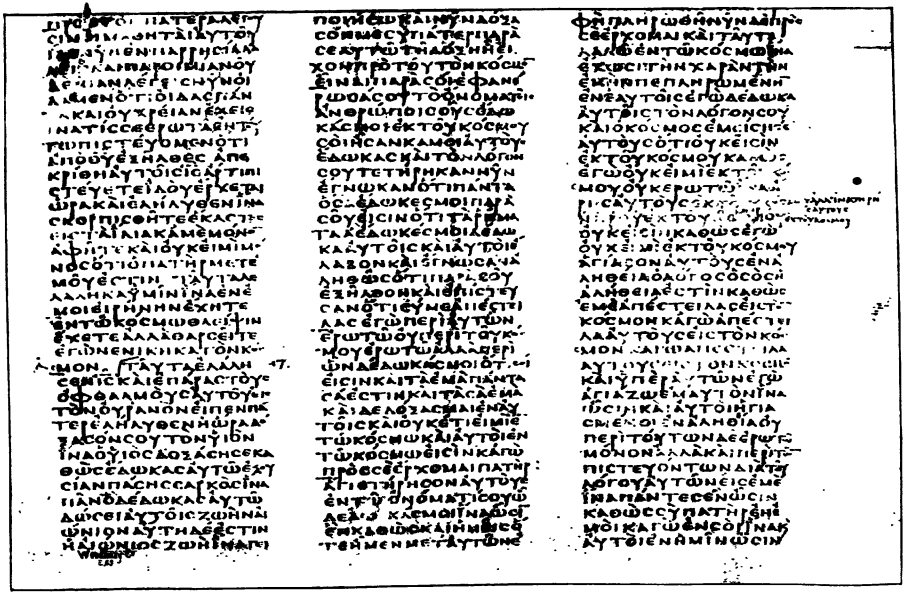
* The Codex Vaticanus being deficient in the Apocalypse, the letter B is in the case of that book transferred to another MS. also in the Vatican, but much later in date, being of the eighth century. It is of some importance, as uncial MSS. of the Apocalypse are scarce; but it must be remembered that its authority is by no means equal to that of the great manuscript to which the letter B is elsewhere appropriated.

of the third column in our plate, where the corrector has not retouched the words *καγω απεστειλα αυτους εις τον κοσμον*, which have been written twice over by mistake. One scribe wrote the whole of the MS., and was also, as we have seen, employed on part of the Codex Sinaiticus. There are corrections by various hands, one of them (indicated as B^2) being ancient and valuable. With regard to the date of the manuscript, critics are agreed in assigning it to the fourth century; and the identity of scribe between it and part of ℵ shows that they are practically contemporary, though the more complete absence of ornamentation from B has generally caused it to be regarded as slightly the older.

Over the character of the text contained in B a most embittered controversy has raged. It will have been noticed that it is only within quite recent years that ℵ and B have emerged from their obscurity and have become generally known; and it so happens that these two most ancient manuscripts differ markedly from the class of text represented by A, which up to the time of their appearance was held to be the oldest and best authority in existence. Hence there has been a natural reluctance to abandon the ancient readings at the bidding of these two new-comers, imposing though their appearance may be; and this is especially the case since the publication of Dr. Hort's theory, which assigns to these two manuscripts, and especially to B, a pre-eminence which is almost overwhelming. Dean Burgon tilted desperately against the text of Westcott and Hort, and even went so far as to argue that these two documents owed their preservation, not to the goodness of their text, but to its depravity, having been, so to speak, pilloried as examples of what a copy of the Scripture ought not to be! In spite of the learning with which the Dean maintained his arguments, and of the support which equally eminent but more moderate scholars such as Dr. Scrivener gave to his conclusions, they have failed to hold their ground. Scholars in general believe B to be the chief evidence for the most ancient form of the New Testament text, and it is clear that the Revisers of our English Bible attached the greatest weight to its authority.

Even where it stands alone, or almost alone, its evidence must be treated with respect; and such readings not unfrequently find a place in the margin of the Revised Version. One notable instance, the omission of the last twelve verses of St. Mark, has been mentioned in speaking of the Codex Sinaiticus; others will be found recorded in the notes to the Variorum Bible, or in any critical edition of the Greek New Testament.

The page exhibited in our facsimile contains John **16.** 27—**17.** 21. Six lines have been omitted from the top of the plate. It was chosen especially as showing a good example of the untouched writing of the MS., as described above; but it also contains several interesting readings. In **16.** 27 it has "the Father" instead of "God"; and the note in the Variorum Bible informs us that B is here supported by the original text of C, and by D and L. On the other hand, it is opposed by the original text of ℵ (both ℵ and C have been altered by later correctors), and by A and Δ. Most of the later MSS. follow the latter group; the versions and Fathers are divided. The evidence is thus very evenly divided, and so, consequently, are the editors; Tischendorf, M^c^Clellan, and Weiss retaining the "received" reading, "God," while Lachmann, Tregelles, and Westcott and Hort follow B. The Revisers have done the same, being probably influenced by the fact that the evidence in support of the word "Father" comes from more than one group of authorities, B and L being Neutral, D Western, and C mixed, while the Coptic versions, which also support it, are Alexandrian. This is a good instance of an evenly balanced choice of readings. In **16.** 33 the received reading "shall have" is supported only by D and the Latin versions, while ℵ A, B, C, and nearly all the other uncials and versions read "have"; so that practically all editors adopt the latter reading. In **17.** 11 another instance occurs of an overwhelming majority in favour of a change, the received reading being supported only by a correction in D and by the Vulgate, while ℵ, A, B, C, L, and all editors read "keep them in thy name which thou hast given me." In the next verse, ℵ, B, C, D, L (all the best MSS. except A,



CODEX VATICANUS—4TH CENT.

(Original size of page, 10½ in. × 10 in.: of part reproduced, 6 in. × 9½ in.)

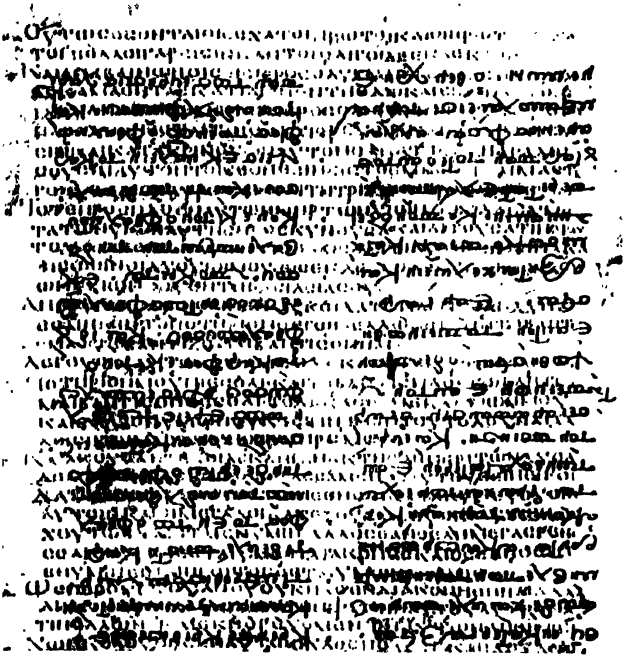
and most of the versions) omit the words "in the world," which are found in A and the mass of cursives. Of the editors, only M^cClellan, preferring what he regards as internal probability to external evidence, retains the "received" reading. In the words which follow, a more complicated difference of opinion exists, for which reference may be made to the Variorum Bible note. One reading is supported by A and D; another by ℵ^c (the third corrector of ℵ) and the two chief Coptic versions; a third by B, C, and L. Of the editors, Lachmann adopts the first reading, M^cClellan the second, and the others, including the Revisers, the third. None of the variations here mentioned as occurring on this page of B is of first-rate importance, but they furnish a fair example of the sort of problems with which the textual critic has to deal, and of the conflicting evidence of MSS. and the divergent opinions of editors. Finally, in *v.* 15 (col. 3, ll. 19, 20 in the plate) there is a good example of a class of error to which, as mentioned above (p. 6), scribes were especially liable. The words to be copied were "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them out of the evil"; but when the scribe had written the first "out of the," his eye wandered on to the second occurrence of these words, and he proceeded to write "evil" instead of "world," thus omitting several words, and producing nonsense. The correction of the blunder has involved the cancelling of some words in l. 20 and the writing of others in the margin. Sometimes the omission of words in this way does not produce obvious nonsense, and then the error may escape notice and be perpetuated by being copied into other manuscripts.

C. **Codex Ephraemi**, now in the National Library of Paris, having been brought from the East to Italy early in the sixteenth century, and taken from Italy to Paris by Queen Catherine de' Medici. This manuscript is a prominent instance of a fate which befell many ancient books in the Middle Ages, before the introduction of paper into Europe. When vellum became scarce, a scribe who was unable to procure a sufficiency of it was apt to take some

manuscript to which he attached little value, wash or scrape off the ink as well as he could, and then write his book on the vellum thus partially cleaned. Manuscripts so treated are called *palimpsests*, from a Greek word implying the removal of the original writing. The Codex Ephraemi is a palimpsest, and derives its name from the fact that the later writing inscribed upon its vellum (probably in the twelfth century) consists of the works of St. Ephraem of Syria. Naturally to us the earlier writing in such a case is almost always the more valuable, as it certainly is in this case; but it requires much labour and ingenuity, and often the application of chemicals, in order to discern the faded traces of the original ink. Attention was first called to the Biblical text underlying the works of St. Ephraem at the end of the seventeenth century. In 1716 a collation of the New Testament was made, at the instance of the great English scholar Richard Bentley; but the first complete edition of it was due to the zeal and industry of Tischendorf, who published all that was decipherable, both of the Old and of the New Testament, in 1843–5.

The original manuscript contained the whole Greek Bible, but only scattered leaves of it were used by the scribe of St. Ephraem's works, and the rest was probably destroyed. Only 64 leaves are left of the Old Testament; of the New Testament there are 145 (out of 238), containing portions of every book except 2 Thessalonians and 2 John. It is written in a medium-sized uncial hand, in pages measuring 12½ inches by 9½ inches, and with only one column to the page. The Eusebian sections and the division into chapters appear in the Gospels, but there are no traces of divisions in the other books. The writing is generally agreed to be of the fifth century, perhaps a little later than the Codex Alexandrinus; and two correctors have left their mark upon the text, the first in the sixth century, and the other in the ninth. Of course it will be understood, in reference to other manuscripts as well as this, that the readings of an early corrector may be as valuable as those of the manuscript itself, since they must have been taken from other copies then in existence.

PLATE XI.



CODEX EPHRAEMI—5TH CENT.

(*Original size of page*, 12½ *in.* × 9½ *in.*; *of part reproduced*, 7½ *in.* × 9 *in.*)

The great age of C makes it extremely valuable for the textual criticism of the New Testament; but it is less important than those which we have hitherto described, owing to the fact that it represents no one family of text, but is rather compounded from them all. Its scribe, or the scribe of one of its immediate ancestors, must have had before him manuscripts representing all the different families which have been described above. Sometimes it agrees with the Neutral group of manuscripts, sometimes with the Western, not unfrequently with the Alexandrian, and perhaps oftenest with the Syrian. The page exhibited in Plate XI. contains Matt. **20.** 16–34 (eight lines being omitted from the bottom of the page), and a reference to the notes in the Variorum Bible will show that its readings here are of some interest. In *v.* 16 it is the chief authority for the words, "for many be called but few chosen"; in this case it is supported by D, but opposed by ℵ and B, which omit the sentence (A is defective here). Similarly in verses 22 and 23 the words, "and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with," are found in C, E, and a multitude of later uncials and cursives, but are omitted by ℵ, B, D, L, Z, and most of the versions. In all these cases the Revised Version sides with ℵ and B against C, and there can be little doubt that the Revisers are right, and that these readings of C are due to the habit (very common in the Syrian type of text) of introducing into the narrative of one Evangelist words and clauses which occur in the description of the same or similar events in the others.

D. **Codex Bezae**; in the University Library at Cambridge. This is undoubtedly the most curious, though certainly not the most trustworthy, manuscript of the New Testament at present known to us. It was probably written in the south of France, perhaps at Lyons. It was at Lyons in the year 1562, when Theodore Beza, the disciple of Calvin and editor of the New Testament (see p. 99), procured it, probably after the sack of the city by the Huguenots in that year; and by Beza, from whom it derives its name, it was presented in 1581 to the University of

Cambridge. It is remarkable as the first example of a copy of the Bible in two languages; for it contains both Greek and Latin texts. It is also remarkable, as will be shown directly, on account of the many curious additions to and variations from the authentic text which it contains; and no manuscript has been the subject of so many speculations or the basis of so many conflicting theories. It was partially used by Stephanus in his edition of 1550 and by Beza in his various editions. After its acquisition by Cambridge it was collated, more or less imperfectly, by various scholars in the 17th and 18th centuries, and published in full by Kipling in 1793. A new edition, with full annotations, was issued by Dr. Scrivener in 1864; and since that date two other Cambridge scholars, Professor Rendel Harris and Mr. Chase, have made careful studies of its text from rather different points of view.

In size the Codex Bezae is smaller than the manuscripts hitherto described, its pages measuring ten inches by eight. The Greek and Latin texts face one another on opposite pages, the Greek being on the left hand, the Latin on the right. Each page contains a single column, not written continuously, as in the MSS. hitherto described, but in lines of varying length, the object (imperfectly attained, it is true) being to make the pauses of sense come at the end of a line. It is written in uncials of rather large size, the Latin and Greek characters being made curiously alike, so that both pages have a similar general appearance at first sight. The writing is evidently in a style later than that of A or C, and it may be assigned with fair confidence to the sixth century. The manuscript has been corrected by many hands, including the original scribe himself; some of the correctors are nearly contemporary with the original writing, others are much later.

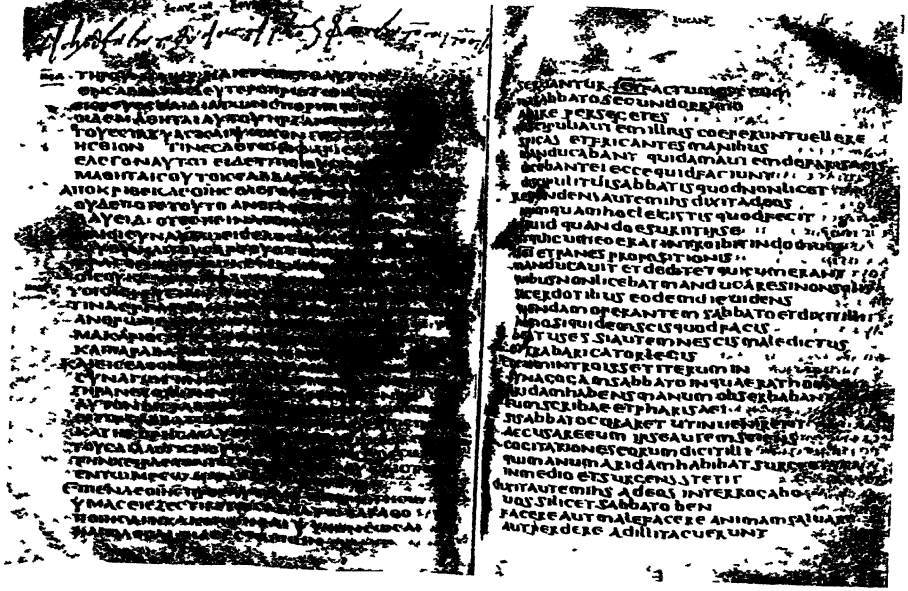
The existence of a Latin text is sufficient proof by itself that the manuscript was written in the West of Europe, where Latin was the language of literature and daily life. In the East there would be no occasion for a Latin translation; but in the West

Latin was the language which would be the most generally intelligible, while the Greek was added because it was the original language of the sacred books. But Latin copies of the Scriptures existed long before this manuscript was written; and then the question arises, whether the scribe has simply copied a Greek manuscript for his Greek pages and a Latin manuscript for his Latin, or whether he has taken pains to make the two versions correspond and represent the same readings of the original. On this point a rather curious division of opinion has arisen. It is tolerably clear that in the first instance independent Greek and Latin texts were used as the authorities to be copied, but it is also clear that the texts have been to some extent assimilated to one another; and while Dr. Scrivener (and most scholars until recently) argues that the Latin has been altered to suit the Greek (and therefore ceases to be very valuable evidence for the text of the Old Latin version), Professor Rendel Harris maintains that the Greek has been altered to suit the Latin, and that therefore it is the Greek that is comparatively unimportant as evidence for the original Greek text. Striking evidence can be produced on both sides; so that there seems to be nothing left but to conclude that *both* texts have been modified, which is in itself not an unreasonable conclusion. The general result is that the evidence of D, whether for the Greek or Latin texts, must be used with some caution; and care must be taken to make sure that any apparent variation is not due to some modification introduced by the scribe.

But the special interest of Codex Bezae is not to be found so much in verbal variations as in wider departures from the normal text, in which there is no question of mere accommodations of language, but which can only be due to a different tradition. Codex Bezae, unlike the MSS. hitherto described, which are copies of the entire Bible, contains only the Gospels and Acts, with a few verses of the Catholic Epistles, which originally preceded the Acts; but in these portions of the New Testament it exhibits a very remarkable series of variations from the usual text. It is the

chief representative of the Western type of text, which, formerly supposed to have originated in the West, is now shown to have come into existence in Syria or Asia Minor, at a very early date indeed, probably near the beginning of the second century. The Church in Gaul (*i.e.* France) was closely connected with the Church of Asia Minor, from which it had been founded; and it may have been in this way that this type of text passed from the East (where it left its mark in the Old Syriac version) to the West, where it became the predominant form in the early ages of the Church. Its special characteristic, as explained above (p. 110), is the free addition, and occasionally omission, of words, sentences, and even incidents. One of these will be found in the page of the MS. reproduced in our Plate XII., containing Luke **5.** 38 —**6.** 9. The first word on the page shows that this manuscript contains the last words of verse 38, "and both are preserved," which are omitted by ℵ, B, and L, and after them by Tischendorf, Westcott and Hort, and the Revised Version; while A, C, and the mass of later MSS. agree with D, and are followed by Lachmann, Tregelles, and McClellan. Verse 39 is omitted altogether, both by D and by the Old Latin version (*see* note in Variorum Bible). At the end of **6.** 9 the words οἱ δὲ ἐσιώπων ("but they were silent") are added by D alone; and in place of verse 5, D alone inserts the following curious passage (ll. 16–20 in the plate): "On the same day, seeing one working on the sabbath day, he said unto him, Man, if thou knowest what thou doest, blessed art thou; but if thou knowest not, thou art accursed and a transgressor of the law." This striking incident, which is contained in no other manuscript or version, cannot be held to be part of the original text of St. Luke; but it may well be that it is a genuine tradition, one of the "many other things which Jesus did" which were not written in the Gospels. If this be so, one would forgive all the liberties taken by this manuscript with the sacred text, for the sake of this addition to the recorded words of the Lord.

It will be of interest to note some of the principal additions and



CODEX BEZAE—6TH CENT

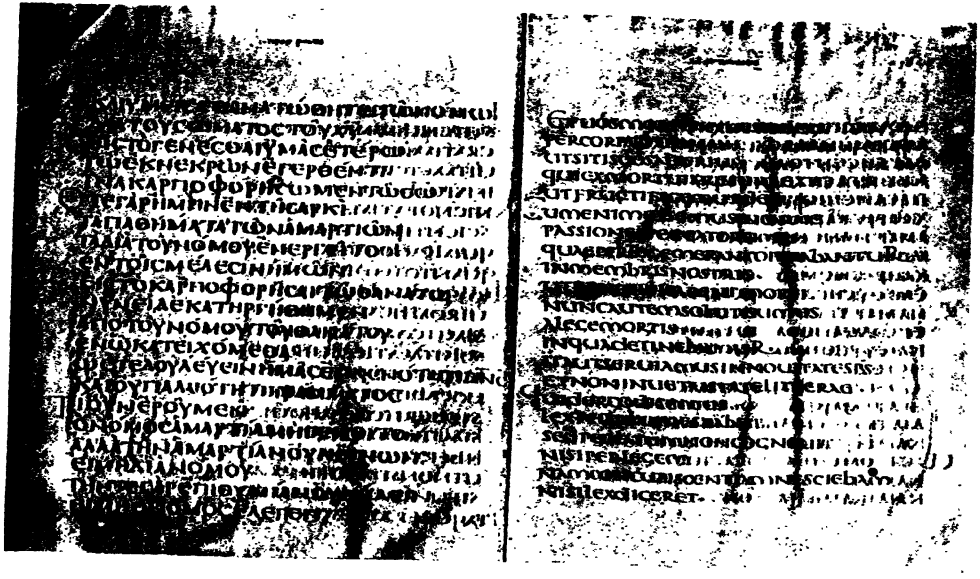
(Original size of each page, 10 in × 8 in; text in writing, 7½ in × 6 in.)

omissions found elsewhere in this remarkable manuscript. After Matt. **20.** 28, D is the principal authority (being supported by one uncial, Φ, the Old Latin and Old Syriac versions, and a few copies of the Vulgate) for inserting another long passage: "But seek ye to increase from that which is small, and to become less from that which is greater. When ye enter into a house and are summoned to dine, sit not down in the highest places, lest perchance a more honourable man than thou shall come in afterwards, and he that bade thee come and say to thee, Go down lower; and thou shalt be ashamed. But if thou sittest down in the worse place, and one worse than thee come in afterwards, then he that bade thee will say to thee, Go up higher; and this shall be advantageous for thee." Matt. **21.** 44 ("and whosoever shall fall on this stone," *etc.*) is omitted by D, one cursive (33), and the best copies of the Old Latin. In Luke **10.** 42, D and the Old Latin omit the words, "one thing is needful, and." In Luke **22.** 19, 20 the same authorities and the Old Syriac omit the second mention of the cup in the institution of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, thus reversing the order of administration of the elements. In Luke **24.** 6, D and the Old Latin omit the words "He is not here, but is risen"; they omit the whole of *v.* 12, with Peter's entry into the sepulchre; they omit in *v.* 36 "and saith unto them, Peace be unto you"; the whole of *v.* 40, "And when he had thus spoken, he showed them his hands and his feet"; in *v.* 51 the words "and was carried up into heaven"; and in *v.* 52 the words "worshipped him and." In John **4.** 9 the same authorities omit "for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans"; this time with the support of ℵ. In Acts **15.** 20 D omits "and from things strangled," and adds at the end of the verse "and that they should not do to others what they would not have done to themselves." In the narrative of St. Paul's missionary journeys in Asia, this manuscript and its allies have so many variations as to have suggested the idea that they represent a separate edition of the Acts, equally authentic but different in date; or else that they (or rather the source from which they are descended) embody touches of local detail added by

a scribe who must have been a resident in the country and acquainted with the local traditions. Little changes of phrase, which the greatest living authority on the history and geography of Asia Minor declares to be more true and vivid than the ordinary text, are added to the narratives of St. Paul's visits to Lycaonia and Ephesus. Thus in ch. **19.** 9, D adds the detail that St. Paul preached daily in the school of Tyrannus "from the fifth hour to the tenth." In ch. **19.** 1 the text runs thus, quite differently from the verse which stands in our Bibles: "Now when Paul desired in his own mind to journey to Jerusalem, the Spirit spake unto him that he should turn back to Ephesus; and passing through the upper parts he cometh to Ephesus, and finding certain disciples he said unto them." And when the evidence of D comes to an end, as it does at **22.** 29, the other authorities usually associated with it continue to record a text differing equally remarkably from that which is recorded in the vast majority of manuscripts and versions.

The instances which have been given are sufficient to show at once the interest and the freedom characteristic of the Western text, of which the Codex Bezae is the chief representative. It is not, however, to be supposed that it is always so striking and so independent. In many cases it is found in agreement with the Neutral text of B and ℵ, when it no doubt represents the authentic words of the original. But space will not allow us to dwell too long on any single manuscript, however interesting, and further information as to its readings can always be found by a study of any critical edition or of the notes to the Variorum Bible.

D_2. **Codex Claromontanus**; in the National Library at Paris (Plate XIII.). It has been said that the Codex Bezae contains only the Gospels and Acts; and consequently when we come to the Pauline Epistles the letter D is given to another manuscript, which contains only this part of the New Testament. Like the Codex Bezae it formerly belonged to Beza, having been found at Clermont (whence its name), in France, and in 1656 it was bought for the Royal Library. Like the Codex Bezae, again, it



CODEX CLAROMONTANUS—6TH CENT.

(Original size of each page, 9¾ in. × 7¼ in.; of column of writing, 6 in. × 6 in.)

contains both Greek and Latin texts, written on opposite pages. Each leaf measures 9¾ inches by 7¾ inches, with very wide margins. It is written on beautifully fine vellum, in a very handsome style of writing, and (still like D of the Gospels) it is arranged in lines of irregular length, corresponding to the pauses in the sense. It is generally assigned to the sixth century, and was probably written in Africa, perhaps in Egypt. The Greek text is correctly written, the Latin has many blunders, and is more independent of the Greek than is the case in Codex Bezae, belonging to the African type of the Old Latin version. It has been corrected by no less than nine different hands, the fourth of which (about the ninth century) added the breathings and accents, as they appear in the plate. The page shown contains Rom. 7. 4–7. In verse 6 it has a reading different from that usually found: "But now we have been discharged from the law of death, wherein we were holden." The text of this Codex is distinctly Western, as might be expected from its containing a Latin version; but Western readings in the Epistles are not so striking as we have seen them to be in the Gospels and Acts.

The remaining uncial manuscripts of the New Testament may, and indeed must, be described more briefly; but as they are sometimes referred to in the Variorum Bible, and of course oftener in critical editions of the Greek, a short notice of them seems to be necessary.

E of the Gospels (**Codex Basiliensis**) is an eighth century copy of the four Gospels, at Basle, in Switzerland, containing a good representation of the Syrian type of text, so that it will often be found siding with A.

E of the Acts (E_2), the **Codex Laudianus**, is much more valuable, and is the most important Biblical MS. in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. It is a manuscript of the sixth century, containing both Latin and Greek texts, the Latin being on the left and the Greek on the right (unlike D and D_2). It is written in large rough uncials, in lines of varying length, but containing

only one to three words each. Its text is Western, with a large admixture of Alexandrian readings. The history of this volume is interesting. An inscription contained in it shows that it was in Sardinia at some time in the seventh century. It was brought to England probably by Theodore of Tarsus, Archbishop of Canterbury, in 668. It was probably deposited by him in one of the great monasteries in the north of England, for it is practically certain that it was used by Bede in writing his commentary on the Acts. At the dissolution of the monasteries it must have been turned loose on the world, like so many other treasures of inestimable value; but ultimately it came into the hands of Archbishop Laud, and was included by him, in 1636, in one of his splendid gifts to the University of Oxford.

E of the Pauline Epistles (E_3) is merely a copy of D_2, made at the end of the ninth century, when the text of D_2 had already suffered damage from correctors. Hence it is of no independent value.

Of the remaining manuscripts we shall notice only those which have some special value or interest. Many of them consist of fragments only, and their texts are for the most part less valuable. Most of them contain texts of the Syrian type, and are of no more importance than the great mass of cursives. They prove that the Syrian text was predominant in the Greek world, but they do not prove that it is the most authentic form of the text. Some of the later uncials, however, contain earlier texts to a greater or less degree; and these deserve a separate mention.

L (**Codex Regius**), in the National Library at Paris, is conspicuous among the later uncials for the antiquity of the text which it preserves, and it was probably copied from a very early manuscript. It is assigned to the eighth century, and contains the Gospels complete, except for a few small lacunas. It has a large number of Alexandrian readings (having in fact probably been written in Egypt), but it is also in very great measure Neutral in its character, and it is very frequently found in con-

junction with B in readings which are now generally accepted as the best. One notable case in which its evidence is of special interest is at the end of St. Mark's Gospel. Like B and ℵ it breaks off at the end of *v.* 8; but unlike them it proceeds to give two alternative endings. The *second* of these is the ordinary *vv.* 9–20, but the first is a shorter one, which is also found in a small number of minor authorities: "But they told to Peter and his companions all the things that had been said unto them. And after these things the Lord Jesus himself also, from morning even until evening, sent forth by them the holy and imperishable proclamation of eternal salvation." It is certain that this is not the original ending of St. Mark's Gospel, but it is very probably an early substitute for the true ending, which may have been lost through some accident,* or else not written at all. In any case it is interesting as showing the independent character of L and increasing the general value of its testimony elsewhere.

P (**Codex Guelpherbytanus A**) is a palimpsest of the sixth century, containing 518 verses from various parts of all four Gospels, over which have been written some of the works of Isidore of Seville. It is now at Wolfenbüttel in Germany. Its text is partly Syrian, but contains some good readings.

Q (**Codex Guelpherbytanus B**) is another palimpsest, of the fifth century, containing 247 verses from St. Luke and St. John; it now forms part of the same volume as P, and its text is of the same general character.

R (**Codex Nitriensis**) is a palimpsest in the British Museum (Add. MS. 17,211), where it may be seen exhibited in the same case as the Codex Alexandrinus. It was brought from the convent of St. Mary Deipara, in the Nitrian Desert of Egypt. It contains 516 verses of St. Luke in a fine large hand of the sixth century,

* Dr. Hort suggests that a leaf containing *vv.* 9–20 may have been lost from an early copy of the second century; but it must be observed that this implies that the manuscript was written in book form, which is very improbable at that date. If it were a papyrus roll, as is most likely, the end would be in the *inside* of the roll, and therefore not exposed to much risk of damage.

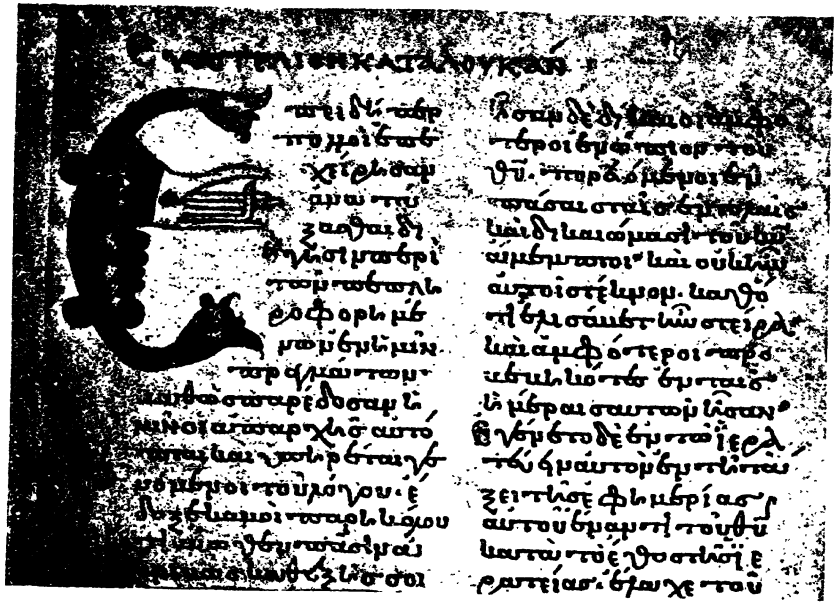
over which a Syriac treatise by Severus of Antioch has been written in the eighth or ninth century. Its text is distinctly valuable, and it contains a large proportion of pre-Syrian readings.

T (**Codex Borgianus**), in the Propaganda at Rome, is peculiar as containing both Greek and Coptic texts, the latter being of the Thebaic or Sahidic version. It is only a fragment, or rather several small fragments, containing 179 verses of St. Luke and St. John. It is of the fifth century, and contains an almost entirely Neutral text, with a few Alexandrian corrections. Dr. Hort ranks it next after B and ℵ for excellence of text. Several fragments of other Græco-Coptic MSS. have since been discovered of lesser size and importance.

Ƶ (**Codex Dublinensis**) is a palimpsest, consisting of 32 leaves, containing 295 verses of St. Matthew in writing of the sixth or possibly the fifth century, over which some portions of Greek Fathers were written in the tenth century. It was evidently written in Egypt, in a very large and beautiful hand. Its text is decidedly pre-Syrian, but it agrees with ℵ rather than with B.

Δ, *i.e.* Delta, the fourth letter in the Greek alphabet (**Codex Sangallensis**), is a nearly complete copy of the Gospels in Greek, with a Latin translation between the lines, written in the ninth century by an Irish scribe at the monastery of St. Gall in Switzerland. It was originally part of the same manuscript as G_3 of the Pauline Epistles. Its text, except in St. Mark, is of the ordinary Syrian type and calls for no special notice, but in St. Mark it is decidedly Neutral and Alexandrian, of the same type as L.

Ξ, *i.e.* Xi, the fourteenth letter of the Greek alphabet (**Codex Zacynthius**), is a palimpsest containing 342 verses of St. Luke, written in the eighth century, but covered in the thirteenth with a lectionary. It is now in the library of the British and Foreign Bible Society in London, whither it was brought from the island of Zante in 1820. Its text belongs to the same class as L, having a large number of Alexandrian readings, and also some of Western type; but its substratum is to a great extent Neutral, and Dr. Hort places it next to T.



CURSIVE GREEK MS.—A.D. 1022.

(*Unreduced; full page*, 8 *in.* × 6 *in.*)

Such is the roll of the most important uncial manuscripts of the New Testament. Of the great crowd of cursive MSS., which run into hundreds and thousands, we do not propose to speak. A few of the most remarkable of them, which contain texts of an early type, have been mentioned on p. 103; but for the most part they do but reproduce, with less and less authority as they become later in date, the prevailing Syrian type of text. No doubt good readings *may* lurk here and there among them, but the chances against it are many; and the examination of them belongs to the professional student of Biblical criticism, and not to those who desire only to know the most important of the authorities upon which rests our knowledge of the Bible text. Only for completeness sake, and as an example of the smaller form of writing prevalent in Greek manuscripts from the ninth century to the fifteenth, is a plate given here of one of these "cursive" MSS. (Plate XIV.). The manuscript here reproduced was written in the year 1022, and is now in the Ambrosian Library at Milan. It contains the Gospels only, and its official designation in the list of New Testament MSS. is Evan. 348. The page of which the upper half is here produced, on the same scale as the original, contains the beginning of St. Mark's Gospel. Its text is of no special interest; it is simply an average specimen of the Greek Gospels current in the Middle Ages, in the beautiful Greek writing of the eleventh century.

The most important authorities for the text of the Greek Testament have now been described in some detail; and it is to be hoped that the reader to whom the matter contained in these pages is new will henceforth feel a livelier interest when he strolls through the galleries of one of our great libraries and sees the opened pages of these ancient witnesses to the Word of God. These are no common books, such as machinery turns out in hundreds every day in these later times. Each one of them was written by the personal labour and sanctified by the prayers of some Egyptian or Syrian Christian of the early days, some Greek or Latin Monk of the Middle Ages, working in the writing-room of some great monastery of Eastern or Western Europe. Each

has its own individuality, which must be sought out by modern scholars with patient toil and persevering study. And from the comparison of all, from the weighing, and not counting merely, of their testimony, slowly is being built up a purer and more accurate representation of the text of our sacred books than our fathers and our forefathers possessed, and we are brought nearer to the very words which Evangelist and Apostle wrote, eighteen hundred years or more ago.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ANCIENT VERSIONS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

IN this chapter we are like hunters who have beaten through the ground on which their game is chiefly expected to be found, and then proceed to outlying covers and patches in which they have good hope to find something which, though not equal to what they have already got, may yet add appreciably to the value of their bag. We go out into a wider territory. Not Greek alone, but all the tongues of Pentecost—the dwellers in Mesopotamia, in Pontus and Asia, in Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt and the parts of Libya about Cyrene, sojourners in Rome, and Arabians—are now laid under contribution. We go to Syrian, and Egyptian, and Roman, and ask them when the sacred Scriptures were translated into their language, and what information they can give us as to the character and exact words of the Greek text from which their translations were originally made. And the answer is that the Word of God was delivered to the dwellers in these lands several centuries before the date at which the oldest of our Greek manuscripts were written. The Vatican and Sinaitic manuscripts carry us back, as we have just seen, to about the middle of the fourth century—say, to A.D. 350. But the New Testament was translated into Syriac and into Latin before A.D. 150, and into Egyptian somewhere about A.D. 200; and the copies which we now possess of these versions are lineal descendants of the original translations made at these dates. The stream of textual tradition was tapped at these points, far higher in its course than the highest point at which we have access to the original Greek. If we can ascertain with certainty what were the original words of the Syriac or Latin translations, we can generally know what was the Greek text which the translator had before him: we know, that is, what words were found in a Greek manuscript which was extant

in the first half of the second century, and which cannot have been written very far from A.D. 100. Of course variations and mistakes crept into the copies of these translations, just as they did into the Greek manuscripts, and much skill and labour are necessary to establish the true readings in these passages; but we have the satisfaction of knowing that we are working back at the common object (the recovery of the original text of the Bible) along an independent line; and when many of these lines converge on a single point, our confidence in the accuracy of our conclusions is enormously increased.

§ 1.—Eastern Versions.

I. Syriac Versions.

The Gospel was first preached in the East, and we will therefore take first the versions in the languages of those countries which lay nearest to Judæa. Of these, none can take precedence of the Syriac version. Syriac, as has been already stated (p. 73), is the language of Mesopotamia and Syria, and was likewise (with some variety of dialect) the current language of every-day life in Palestine in the time of our Lord. More than one translation of the Bible was made into this language, and these will be described in order.

(*a*) **The Old or Curetonian Syriac** (distinguished as *Cur.* in the Variorum Bible). Our knowledge of this version is due entirely to quite recent discoveries. Little more than fifty years ago its very existence was unknown. Some acute critics had indeed guessed that there must have been a version in Syriac older than that which bears the name of the Peshitto (*see below*), but no portion of it was known to exist. In 1842, however, a great mass of Syriac manuscripts reached the British Museum from the library of a monastery in the Nitrian Desert in Egypt,—the result of long negotiations with the monks by various travellers. Among them was the palimpsest under whose Syriac text is the copy of the Greek Gospels known as R (*see* p. 147), many copies of the ordinary Syriac Bible, and other precious documents. But among them also were some eighty leaves of a copy of the Gospels in

Syriac which Dr. Cureton, one of the officers of the Museum, recognised as containing a completely different text from any manuscript previously known. These leaves were edited by him, with a preface in which he contended that in this version we have the very words of our Lord's discourses, in the identical language in which they were originally spoken. The manuscript itself (of which a facsimile may be seen in Plate XV.) is of the fifth century, practically contemporary with the earliest manuscripts which we possess of the Peshitto Syriac; but Cureton argued that the character of the translation showed that the original of his version (which from the name of its discoverer is often known as the Curetonian Syriac) must have been made earlier than the original of the Peshitto, and that, in fact, the Peshitto was a revision of the Old Syriac, just as the Vulgate Latin was in part a revision of the Old Latin.

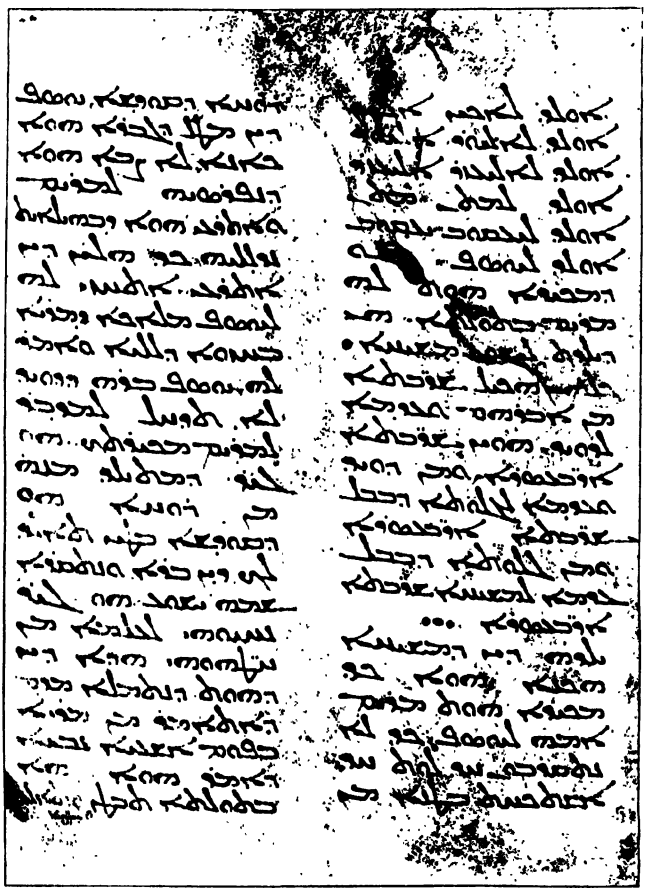
On this point a hot controversy has raged. In calling this version the *Old* Syriac, we have for the moment begged the question, believing that the balance of evidence tends to support this view; but it is only fair to state that the opposite opinion has been held by very high authorities. There is no question that the Curetonian Syriac is less accurate, less scholarly, less smooth than the Peshitto. There is also no doubt that the Peshitto was eventually the Authorised Version among Syriac Christians, the other being practically annihilated. The question is whether the Curetonian is a corruption of the Peshitto, or the Peshitto a revision of the Curetonian, or whether the connection between them is something more remote and indirect. It is too technical a controversy to be fully argued here, but in support of the view that the Curetonian is the older text it may be maintained that if an accurate version (such as the Peshitto) was in existence, it is not likely that it would be deliberately altered so as to make it less accurate, or that a less accurate independent version would be circulated; that the ultimate prevalence of the Peshitto is no proof of its superior antiquity, any more than the ultimate prevalence of the Vulgate proves it to be older than the Old Latin, but rather the reverse; and that the affinities of the Curetonian version are

with the older forms of the Greek text, while those of the Peshitto are with its later forms. The Curetonian Syriac is found in alliance with the Greek manuscripts B, ℵ, and D, rather than with A or C. As has been shown above (p. 143) it is often found supporting the same readings as D and the Old Latin, even where these are most unlike all other authorities. In short, its text is mainly Western, while the text of the Peshitto is mainly Syrian, like that of A and the majority of later MSS.

Fresh light, however, has just been poured upon the subject by a new discovery, which will no doubt re-open the controversy. A new copy of the Old Syriac Gospels has been discovered, and its text has been published while this book was being written. In 1892 two enterprising Cambridge ladies, Mrs. Lewis and her sister, Mrs. Gibson, visited the Monastery of St. Catherine, on Mount Sinai, the very place where Tischendorf made his celebrated discovery of the Codex Sinaiticus, and where Prof. Rendel Harris had quite recently found a Syriac copy of a very early Christian work, hitherto supposed to be lost, the "Apology" of Aristides. These ladies photographed a number of manuscripts, among them a Syriac palimpsest which they had noticed as containing a Gospel text; and when they brought their photographs home, the underlying text of this palimpsest was recognised by two Cambridge Orientalists, Mr. Burkitt and Prof. Bensly, as belonging to the Old Syriac version, hitherto known only in the fragments of Cureton. The palimpsest contains the greater part (about three-fourths, the rest being undecipherable) of the four Gospels. Naturally enough the announcement of the discovery aroused much interest; but Biblical students have had to possess their souls in patience while another expedition was made to Sinai to copy the MS. in full, and while the half obliterated writing was being painfully deciphered and edited. The result is now before the world, and though much discussion will be needed before a settled conclusion can be reached, it is possible to indicate the general bearings of the new discovery.

It is clear, in the first place, that the Sinaitic MS. does not

PLATE XV.



CURETONIAN SYRIAC MS.—5TH CENT.

(*Original size of page*, 11¾ *in.* × 9 *in.*; *without margins, as here*, 9½ *in.* × 7¼ *in.*)

represent precisely the same text as the Curetonian. The differences between them are much more marked than, say, between any two manuscripts of the Peshitto or of the Greek Testament. One striking proof of this may be found in the first chapter of St. Matthew; for whereas the Curetonian MS. emphasises the fact of the Miraculous Conception, reading in *v.* 16* "Jacob begat Joseph, to whom was betrothed Mary the Virgin, who bare Jesus Christ" (thus avoiding even the word "husband," which occurs in the Greek), the Sinaitic MS. as emphatically denies it, reading "Jacob begat Joseph, and Joseph, to whom was betrothed Mary the Virgin, begat Jesus who is called Christ." Similar additions are made elsewhere, and it is not surprising that some scholars have been eager to claim this as the original form of the narrative, the story of the Divine Conception being (in their view) a later excrescence. To the sober student, who tries to divest himself of prejudice in either direction (and it must not be supposed that all prejudice is on the side of orthodoxy), such a contention will appear quite uncritical. It is true that the genealogy of our Lord in Matt. 1. 1–16 was probably copied from a contemporary record, and that in such a record our Lord would undoubtedly have been described as the son of Joseph. But in any case the conclusion of the document (with its reference to Mary and to the title of "Christ") has been altered when it was incorporated into the Gospel, and the only question is whether it was incorporated in the form in which it stands in the Sinaitic Syriac, or in that of the Greek manuscripts and all other versions. And here the Sinaitic copy betrays itself; for it contains several phrases which are quite inconsistent with the denial of the Divine Conception. The title "Mary *the Virgin*" itself implies a comparatively late origin; and the phrase "before they came together," the quotation from Isaiah referring to the Virgin Birth, and the narrative of Joseph's doubts and behaviour are meaningless and unintelligible in connection with the new reading in *v.* 16. In short, the Greek

* Plate XV. exhibits this portion of the Curetonian MS., the page containing Matt. 1. 14–23.

manuscripts give a consistent story of a miraculous event; the Sinaitic Syriac gives an inconsistent story of what purports to be a natural event.

The interest naturally associated with so recent a discovery perhaps justifies this longer discussion of a single passage; but it also has a direct bearing on our subject, because it helps to indicate the position of the Old Syriac in the history of the Bible text. It clearly belongs to an old family in the pedigree of texts, and the Sinaitic MS. seems to contain it in an earlier form than the Curetonian. Besides the passage just discussed, it differs from the Curetonian in the important case of the last twelve verses of St. Mark. These are present in the Curetonian MS., but are omitted in the Sinaitic, which thus takes a place beside B and ℵ, which have hitherto stood alone in this omission. There are several other interesting variants from the normal text, but there is no room to discuss them here.

The general result (so far as first impressions go) would seem to be that the Curetonian and Sinaitic texts represent two closely allied branches of a common stock, each of them having been somewhat considerably altered in the course of transmission, but altered in different directions. The Sinaitic MS., or rather the original from which it is descended, was probably made for one of the early heretical bodies which held that our Lord was born in the ordinary way, and that the Divine Spirit entered Him at His baptism; while the Curetonian MS. represents an orthodox revision of the same version. Although, then, there is no justification for the attempt to exalt the newly discovered palimpsest into an authority superior to the oldest and best Greek manuscripts, the evidence of both the Curetonian and the Sinaitic MSS. is of great value, on account of the date to which it carries us back. Both contain an early type of text, and when the age of the two manuscripts is remembered (the Curetonian being of the fifth century, the Sinaitic not later, and perhaps slightly earlier), it is evident that the common original from which they have branched off must be placed very early indeed. We seem, then, to

have something of the same state of things as we shall find in the case of the Latin versions, where we have a number of very early texts collectively known as the Old Latin version, but differing very widely among themselves; the whole being finally superseded by the new version of St. Jerome (partly revised, partly re-translated from the originals), which we know as the Vulgate. The exact relation of this Curetonian-Sinaitic version to the Peshitto still remains not absolutely clear. Cureton's belief that the Peshitto is the result of a revision of his version is not shared by the scholar who is engaged in editing the Peshitto, Mr. Gwilliam. On the other hand he does not seem to have overthrown the view that the Curetonian is (or is based upon) an older form of text than the Peshitto; and therefore we shall continue to call this version, of which the Curetonian and Sinaitic manuscripts represent divergent modifications, by the convenient name of the Old Syriac.

(*b*) **The Peshitto** (*Pesh.* in Variorum Bible).—This is the great standard version of the ancient Syriac Church, made not later than the third century (those scholars who hold it older than the Curetonian would say the second), and certainly current and in general use from the fourth century onwards. The name means "simple" or "common," but the origin of it is unknown. It is known to us in a much greater number of manuscripts than the Old Syriac, the total hitherto recorded being 177. Most of these, including the most ancient, formed part of the splendid collection of Syriac MSS. from the Nitrian Desert to which allusion has already been made (p. 152), and are now in the British Museum. Of some of these, containing parts of the Old Testament, we have spoken above (p. 74). Of those which contain the New Testament, two are of the fifth century (the oldest being Add. MS. 14,459, in the British Museum, containing the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark), and at least a dozen more are not later than the sixth century, three of them bearing precise dates in the years 530–39, 534, and 548. The Peshitto was first printed by Widmanstadt, in 1555, from only two manuscripts, both of late date. It is now

being re-edited by Mr. Gwilliam from some forty MSS., many of them of very early date, as shown above; but so carefully were the later copies of the Peshitto made, between the fifth and twelfth centuries, that the substantial difference between these two editions is very slight.

That the foundations of the Peshitto go back to a very early date is shown by the fact that it does not contain those books of the New Testament which were the last to be generally accepted. All copies of it omit 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, Jude, and the Apocalypse. It is a smooth, scholarly, accurate version, free and idiomatic, without being loose, and it is evidently taken from a Greek text of the Syrian family. Its relations with the old Syriac have been discussed above. It appears to be not so much a revision of it (at any rate as it appears in the Curetonian and Sinaitic MSS.) as a later version based in part upon it, but upon other materials as well. More than this it would not be safe to say until Syriac scholars have made up their minds on the subject more definitely and with a greater approach to unanimity than is at present the case.

(*c*) **The Philoxenian or Harkleian Syriac.**—In the year 508, Philoxenus, Bishop of Mabug, in Eastern Syria, thinking the current Peshitto version did not represent the original Greek accurately enough, caused it to be revised throughout by one Polycarp; and in A.D. 616 this version was itself revised, with the assistance of some Greek manuscripts in Alexandria, by Thomas of Harkel, himself also subsequently Bishop of Mabug. This version had practically escaped notice until 1730, when four copies of it were sent from the East to Dr. Ridley, of New College, Oxford, from which, after his death, an edition was printed by Prof. J. White in 1778–1803. It is now known to us in many more manuscripts, a total of 36 being recorded, of which half are in England. The best is said to be one in the Cambridge University Library, written in 1170, but a copy of the seventh century and another of the eighth century exist at Rome, another at Florence bears the date A.D. 757, and there are two of

the tenth century in the British Museum. The version is extremely literal, and follows the Greek with most servile exactness, which has at least the advantage of making it quite certain what form of words is being translated. The MSS. used by Thomas of Harkel in his revision were evidently of the Western type, but the text of the Philoxenian-Harkleian version as a whole is of a very mixed description.

(*d*) **The Palestinian Syriac.**—There is yet another version of the New Testament in Syriac, known to us only in fragments, in a different dialect of Syriac from all the other versions. It is believed to have been made in the fifth or sixth century, and to have been used exclusively in Palestine. It was originally discovered at the end of the last century by Adler in a Lectionary (containing lessons from the Gospels only) in the Vatican Library, and fully edited by Erizzo in 1861–1. Since then fragments of the Gospels and Acts have come to light in the British Museum and at St. Petersburg; fragments of the Pauline Epistles in the Bodleian and at Mount Sinai; and two additional Lectionaries have been found at the latter place by Mrs. Lewis, and will shortly be edited by her. The text of this version is, on the whole, of a Western type. Dr. Hort considers that it rests in part on the Peshitto, but it is generally held to be quite independent, and to be the result of a fresh translation from the Greek.

This closes the list of Syriac Versions,* which rank among the oldest and most interesting of all translations of the New Testament. From Syria and Mesopotamia we pass now to the neighbouring country of Egypt.

The history of the Coptic language, as it existed in Egypt at the time when the Christian Scriptures were translated in that country, has been told in a previous chapter (p. 75). There can be

* Another Syriac version is sometimes enumerated, styled the *Karkaphensian*; but this is not a continuous version at all, but a collection of passages on which annotations are made dealing with questions of spelling and pronunciation. It is like the Massorah on the Hebrew Old Testament, and probably derives its name from the monastery in which it was compiled.

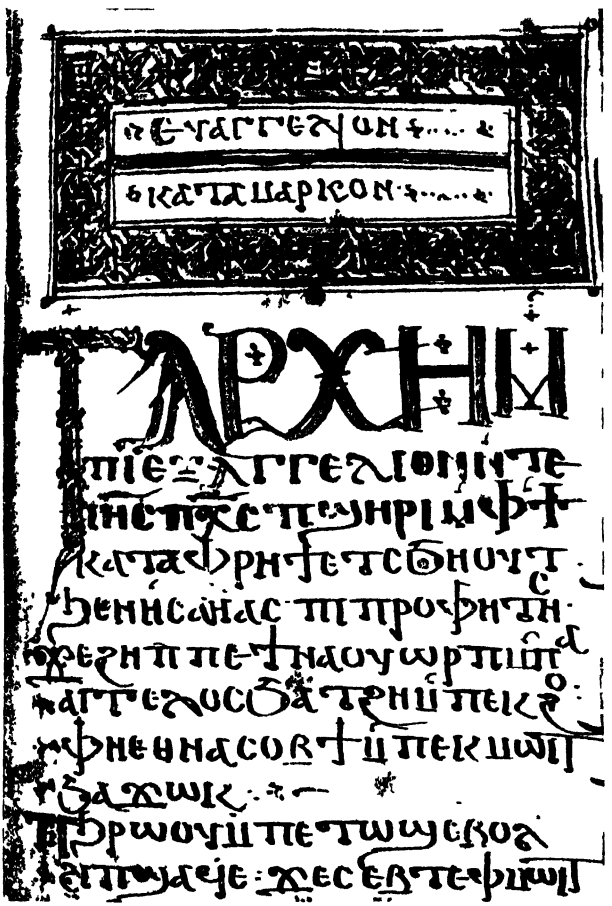
no doubt that Christianity spread into Egypt at a very early date.

II. Egyptian Versions.

Alexandria, then the head-quarters of Greek literature, possessed a large colony of Jews, by and for whom the Septuagint version of the Hebrew Scriptures had been made; and religious thought and philosophy flourished among them. Apollos, the disciple of St. Paul, was a Jew of Alexandria; and the intercourse of Alexandria with Palestine, with Syria, and with Asia Minor, made it inevitable that the new religion should spread thither soon after it had over-leapt the boundaries of Palestine itself. At what precise date the New Testament books were translated into the native language of Egypt we cannot tell. Some time would elapse before the faith spread from the Greek-speaking population to the Coptic natives; some time more before oral teaching was superseded by written books. But by or soon after the end of the second century it is probable that the first Coptic versions had been made. Our knowledge of these versions is, for the most part, of quite recent growth, and is growing still. Different dialects were spoken in different parts of the country, and each of these came in course of time to have its own version of the Scriptures. Until recently only two of these versions were known; we are now acquainted, more or less, with five, and it is not improbable that the discoveries which come in so thickly upon us from Egypt will increase this number in the near future.

(*a*) **The Memphitic** or **Bohairic Version** (*Memph.* in Variorum Bible) was the version current in Lower (*i.e.* Northern) Egypt, of which the principal native town was Memphis. Originally, however, the dialect in which it is written belonged only to the coast district near Alexandria, and another dialect was in use in Memphis itself; hence it is better to avoid the term Memphitic, and use the more strictly accurate name *Bohairic*. This was the most developed and most literary dialect of the Egyptian language, and ultimately spread up the country and superseded all the other dialects. The consequence of this is that the Bohairic is the Coptic of to-day, so far as the language still exists, and that in

PLATE XVI.



Bohairic MS.—A.D. 1208

(*Oriental Department, British Museum, Add. MS. 16,180, fol. 1 recto, line 1 to fol. 2 recto, line 8.*)

the Bohairic dialect alone are complete copies of the New Testament still extant. All the other Coptic versions exist in fragments only.

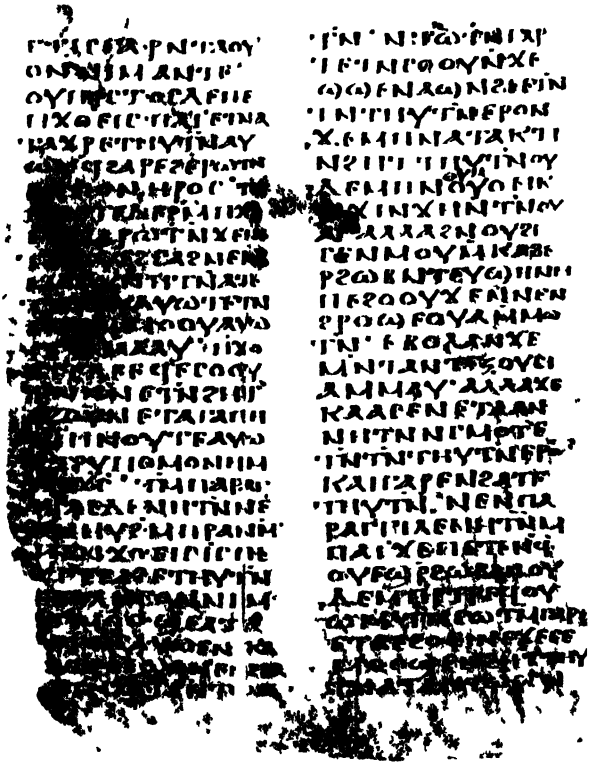
The Bohairic version was first made known by some Oxford scholars at the end of the seventeenth century, and the first printed edition of it was published at Oxford by Wilkins in 1716. Neither in this nor in any subsequent edition has sufficient use been made of the manuscripts available for comparison, and a good edition is still required, a want which is now in course of being supplied by the Rev. G. Horner, of Oxford. Over a hundred manuscripts exist and have been examined, but none of them is of a very early date. The oldest and best is a MS. of the Gospels at Oxford, which is dated A.D. 1173–4; there is one at Paris dated in 1178–80; there is another, in the British Museum, of the year 1192; others are of the thirteenth and later centuries. There is indeed a single leaf of the Epistle to the Ephesians which may be as early as the fifth century (in the British Museum), but this exception is too small to be important. The Apocalypse was not originally included in this version, and we know that in the third century its authenticity was questioned in Egypt. The translation is generally good and careful, so that it is easy to see what was the Greek which the translator had before him in any particular passage. The text, too, is of an excellent type. Excluding passages which appear only in the later MSS., and which evidently were not in the original version, the Bohairic text is mainly of a Neutral or Alexandrian type, with not much mixture of Western readings, and little or nothing of Syrian. The doubt about the last twelve verses of St. Mark appears in the best MS., which gives the shorter alternative ending (as in L, *see* p. 147) in the margin. Otherwise all the Bohairic MSS. have the usual verses 9–20. The passage John **7.** 53—**8.** 11 is omitted by all the best MSS. The pureness of the text is another argument in favour of this version having been made at an early date.

The specimen here given (Plate XVI.) is taken from a manuscript in the British Museum (MS. Or. 1315) which was written in

the year 1208. It affords an average specimen of Coptic writing of this period, and of the form of ornamentation (copied from Byzantine MSS.) which is sometimes found in them. The page here given (five lines being omitted from the bottom, and the whole being much reduced in scale) contains the beginning of St. Mark. In the margin, which is not shown in the plate, is an Arabic version of the Gospels. Such versions are a common accompaniment of Coptic MSS., and are no doubt due to the fact that Coptic has gradually become a dead language, Arabic alone being understood. At the present day there is a tendency to substitute Arabic for Coptic in the services of the Church.

(*b*) **The Thebaic** or **Sahidic Version** (*Theb.* in Variorum Bible).—Again, Thebaic is the older name, Sahidic the more accurate. This is the version which was current in Upper (*i.e.* Southern) Egypt, of which the chief town was Thebes. Its existence was not noticed until the end of the eighteenth century, and the first printed edition was that of Woide, published at Oxford, after his death, in 1799. Since that date our knowledge of the Sahidic version has enormously increased, and a new edition of it is urgently required. It exists only in fragments, but these fragments are now very numerous indeed, especially at Paris, and when put together they would compose a nearly complete New Testament, with considerable portions of the Old. Many of the fragments are of very early date, going back to the fifth, or possibly even the fourth century; but the dating of Coptic MSS. is a very difficult task. The original translation, however, was probably made somewhat later than the Bohairic version, as is only natural, since Christianity was first introduced into Lower Egypt, and thence spread up the Nile into Upper Egypt. As in the Bohairic, the Apocalypse seems originally to have formed no part of the New Testament. The translation is somewhat less faithful than the Bohairic, the language rougher and less polished. The text also is less pure, including a considerable Western element, so that it must have been translated independently from the Greek, and from manuscripts belonging to the Western family. Thus it is reckoned by

PLATE XVII.



SAHIDIC MS.—5TH CENT. (?)

(*Original size.*)

Dr. Hort as a not unfrequent ally of the chief representatives of that form of the text, the Codex Bezæ (D), and the Old Latin and Old Syriac versions.

The specimen shown in our Plate XVII. is selected mainly on the ground of its age. It is probably one of the oldest extant fragments of the Sahidic New Testament, having perhaps been written in the fifth century. It is now in the British Museum (MS. Or. 4717 (10)). Unfortunately, it is only a fragment consisting of four pages. The page exhibited, which is reproduced in its original size, contains 2 Thess. 3. 2–11. No important variations of reading occur in this passage.

The remaining Coptic versions may be dismissed very briefly. They have only recently been discovered, they are known as yet only in a few fragments, and their characteristics cannot yet be said to be established. Hence they have not yet made their appearance in critical editions of the New Testament, and may for the present be disregarded. They are (*c*) the **Fayyumic**, or version current in the district of the Fayyum, west of the Nile and south of the Delta, from which an enormous number of Greek and Coptic papyri have reached Europe in recent years. It appears to be related to the Sahidic, being probably descended from an early form of the same version. (*d*) The **Middle Egyptian**, found in manuscripts from the region of Memphis, related, like the Fayyumic, to the Sahidic. (*e*) The **Akhmîmic**, found in a number of fragments from the neighbourhood of Akhmîm, the ancient Panopolis, from which also came the manuscript containing the extraordinarily interesting portions of the apocryphal Gospel and Revelation of Peter which were published in 1892. This is said to be the earliest dialect of the Coptic language, but at present only a few small fragments of the New Testament have been published, the first to appear being the discovery of Mr. W. E. Crum. It is as certain as such speculations can be, that our knowledge of the Egyptian versions will be very greatly increased within the next few years. Materials are rapidly coming to light, and scholars competent to deal with them are now not wanting. Meanwhile we

must be thankful for the high character of the versions which are already available for the criticism and restoration of the sacred text.

The remaining Oriental versions of the New Testament may be dismissed with a very short notice. Their evidence may sometimes be called into court, but it is seldom of much importance.

The **Armenian** version, as we have it now, dates from the fifth century. Up to about the year 390 Armenia, the country to the east of Asia Minor and north of Mesopotamia, lying between the Roman and Persian empires, possessed no version of its own; but between that date and A.D. 400 translations of both Old and New Testaments were made, partly from Greek and partly from Syriac. About the year 433 these translations were revised with the help of Greek manuscripts brought from Constantinople. The result was the existing Armenian version, which consequently has, as might be expected, a very mixed kind of text. One very interesting piece of evidence has, however, been preserved in an Armenian manuscript. Most of the oldest MSS. of the Gospels in this version omit the last twelve verses of St. Mark; but one of them, written in the year 989, contains them, with a heading stating that they are "of the Elder Aristion."* Aristion lived in the first century, and is mentioned by Papias, his younger contemporary, as having been a disciple of the Lord. If the tradition which assigns to him the authorship of Mark **16.** 9–20 may be accepted, it will clear up the doubts surrounding that passage in a satisfactory way. It will show that St. Mark's Gospel was left unfinished, or was mutilated at a very early date, and that a summary of the events following the Resurrection, written by Aristion, was inserted to fill the gap; and we gain the evidence of another witness of our Lord's life on earth. The earliest MS. of the Armenian Gospels is dated in the year 887; there are probably two others of the ninth century and six of the tenth. The rest of

* The credit of this discovery belongs to Mr. F. C. Conybeare, of University College, Oxford.

the New Testament is only found in copies containing the whole Bible, which are rare and never older than the twelfth century.

The **Gothic** version, as has already been stated (p. 77), was made for the Goths in the fourth century, while they were settled in Mœsia, before they overran Western Europe. It was made by their Bishop Ulfilas, and was translated directly from the Greek. We know it now only in fragments, more than half of the Gospels being preserved in a magnificent manuscript at Upsala, in Sweden, written (in the fifth or sixth century) in letters of gold and silver upon purple vellum. Some portions of the Epistles of St. Paul are preserved in palimpsest fragments at Milan; but the Acts, Catholic Epistles, and Apocalypse are entirely lost. The Greek text used by Ulfilas seems to have been of the Syrian type in the New Testament, just as it was of Syrian (Lucianic) type in the Old.

The **Ethiopic** version belongs to the country of Abyssinia, and was probably made about the year 600; but most of the existing manuscripts (of which there are over a hundred) are as late as the seventeenth century, only a few going back as early as the fifteenth, the oldest of all (at Paris) being of the thirteenth century. Little is known about the character of the text, as it has never been critically edited.

Several **Arabic** versions are known to exist, some being translations from the Greek, some from Syriac, and some from Coptic, while others are revisions based upon some or all of these. None is earlier than the seventh century, perhaps none so early; and for critical purposes none is of any value.

Other Oriental versions (Georgian, Slavonic, Persian) are of still later date, and may be ignored.

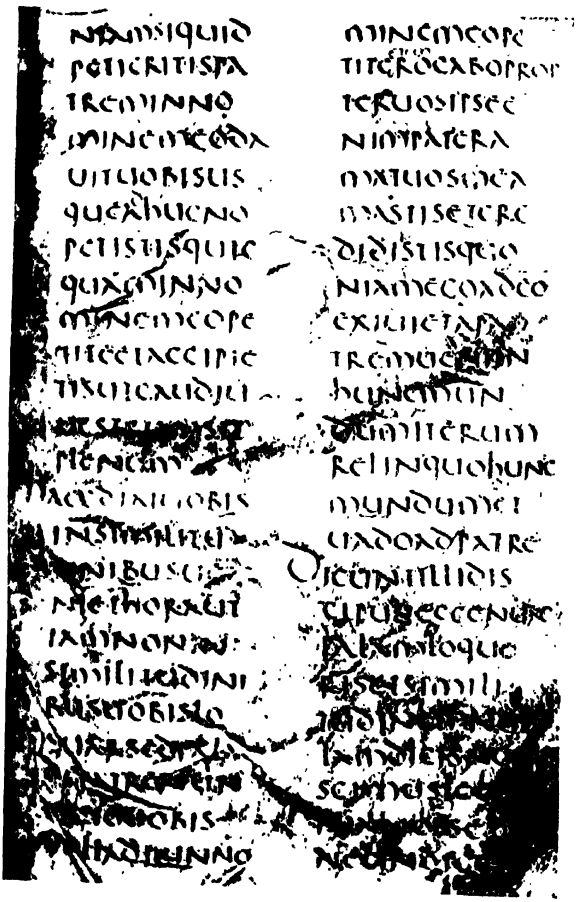
§ 2.—The Western Versions.

We now pass to the Western world, and trace the history of the New Testament as it spread from its obscure home in Palestine to the great capital of the world, and to the countries in its neighbourhood which owned its sway and spoke its language. In

speaking of the Latin Bible we are at once taking a great step nearer home; for Latin was the literary language of our own forefathers, and the Latin Bible was for centuries the official Bible of our own country. Nay, more, it was from the Latin Bible that the first English Bibles were translated. Therefore we have a special interest in the history of this version, an interest which is still further increased by the remarkable character which it possessed in its earlier stages, and by the minuteness with which we are able to trace its fortunes in later days. We have already described the Latin versions in relation to the Old Testament; we have now to speak of them in relation to the New.

In the Old Testament we have seen that there are two Latin versions, known as the Old Latin and the Vulgate; and we have seen that of these the Vulgate is the more important as an aid to the recovery of the original Hebrew text, because it was translated directly from the Hebrew, while the Old Latin was translated from the Septuagint; and also because the Vulgate is complete, while the Old Latin has only come down to us in fragments. In respect of the New Testament the relative importance of the two is somewhat different. Here we possess both versions practically complete: and whereas the Old Latin was translated direct from the original Greek, the Vulgate was only a revision of the Old Latin. Moreover, we possess a few manuscripts of the original Greek which are as early as the Vulgate; but the Old Latin was made long before any of our manuscripts were written, and takes us back almost to within a generation of the time at which the sacred books were themselves composed.

The **Old Latin Version** is consequently one of the most valuable and interesting evidences which we possess for the condition of the New Testament text in the earliest times. It has already been said (p. 78) that it was originally made in the second century, perhaps not very far from A.D. 150, and probably, though not certainly, in Africa. Another version, apparently independent, subsequently appeared in Europe; and the divergencies between these rival translations, as well as the extensive variations of text



CODEX VERCELLENSIS—4TH CENT.

(Original size of page, 9¼ in. × 6½ in.: without margins, as here, 7 in. × 4⅞ in.)

which found their way into both, made a revision necessary, which was actually produced in Italy in the fourth century. Hence it is that three different families or groups can be traced, the *African*, the *European*, and the *Italian*. We are able to identify these several families by means of the quotations which occur in the writings of the Latin Fathers. Thus the quotations of Cyprian, who died in 258, give us a representation of the African text; the European text is found in the Latin version of the works of Irenæus by Rufinus, who died in 397; while the Italian text appears conspicuously in Augustine (A.D. 354–430). By the help of such evidence as this we can identify the texts which are found in the various manuscripts of the Old Latin which have come down to us.

Owing to the fact that the Vulgate eventually superseded the Old Latin as the Bible of the Western Church, manuscripts of the latter are scarce, but when they exist are generally very old. No copy contains the whole of the New Testament, and very few are perfect even in the books which they contain. Thirty-eight manuscripts of the Old Latin exist; of these, twenty-eight contain the Gospels, four the Acts, five the Catholic Epistles, eight the Pauline Epistles, and three the Apocalypse, of which a practically complete text is also preserved to us in the commentary of Primasius, an African Father of the sixth century. Manuscripts of the Old Latin are indicated in critical editions by the small italic letters of the alphabet. One of the oldest and best is the CODEX VERCELLENSIS (*a*), of which a facsimile is given in Plate XVIII. It contains the four Gospels, in the order usual in the Western Church, namely, Matthew, John, Luke, Mark. It is written in silver letters, in very narrow columns, on extremely thin vellum stained with purple. The passage shown in the Plate is John **16.** 23–30. In verse 25 this MS. has a curious reading, which is found nowhere else; instead of "Ye shall ask in my name; and I say not unto you that I will pray the Father for you," it has "ask in my name, and I will pray for you." The passage may be seen at the top of the second column: "in nomine meo petite et

ego rogabo propter vos," the words "et ego" being added above the line. This manuscript was written in the fourth century, and is consequently as old as the oldest Greek MSS. of the Bible. It is now at Vercelli in Italy.

Other important MSS. of the old Latin are, for the Gospels, the CODEX VERONENSIS (*b*), of the fourth or fifth century, one of the most valuable of all; CODEX COLBERTINUS (*c*), an extraordinarily late copy, having been written in the twelfth century, in Languedoc, where the tradition of the Old Latin text lingered very late, but containing a good text; CODEX PALATINUS (*e*), fourth or fifth century, very incomplete, containing a distinctly African type of text; CODEX BRIXIANUS (*f*), sixth century, with an Italian text; CODEX BOBIENSIS (*k*), fifth or sixth century, containing a very early form of the African text; the Latin text of the CODEX BEZÆ (*d*), for which see p. 139. In the Acts, there are CODEX BEZÆ (*d*), as before; the Latin text of the CODEX LAUDIANUS (*e*), see p. 145; CODEX GIGAS (*g*), of the thirteenth century, the largest manuscript in the world, containing the Acts and Apocalypse in the Old Latin version, the rest in the Vulgate; and some palimpsest fragments (*h* and *s*) of the fifth or sixth century. The Catholic Epistles are very imperfectly represented, being contained only in the CODEX CORBEIENSIS, of St. James (*ff*), of the tenth century, and portions of the other epistles in other fragmentary MSS. The Pauline Epistles are known in the Latin version of the CODEX CLAROMONTANUS (*d*), for which see p. 144; *e*, *f*, *g* are similarly Latin versions of other bilingual manuscripts; and the remaining authorities are fragments. The Apocalypse exists only in *m* of the Gospels and *g* and *h* of the Acts. It must be remembered, however, that these MSS. are supplemented by the quotations in Latin Fathers, which are very numerous, and which show what sort of text each of them had before him when he wrote.

It may be interesting to mention which manuscripts represent the various families of the Old Latin text. The African text is found in *k* and (in a somewhat later form) *e* of the Gospels, *h* of the Acts and Apocalypse, in Primasius on the Apocalypse, and in

Cyprian generally. The Italian text, which is the latest of the three, appears in *f* and *q* of the Gospels, *q* of the Catholic Epistles, *r* of the Pauline Epistles, and in Augustine. The remaining MSS. have, on the whole, European texts (*b* being an especially good example), but many of them are mixed and indeterminate in character, and some have been modified by the incorporation of readings from the Vulgate.

It has been said above (p. 107) that the Old Latin version testifies to a type of Greek text of the class which has been described as "Western." This applies especially to the African and European groups of the Old Latin; the Italian text being evidently due to a revision of these with the help of Greek copies of a Syrian type. The earlier forms of the Old Latin, however, are distinctly Western, as has been shown in describing the peculiar readings of this class of text; and since the original translation into Latin was made in the second century, and perhaps early in that century, it shows how soon considerable corruptions had been introduced into the text of the New Testament. It is, indeed, especially in the earliest period of the history of the text that such interpolations as those we have mentioned can be introduced. At that time the books of the New Testament had not come to be regarded as on a level with those of the Old. They were precious as a narrative of all-important facts; but there was no sense of obligation to keep their language free from all change, and additions or alterations might be made without much scruple. Hence arose the class of manuscripts of which the Old Latin version is one of the most important representatives.

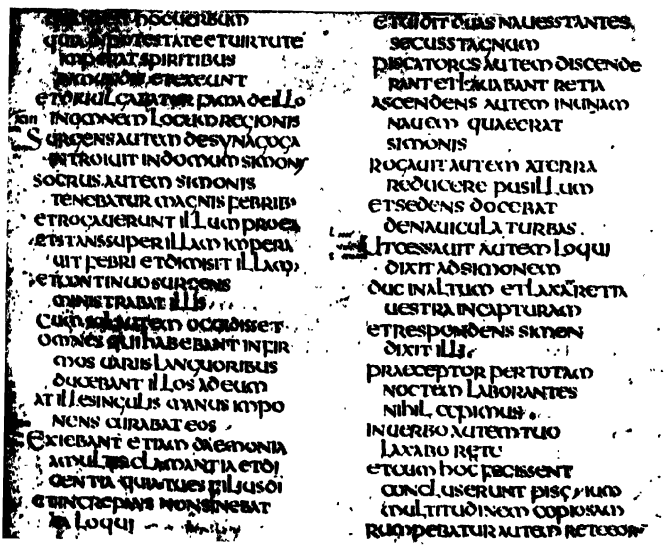
The Vulgate.—The history of this version has already been narrated in connection with the Old Testament. It was in the year 382 that Pope Damasus entrusted Jerome with the task of producing an authoritative revision of the Latin Bible which should supersede the innumerable conflicting copies then in existence. A settled version of the Gospels was naturally regarded as the prime need, and this was the first part of the work to be undertaken. Jerome began cautiously. A wholly new version of

the familiar text would have provoked much opposition, and Jerome consequently contented himself, as Damasus had intended, with merely revising the existing Old Latin translation. He compared it with some ancient Greek manuscripts, and only made alterations where they were absolutely necessary to secure the true sense of a passage. Minor corrections, though in themselves certain, he refrained from introducing, in order that the total change might be as little as possible. The Gospels were completed in 384, and the rest of the New Testament, revised after the same manner, but still more slightly, probably appeared in the following year. The Old Testament, which, as we have seen, was an altogether new translation from the Hebrew, was not finished until twenty years after this date.

The New Testament was consequently a distinct work from the Old, and was made on a different principle. It was based on the "Italian" type of the Old Latin, from which it differs less than the Italian differs from the primitive "African" text. The revision which produced the Italian text consisted largely, as we have seen, in the introduction of Syrian readings into a text which was mainly Western in character. Jerome's revision removed many of the Syrian interpolations, but still left the Vulgate a mixed Western and Syrian text. Its evidence is, consequently, of less value than that of the earlier versions; but it must be remembered that all the authorities used by Jerome in the production of the Vulgate must have been as old as, or older than, the oldest manuscripts which we now possess.

Manuscripts of the Vulgate are countless. There is no great library in Western Europe which does not possess them by scores and by hundreds. After existing side by side with the Old Latin version for some centuries it became universally adopted as the Bible of Western Christendom, and was copied repeatedly in every monastery and school until the invention of printing. Hence when we come now to try to recover the original text of the Vulgate, we are confronted with a task at least as hard as that of recovering the original text of the Greek Bible itself. It is

PLATE XIX.



CODEX AMIATINUS—*Circ.* A.D. 715.

(*Original size of page*, 19½ *in.* × 13½ *in.*; *of part reproduced*, 8½ *in.* × 10½ *in.*)

believed that over 8000 manuscripts exist in Europe, and the majority of these have never been fully examined.* It is only known that the text has been very considerably corrupted, partly by intermixture with the Old Latin version during the time when both translations were simultaneously in use, partly by the natural accidents attending the text of any book which has been repeatedly copied. We shall see in the next chapter what attempts were made to correct it during the Middle Ages. In modern times no critical edition has yet been produced. Our great English scholar, Richard Bentley, examined and caused to be examined a considerable number of manuscripts, but never advanced so far as to form a revised text of any part of the Bible. Now at last the task has been seriously taken in hand, and this very year has witnessed the completion of an edition of the four Gospels by Bishop Wordsworth of Salisbury and the Rev. H. J. White. This edition is based upon a complete examination of over thirty of the best manuscripts, with occasional references to many others, and is the first truly critical edition of the Vulgate that has ever been published. It is sincerely to be hoped that, in due course of time, the same accomplished editors may give us the rest of the Vulgate in an equally satisfactory form.

The best manuscript of the Vulgate is the CODEX AMIATINUS, of which a reduced facsimile, showing the lower half of the page, is given in Plate XIX. This has a special interest for Englishmen, apart from the value of the text contained in it, as having been produced in England (possibly by an Italian scribe) at the beginning of the eighth century. Its English origin was only discovered eight years ago, and in a curious way. On its second page is an inscription stating that it was presented to the abbey of Monte Amiata by Peter of Lombardy, and it was always supposed to have been written in Italy. But Peter's name was obviously written over an erasure, and, besides, spoilt the metre of the verses in which the inscription is composed. Still the truth was never suspected until a brilliant

* Dr. Gregory gives a list amounting to 2270, but his enumeration does not pretend to be anything like exhaustive.

conjecture by the Italian G. B. de Rossi, confirmed by a further discovery by Prof. Hort, showed that the original name was not Peter of Lombardy, but Ceolfrid of England. Then the whole history of the MS. was made clear. It was written either at Wearmouth or at Jarrow, famous schools in the north of England in the seventh and eighth centuries (having probably been copied from MSS. brought from Italy by Ceolfrid, or by Theodore of Tarsus, see p. 179), and was taken by Abbot Ceolfrid as a present to Pope Gregory II. in the year 716. It was used in the revision of the Vulgate by Pope Sixtus V. in 1585–90, and its present home is in the great Laurentian Library at Florence. It is a huge volume, each leaf measuring 19½ in. by 13½ in., written in large and beautifully clear letters. The passage shown in the Plate is Luke **4.** 32—**5.** 6. An example of a correction may be seen in col. 2., 13 lines from the bottom, where the singular imperative *lava* has been altered by a corrector to the plural *lavate*, which corresponds more exactly with the original Greek. The text is carefully and accurately written, and it is taken by Wordsworth and White as their first and most important authority.

Among the other most important MSS. of the Vulgate are the CODEX FULDENSIS, written in A.D. 546 for Bishop Victor of Capua, containing only the Gospels, arranged in a consecutive narrative, based on the Diatessaron (or Harmony) of Tatian, which was made about A.D. 170; CODEX CAVENSIS (ninth century), written in Spain, and with a Spanish type of text; CODEX TOLETANUS (eighth century), very similar to the Cavensis; the LINDISFARNE GOSPELS (about A.D. 690), a splendid north English copy, resembling the Codex Amiatinus in text, described more fully on p. 179; the HARLEIAN GOSPELS (sixth or seventh century), in the British Museum; the STONYHURST GOSPELS (seventh century), formerly at Durham, now at Stonyhurst, written in a beautiful little uncial hand; and the manuscripts exhibiting the revision by Alcuin, described in the following chapter. As yet, no complete classification of the manuscripts into groups has been effected, and the relative value of the texts contained in them consequently remains

uncertain. Distinct types of text are recognisable in the manuscripts of certain countries, notably those of Ireland and Spain, of which we shall have more to say in the next chapter; and it is fairly clear that the best manuscripts are those which most nearly resemble the Codex Amiatinus; but for fuller knowledge we must wait until Bishop Wordsworth and Mr. White are able to sum up the results of their patient and long-continued labours.

So we close the list of our witnesses to the original text of the New Testament. We have traced, so far as we are able, the history of the Greek text itself; we have examined the principal manuscripts of it, and classified them into families, which carry us back far towards the date at which the sacred books were originally written. Then we have enumerated all the early translations of the New Testament into other languages, and have described their several characteristics. With all this mass of evidence, reinforced by the testimony given on isolated passages by quotations in the early Christian writers, the trained scholar must face the task of determining the true reading of each passage in which the authorities differ. It has been the object of these chapters to enable every student of the Bible to follow this process with intelligent interest; to understand why variations exist in the text of the Bible, and on what principles and by what means the true readings are distinguished from the false. In so doing, we have given a history of the spread of the Bible, both in the East and in the West, in the first five or six centuries after the foundation of Christianity. In the chapters which follow we shall trace the later fortunes of the Bible in the West and the origin and history of our own English versions, thus linking in one continuous chain the original Hebrew and Greek Scriptures with the Bible which we read in our churches and homes to-day.

CHAPTER IX.

THE VULGATE IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

THE history of the Bible in Western Europe is for a thousand years the history of the Vulgate, and of the Vulgate alone.

Importance of the Vulgate.

In the East the Scriptures circulated in Greek, in Syriac, in Coptic, in Armenian, in Ethiopic. In the West, Latin was the only language of literature. The Latin language was carried by the Roman legionaries into Africa, into Gaul, into Spain, into parts of Germany, and even to distant Britain; and wherever the Latin language went, thither, after the conversion of the Empire to Christianity, went the Latin Bible. Throughout the period which we know as the Middle Ages, which may roughly be defined as from A.D. 500 to 1500, almost all books were written in Latin. Latin was the language in which different nations communicated with one another. Latin was the language of the monasteries; and the monasteries were the chief centres of the learning which existed during those centuries. An educated man, speaking Latin, was a member of a society which included all educated men in Western Europe, and might be equally at home in Italy, in Gaul, and in Britain. We shall see in the next chapter that translations of parts of the Bible into English existed from a very early time; but these were themselves translations from the Latin Bible, and for every copy of the Bible in English there were scores, or even hundreds, in Latin. The same was the case on the Continent. Translations were made, in course of time, into French, Italian, and other languages; but the originals of these translations were always Latin Bibles. Every monastery had many copies; and the relics of these, the remnant which escaped from the vast destructions of the Reformation and all the other chances of time, fill our

museums and libraries to-day. To the Latin Bible we owe our Christianity in England; and in tracing its fortunes during the Middle Ages, we are but supplying the link between the early narrative of the spread of the Bible throughout Europe and its special history in our own islands.

Simultaneous use of Old Latin and Vulgate.

We have said that the form in which the Bible was first made known to the Latin-speaking people of the West was that of the Old Latin version. The African form of this version spread along the Roman provinces which occupied the north of the continent in which it was produced; the European variety of it was propagated throughout Gaul and Spain, while a revised and improved edition was current in Italy in the fourth century. Then came the Vulgate, the revised Latin Bible of St. Jerome. Undertaken as it was at the express request of the Pope, it yet did not win immediate acceptance. Even so great an authority as St. Augustine objected to the extensive departures from the current version which Jerome had made in his Old Testament. For some centuries the Vulgate and the Old Latin existed side by side. Complete Bibles were then rare. More commonly, a volume would contain only one group of books, such as the Pentateuch or the Prophets, the Gospels or the Pauline Epistles; and it would very easily happen that the library of any one individual would have some of these groups according to the older version, and others according to the Vulgate. Hence we find Christian writers in the fifth and sixth centuries using sometimes one version and sometimes the other; and when complete copies of the Bible came to be written, some books might be copied from manuscripts of the one type, and others from those of the other. Special familiarity with particular books was a strong bar to the acceptance of the new text. Thus the Gospels continued to circulate in the Old Latin much later than the Prophets, and the old version of the Psalms was never superseded by Jerome's translation at all, but continues to this day to hold its place in the received Bible of the Roman Church.

One unfortunate result followed from this long period of simultaneous existence of two different texts, namely the intermixture of readings from one with those of the other. Scribes engaged in copying the Vulgate would, from sheer familiarity with the older version, write down its words instead of those of St. Jerome; and on the other hand a copyist of the Old Latin would introduce into its text some of the improvements of the Vulgate. When it is remembered that this was in days when every copy had to be written by hand, when the variations of one manuscript were perpetuated and increased in all those which were copied from it, it will be easier to understand the confusion which was thus introduced into both versions of the Bible text. It is as though every copy of our Revised Version were written by hand, and the copyists were to substitute, especially in the best known books, such as the Gospels, the more familiar words of the Authorised Version. Very soon no two copies of the Bible would remain alike, and the confusion would only be magnified as time went on.

Consequent mixture of Texts.

So it was with the Latin Bible in the Middle Ages. The fifth and sixth centuries are the period during which the old and new versions existed side by side. In Italy the final acceptance of the Vulgate was largely due to Gregory the Great (590–604). In Gaul, in the sixth century, certain books, especially the Prophets, were habitually known in Jerome's translation; the rest were still current mainly in the old version. In the seventh century the victory of the Vulgate was general. But it was a sadly mutilated and corrupted Vulgate which emerged thus victorious from the struggle; and the rest of the Middle Ages is the history of successive attempts to revise and reform it, and of successive decadences after each revision, until the invention of printing made it possible to fix and maintain a uniform text in all copies of the Bible.

The truest text of the Vulgate was no doubt preserved in Italy. The worst was unquestionably in Gaul, which we may now begin to call France. But two countries, situated at different extremes

of Western Christendom, preserved somewhat distinct types of text, which eventually had considerable influence upon the history of the Vulgate. These were Spain and Ireland. Each was, for a considerable period, cut off from communication with the main body of Christendom; Spain, by the Moorish invasion, which for a time confined the Christian Visigoths to the north-western corner of the peninsula; Ireland, by the English conquest of Britain, which drove the ancient Celtic Church before it, and interposed a barrier of heathendom between the remains of that Church and its fellow Christians on the Continent. The consequence of this isolation was that each Church preserved a distinct type of the Vulgate text, recognisable by certain special readings in many passages of the Bible. The Spanish Bible was complete, and its text, though of very mixed character, contains some good and early elements; witness the Codex Cavensis and the Codex Toletanus, mentioned on p. 172. The Irish Bible as a rule consists of the Gospels alone, and its text is likewise mixed, containing several remarkable readings; but its outward form and ornamentation were of surpassing beauty, and stamped their mark deep on the history of the Bible for several centuries. Of this, as it especially concerns our English Bibles, we shall have to speak more at length.

The Vulgate in Spain and Ireland.

The seventh century is the most glorious period in the history of the Irish Church. While Christianity was almost extinct in England, while the Continent was torn with wars and plunged in ignorance, the Irish Church was producing the finest monuments of Christian art, as applied to the ornamentation of manuscripts, which the world has ever seen, and was sending forth its missionaries far and wide to call back Europe and England to the Christian faith. In the seclusion of their western isle, the Irish devised and perfected a style of decoration, as applied to manuscripts, of absolutely unique beauty and elaboration. The special feature of this style is its extraordinarily intricate system of interlacing patterns, combined and

Irish MSS.

continued with marvellous precision over a whole page throughout the pattern of a huge initial letter. Looked at from a little distance, a page of one of these manuscripts resembles a harmonious mosaic or enamelled pattern in soft and concordant colours. Examine it closely, even with a magnifying glass, and the eye wearies itself in following the intricacy of its pattern, and the hand strives in vain to reproduce its accuracy even for a few inches of its course. The use of gold gives to later illuminations a greater splendour of appearance at first sight; but no other style shows a quarter of the inexhaustible skill and patient devotion which is the glory of the Irish school and of their Anglo-Saxon pupils.

Irish MSS. introduced into England.

For those who are acquainted with illuminated manuscripts, this style of decoration is a striking monument of the introduction of Christianity into northern England from the Irish Church. While Augustine, the delegate of the Roman Church, was winning his way in Kent, Irish missionaries had planted a settlement in the island of Iona, from which they preached the Gospel in southern Scotland; and in the year 635 Oswald, who had learnt Christianity while an exile at Iona, sent to beg that a priest might be sent to him to aid in the conversion of his newly-won kingdom of Northumbria. Aidan was dispatched in answer to his call, to become bishop of Lindisfarne; and in Aidan's steps came a great band of Irish and Scotch missionaries, who spread themselves abroad in the land and planted Christianity there firmly and finally. But in coming to England they did not forget the art which they had learnt at home. In Iona had perhaps been produced the most splendid example of Irish illumination in existence, the Book of Kells, now the special glory of the library of Trinity College, Dublin; but in England they executed other manuscripts scarcely less magnificent, predominant among which is the beautiful Lindisfarne Gospels, a page of which is reproduced in Plate XX.

But while the decoration of the north English manuscripts was

PLATE XX.

THE LINDISFARNE GOSPELS—*Circ.* A.D. 690

(*Original size* 13½ *in.* × 10 *in.*)

Texts of English MSS. derived from Italy.

wholly derived from Ireland, their text had, in great measure, a different origin, and was of a very superior quality. We have seen that the manuscript which contains the purest text of the Vulgate now extant, the Codex Amiatinus, was written at Jarrow or Wearmouth shortly before the year 716. A few years earlier, the book of the Lindisfarne Gospels was written at Lindisfarne, and its text shows a marked affinity to that of the Codex Amiatinus. Now the source of the Lindisfarne text can be proved with practical certainty. It is a copy of the four Gospels, written in a fine and bold uncial hand, with magnificent ornamentation at the beginning of each book. The main text is that of the Latin Vulgate; but between the lines a later hand has written a paraphrase of the Latin into the primitive English which we commonly call Anglo-Saxon. Of this paraphrase more will be said in the ext chapter; at present our concern with it lies in the fact that the author of it has added at the end of the volume a history of the manuscript. He tells us that it was written by Eadfrith, Bishop of Lindisfarne, in honour of St. Cuthbert, the great saint of Lindisfarne and Northumbria, who died in A.D. 687; that it was covered and "made firm on the outside" by Ethilwald; that Billfrith the anchorite wrought in smith's work the ornaments on its cover; and that he himself, Aldred, "an unworthy and most miserable priest," wrote the English translation between the lines. We know, therefore, that the volume was written shortly after the year 687. Now before each Gospel is placed a list of festivals on which lessons were read from that book; and, strange as it may seem at first sight, it has been quite recently shown that these festivals are unquestionably festivals of the Church of Naples. What is still more remarkable, this strange fact can be completely explained. When Theodore of Tarsus was sent by Pope Vitalian to England in 669 to be Archbishop of Canterbury, he brought with him, as his companion and adviser, one Hadrian, the abbot of a monastery near Naples. Theodore visited the whole of England, including

Northumbria; and there can be no reasonable doubt that the Lindisfarne Gospels were copied from a manuscript which Abbot Hadrian had brought with him from Italy. Here, then, we have the clue to the origin of the excellent texts of the Vulgate found in these north English manuscripts. There can be no doubt that the Codex Amiatinus, though written in England, derived its text from Italy, and carries on the best traditions of the Italian Vulgate.

The plate opposite this page is a much reduced copy of the first words of the Gospel of St. Luke in the Lindisfarne book; and even in this reduction the beauty and elaboration of the intricately interlaced design which composes the initial Q can be fairly seen. Between the lines of the original writing is the English paraphrase, in a minute cursive hand, without pretensions to ornament. The history of the MS. after its completion deserves a word of mention; for a special romance attaches to it. Written in honour of St. Cuthbert, it was preserved at Lindisfarne along with the Saint's body; but in the year 875 an invasion of the Danes drove the monks to carry away both body and book. For several years they wandered to and fro in northern England; then, in despair, they resolved to cross over to Ireland. But the Saint was angry at being taken from his own land, and a great storm met the boat as it put out; and as the boat lay on its side in the fury of the storm the precious volume was washed overboard and lost. Realising the Saint's displeasure, the monks put back, in a state of much penitence and sorrow for their loss; but at last the Saint encouraged one of them in a dream to search for the book along the shore, and on a day of exceptionally low tide they found it, practically uninjured by its immersion. The story is told by the chronicler Simeon of Durham, writing about 1104; and it need not be dismissed as a mere mediæval legend. Precious volumes, according to the Irish practice, were carried in special cases or covers, which might well defend them from much damage from the sea; and it is certain that several pages of this book (which was regularly known in

The Lindisfarne Gospels.

mediæval times as "the book of St. Cuthbert which fell into the sea") show to this day the marks of injury from water which has filtered in from without. The subsequent history of the MS. may be briefly told. Always accompanying the Saint's body, it found homes at Chester-le-Street, Durham, and finally at Lindisfarne once more. At the dissolution of the monasteries it was cast abroad into the world and stripped of its jewelled covers; but was rescued by Sir Robert Cotton, and passed with his collection into the British Museum, where it now rests in peace and safety.

But this is a digression. The point which we have established is the spread of the Vulgate from Ireland to northern England, and the formation of an excellent text there by means of copies brought from Italy. During the eighth and ninth centuries northern England was the most flourishing home of Christian scholarship in western Europe. Wearmouth and Jarrow were the head-quarters of the school; and the great names in it are those of Bede and Alcuin. Bede (A.D. 674–735), the first great historian of England, lived and died at Jarrow. Of him we shall have more to say in the next chapter, in connection with the earliest translations of the Bible into English. Alcuin (A.D. 735–805), on the other hand, is intimately connected with the most important stage of the history of the Vulgate in the Middle Ages.

Eminence of English scholarship in 8th and 9th centuries.

While Ireland and England were taking the lead in promoting the study and circulation of the Bible, the Bible in France was sinking deeper and deeper into the confusion and corruption which have been described above. No one who has not worked among manuscripts can know the endless degrees of deterioration to which a much-copied text can sink, or realise the hopelessness of maintaining for long a high or uniform standard of correctness. Nothing but the strong hand of a reformer could check the progress of decay; and that was at last found in the great emperor, Charlemagne. From the beginning of his reign this monarch

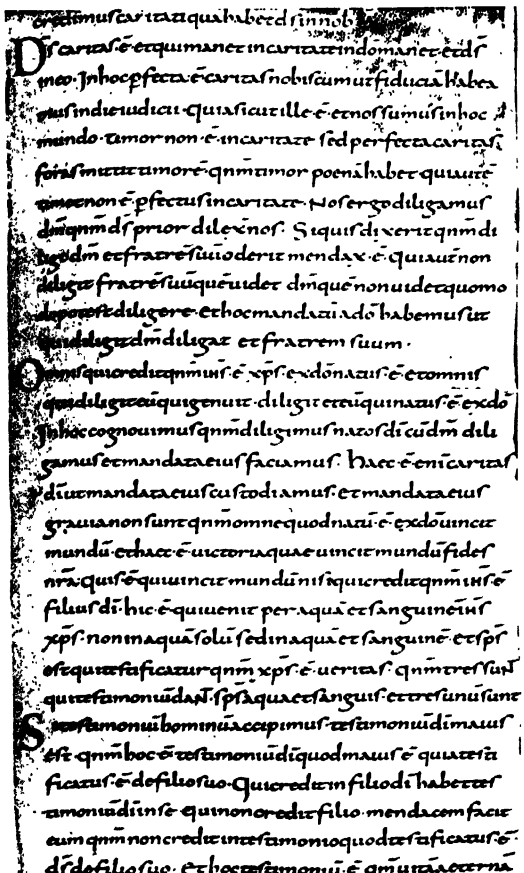
Alcuin invited by Charlemagne to revise Vulgate in France.

manifested great concern for the reformation of the text of the Scriptures. He forbad them to be copied by inexperienced boys at schools; and when he cast his eyes round for a scholar who might undertake the revision of the corrupted text, he naturally looked to England, and there found the man whom he required in the person of Alcuin of York, the most distinguished scholar of the day. Alcuin was invited to France; was attached to the court at Aix and made master of the schools which Charlemagne established in his palace, with the title and revenues of the abbot of St. Martin of Tours: and subsequently retiring to Tours, inaugurated there a great school of copyists and scholars, and there received the commission of the emperor to prepare a revised and corrected edition of the Latin Bible.

Two families of texts were then widely represented in France, the Spanish and the Irish. These, coming respectively from south and north, met in the region of the Loire, and both were known to Alcuin. In 796 we find him sending to York for manuscripts, showing how highly he valued the text preserved in the copies of northern England; in 801 the revision was complete, and on Christmas Day in that year a copy of the restored Vulgate was presented by him to Charlemagne. We have evidence of several copies having been made under Alcuin's own direction during the short remainder of his life, and although none of these has actually come down to us, we yet possess several manuscripts which contain Alcuin's text more or less perfectly preserved. The best of these is the Codex Vallicellianus, containing the whole Bible, now in the library of the Oratory adjoining the Church of Sta. Maria in Vallicella, at Rome, but written at Tours in the ninth century, probably in or soon after the life time of Alcuin. Another fine copy (Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 10546, sometimes known as the Bible of Charlemagne), likewise containing the whole Bible, may be seen in one of the show-cases in the British Museum, and of this a reproduction is given in Plate XXI. It is an excellent specimen of the style of writing introduced in France during the reign of

Alcuin's Vulgate.

PLATE XXI.



ALCUIN'S VULGATE—9TH CENT.

(*Original size of page*, 20 *in.* × 14½ *in.*: *of part reproduced* 8¼ *in.* × 5 *in.*)

Charlemagne, the special head-quarters of which was the school of Tours, over which Alcuin presided. It marked a new departure in the history of Latin writing, and it was this style of writing that indirectly formed the model from which our modern printed types are taken. The MS. in question is written in double columns on a page measuring 20 inches by 14½. Here only part of one column can be shown (and that much reduced in scale), containing 1 John 4. 16—5. 10, and it will be seen that the famous interpolation in verse 8 relating to the Three Witnesses is here absent. As stated in the Variorum Bible, this text is found in no Greek manuscript, with the exception of two, in which it is manifestly inserted from the Latin. It is a purely Latin interpolation, though one of early origin, and it finds no place in Alcuin's corrected Vulgate. There the text runs, "For there are three that bear witness, the spirit, the water, and the blood; and the three are one."

The Golden Gospels of Charlemagne.

The zeal of Charlemagne for the Bible was not manifested in his encouragement of Alcuin's revision alone. From his reign date a series of splendid manuscripts of the Gospels, written in gold letters upon white or purple vellum, and adorned with magnificent decorations. The inspiration of these highly decorated copies is clearly derived from the Irish and north English manuscripts of which we have spoken above, and it is probable that here again Alcuin was the principal agent in carrying the English influence into the Continent. It has at least been shown to be probable that the centre from which these "Golden Gospels," as they are sometimes called, took their rise, was in the neighbourhood of the Rhine, where Alcuin was settled as master of the palace schools before his retirement to Tours; and the earliest examples of this style appear to have been written during the time of his residence in that region. In any case they are a splendid evidence of the value in which the sacred volume was held, and they show how the tradition of the Irish illumination was carried abroad into France. The characteristic interlacings of the Irish style are plainly evident,

but the extent to which they are employed has diminished; and although the profuse employment of gold lends them a gorgeousness which their predecessors do not possess, yet the skill and labour bestowed upon them cannot be ranked so high, and the reader who will compare the best examples of either class will probably agree that, while both are splendid, the Books of Kells and of Lindisfarne are even more marvellous as works of art than the Golden Gospels of Charlemagne. The texts of these Gospels differ from those of the Tours manuscripts in being closer to the Anglo-Saxon type, and this is quite in accordance with the theory which assigns their origin to the influence of Alcuin, but at a period earlier than that of his thorough revision of the Vulgate. Manuscripts of this class continued to be written under the successors of Charlemagne, especially in the reign of Charles the Bald (843–881); but after that date they disappear, and a less gorgeous style of illumination takes the place of these elaborate and beautiful volumes.

It was not only under the immediate direction of Charlemagne that the desire for an improved text of the Vulgate was active.

The revision of Theodulf.

Almost simultaneously with Alcuin, Theodulf, Bishop of Orleans, was undertaking a revision upon different lines. Theodulf was probably a Visigoth by birth, a member, that is, of the race of Goths which had occupied Spain, and from which the Spaniards are in part descended. He came from the south of France, and hence all his associations were with the districts on either side of the Pyrenees. Thus, while Alcuin represented the Irish tradition of the Bible text, Theodulf embodied the traditions of Spain. At Orleans, however, of which see he was bishop about the year 800, he stood at the meeting place of the two streams; and his revised Vulgate, though mainly Spanish in type, shows also traces of Irish influence, as well as of the use of good Alcuinian MSS. His revision is very unequal in value, and its importance is by no means so great as that of Alcuin's work. Undertaken apart from the influence of Charlemagne, it was never generally adopted, and

now survives in comparatively few manuscripts, the best of which is in the National Library at Paris.*

One other school of Biblical study at this period deserves notice. Not far from the Lake of Constance lies the monastery of St. Gall, now a comparatively obscure and unvisited spot, but formerly a great centre of study and of penmanship. At this day it is almost, if not quite, unique in retaining still in the nineteenth century the library which made it famous in the ninth. At a still earlier period it was a focus of Irish missionary effort. Irish monks made their way to its walls, bringing with them their own peculiar style of writing; and manuscripts in the Irish style still exist in some numbers in the library of St. Gall. The style was taken up and imitated by the native monks; and in the ninth century, under the direction of the scribe and scholar Hartmut, the school of St. Gall was definitely established as a prominent centre of acti ity in the work of copying MSS. His successors, towards the end of the century, developed a distinct style of writing, which became generally adopted in the districts bordering on the Rhine. The *text* of these St. Gall manuscripts, on the other hand, looks southwards for its home, not north, and is derived from Milan, with some traces of Spanish influence, instead of from Ireland.

The school of St. Gall.

Thus in the ninth century a healthy activity prevailed in many quarters, directed towards the securing of a sound text of the Bible. But permanence in goodness cannot be maintained so long as books are copied by hand alone. The errors of copyists undo the labours of scholars, and in a short time chaos has come again. The Alcuinian text was corrupted with surprising rapidity, and the private labours of Theodulf had even less lasting an effect. The decadence of the house of Charlemagne was reflected in the decadence of the Bible text which he had striven to purify

Subsequent deterioration.

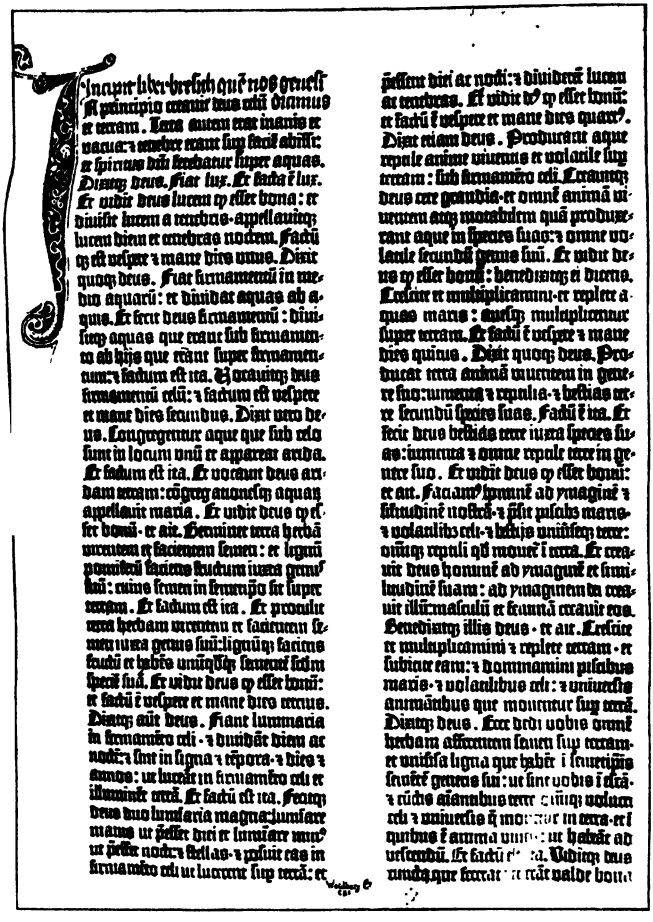
* The British Museum possesses a copy (Add. MS. 24124), known as the Bible of St. Hubert, which is at present exhibited in one of the show-cases.

and establish. The invasion of the Normans broke up the school of Tours, as the invasion of the Danes broke up the school of Wearmouth and Jarrow in Northumbria. In these wars and tumults scholarship went to the ground. A few individuals, such as our Norman Archbishop Lanfranc, tried to check the growing corruption of the Bible text, but with only temporary effect. It was not until four centuries had passed away that a real and effectual attempt was made to restore the Vulgate to something like its ancient form.

England had led the way in the ninth century; but in the thirteenth the glory belongs almost entirely to France. It is to the influence of the French king, St. Louis, and the scholarship of the newly established University of Paris that the revision of the thirteenth century is due. Those who are acquainted with the manuscripts of the Vulgate in any of our great libraries will know what a remarkable proportion of them were written in this century. The small, compressed writing, arranged in double columns, with little decoration except simple coloured initials, becomes very familiar to the student of manuscripts, and impresses him with a sense of the great activity which must have prevailed at that period in multiplying copies of the Bible. For us at the present day the principal result of the labours of the Paris doctors is the division of our Bible into chapters. Divisions of both Old and New Testaments into sections of various sizes existed from very early times; but our modern chapter-division was the work of Stephen Langton, then a doctor of the University of Paris, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury and leader of the barons in the struggle which gave birth to Magna Charta. The *texts* of these Parisian Bibles are not, it must be admitted, of any very remarkable excellence; but they are very important in the history of the Vulgate, because it is virtually upon them that the printed text of the Bible of the Roman Church is based to this day.

The revision of the 13th century.

We are going ahead too fast, and shall have to retrace our steps in the next chapter; but it will be convenient to conclude here



THE MAZARIN BIBLE—A.D. 1456.

(*Original size*, 15 *in.* × 11 *in.*)

the history of the Latin Bible. It has been made evident that, so long as Bibles continued to be copied by hand, no stability or uniformity of text could be maintained. As with the Greek Bible, so with the Latin, the later copies become progressively worse and worse. Hence the enormous importance of the invention of printing, which made it possible to fix and stereotype a form of text, and secure that it should be handed on without substantial change from one generation to another. The first book printed in Europe, it is pleasant to know, was the Latin Bible,—the splendid Mazarin Bible (so-called from the fact that the first copy which attracted much attention in later times was that in the library of Cardinal Mazarin) issued by Gutenberg in 1456, of which a copy may be seen exhibited in the British Museum, and from which the first page is here given in reduced facsimile (Plate XXII.). But this edition, and many others which followed it, merely reproduced the current form of text, without revision or comparison with the best manuscripts. Ximenes and Erasmus, the first editors of the Greek printed Bible, also bestowed much labour on the Latin text; but the first really critical edition was that prepared by Stephanus in 1528, and revised by himself in 1538–40. No authoritative edition, however, was forthcoming until the accession to the Papal chair of Sixtus V. in 1585.

Printed Latin Bibles.

Immediately on his accession, this energetic Pope appointed a commission to revise the text of the Bible, and in the work of revision he himself took an active part. Good manuscripts were used as authorities, including notably the Codex Amiatinus; and in 1590 the completed work issued from the press in three volumes. The text resembles generally that of Stephanus, on which it was evidently based. But hardly had Pope Sixtus declared his edition to be the sole authentic and authorised form of the Bible, when he died; and one of the first acts of Clement VIII., on his accession in 1592, was to call in all the copies of the Sixtine Bible. There is no doubt that the Sixtine edition was full of errors. The

The Sixtine Bible.

press had been very imperfectly revised, and a number of mistakes, discovered after the sheets had been struck off, were corrected by means of hand-stamped type. It is believed, however, that Clement was also incited to this attack on his predecessor's memory by the Jesuits, whom Sixtus had offended.

The Clementine Bible.

In any case the fact remains that Clement caused a new edition to be prepared, which appeared towards the end of 1592. This edition was not confined to a removal of the errors of the press in the Sixtine volumes, but presents a considerably altered text, differing, it has been estimated, from its predecessor in no less than 3000 readings. Here at last we reach the origin of the text of the Latin Bible current to-day; for the Clementine edition, sometimes appearing under the name of Clement, sometimes (to disguise the appearance of difference between two Popes) under that of Sixtus, was constituted the one authorised text of the Vulgate, from which no single variation is permitted.

It cannot be pretended that the Clementine text is satisfactory from the point of view of history or scholarship. The alterations which differentiate it from the Sixtine edition, except where they simply remove an obvious blunder, are, for the most part, no improvement; and in any case, the circumstances of the time did not permit so full and scientific an examination of all the evidence as is possible now. The task of revising the Vulgate text in accordance with modern knowledge has, however, been left almost entirely to scholars outside the pale of the Roman Church. Of these the most conspicuous have been Richard Bentley in the past, Bishop Wordsworth, Mr. White, M. Berger, and Dr. Corssen at the present time. It may be that in the future the leaders of the Roman Church will be willing to make use of the labours of these careful and accomplished scholars, and issue for the benefit of all who use the Latin Bible a text which shall reproduce, as nearly as may be, the original words of the version prepared by St. Jerome fifteen hundred years ago.

CHAPTER X.

THE ENGLISH MANUSCRIPT BIBLES.

WE take another step forward in our story, and narrow still further the circle of our inquiry. It is no longer the original text of the Bible with which we have to deal, nor even the Bible of Western Europe. Our step is a step nearer home; our subject is the Bible of our own country and in our own language. For nearly a thousand years, from the landing of Augustine to the Reformation, the official Bible, so to speak, the Bible of the Church services and of monastic usage, was the Latin Vulgate. But although the monks and clergy learnt Latin, and a knowledge of Latin was the most essential element of an educated man's culture, it was never the language of the common people. To them the Bible, if it came at all, must come in English, and from almost the earliest times there were churchmen and statesmen whose care it was that, whether by reading it for themselves, if they were able, or by hearing it read to them, the common people should have at least the more important parts of the Bible accessible to them in their own language. For twelve hundred years one may fairly say that the English people has never been entirely without an English Bible.

The conversion of England.

It was in the year 597 that Augustine landed in Kent, and brought back to that part of the island the Christianity which had been driven out of it by our Saxon, Jute, and Engle forefathers. In 634, Birinus, a Roman priest from Gaul, converted the West Saxons; and in 635 came Aidan from Iona to preach Christianity in Northumbria, as related in the last chapter. Soon after the middle of the century all England had heard the Word of Christ,

proclaimed by word of mouth by the missionaries of Rome or of Ireland. At first there would be no need of a written Bible for the common people. As in the days of Christ and His Apostles, men heard the Word of God by direct preaching. Most of them could not read, and the enthusiasm of a convert requires personal instruction rather than study of a written book. Yet it was not long before the story of the Bible made its appearance in English literature. In the abbey of the Lady Hilda at Whitby was a brother named Cædmon, who had no skill in making songs, and would therefore leave the table when his turn came to sing something for the pleasure of the company. But one night when he had done so, and had lain down in the stable and there fallen asleep, there stood One by him in a dream, and said, "Cædmon, sing Me something." And he answered, "I cannot sing, and for that reason I have left the feast." But He said, "Nevertheless, thou canst sing to Me." "What," said he, "must I sing?" And He said, "Sing the beginning of created beings." So he sang; and the poem of Cædmon is the first native growth of English literature. It is a paraphrase in verse of the Bible narrative, from both Old and New Testaments, written in that early dialect which we call Anglo-Saxon, but which is really the ancient form of English.

The Bible paraphrase of Cædmon.

Cædmon's Bible paraphrase was written about 670, a generation after the coming of Aidan; and another generation had not passed away before part of the Bible had been actually translated into English. Aldhelm, Bishop of Sherborne, who died in 709, translated the Psalms, and thereby holds the honour of having been the first translator of the Bible into our native tongue. It is uncertain whether we still possess any part of his work, or not. There is a version of the Psalms in Anglo-Saxon, preserved in a manuscript at Paris, which has been supposed to be the Psalter of Aldhelm; but the manuscript was only written in the eleventh century, and the language of the translation seems to contain forms

The Psalter of Aldhelm.

which had not come into existence in the time at which Aldhelm lived. If, therefore, this version, which gives the first fifty Psalms in prose and the rest in verse, really belongs to Aldhelm at all, the language must have been somewhat modified in later copies.

The next translator of whom we hear is the greatest name in the history of the early English Church. Bede (674–735) was the glory of the Northumbrian school, which, as we have seen, was the most shining light of learning in western Europe during the eighth century. In addition to his greatest work, the *History of the English Church*, he wrote commentaries on many of the books of the Bible. These works, which were intended primarily for scholars, were written in Latin; but we know that he also took care that the Scriptures might be faithfully delivered to the common people in their own tongue. He translated the Creed and the Lord's Prayer, as the first essentials of the Christian faith; and at the time of his death he was engaged on a translation of the Gospel of St. John. The story of its completion, told by his disciple, Cuthbert, is well known, but it never can be omitted in a history of the English Bible. On the Eve of Ascension Day, 735, the great scholar lay dying, but dictating, while his strength allowed, to his disciples; and they wrote down the translation of the Gospel as it fell from his lips, being urged by him to write quickly, since he knew not how soon his Master would call him. On Ascension morning one chapter alone remained unfinished, and the youth who had been copying hesitated to press his master further; but he would not rest. "*It is easily done*," he said, "take thy pen and write quickly." Failing strength and the last farewells to the brethren of the monastery prolonged the task, till at eventide the boy reminded his master: "There is yet one sentence unwritten, dear master." "Write it quickly," was the answer; and it was written at his word. "It is written now," said the boy. "You speak truth," answered the saint, "it is finished now." Then he bade them lay him on the pavement

Bede.

of his cell, supporting his head in their hands; and as he repeated the Gloria, with the name of the Holy Spirit on his lips, he passed quietly away.

Of Bede's translation no trace or vestige now remains; nor are we more fortunate when we pass from the great scholar of the early Church to the great statesman, King Alfred. Alfred, by far the finest name among the early sovereigns of England, careful for the moral and intellectual welfare of his people, did not neglect the work which Aldhelm and Bede had begun. He prefixed a translation of the Ten Commandments and other extracts from the Law of Moses to his own code of laws, and translated, or caused to be translated, several other parts of the Bible. He is said to have been engaged on a version of the Psalms at the time of his death; but no copy of his work has survived, although a manuscript (really of later date) now in the British Museum,* and containing the Latin text with an English translation between the lines, has borne the name of King Alfred's Psalter. Still, though nothing has come down to us from Bede or Alfred, the tradition is valuable, as assuring us of the existence of English Bibles, or parts of Bibles, in the eighth and ninth centuries. From the end of this period we have an actual example of an English Psalter still extant; for a manuscript in the British Museum, containing the Psalms in Latin, written about A.D. 700 (though formerly supposed to have belonged to St. Augustine himself), has had a word-for-word translation in the Kentish dialect inserted about the end of the ninth century. In the tenth century we stand on firmer ground, for, in addition to similar interlinear translations, we reach the date of independent versions, known to us from copies still extant in several of our public libraries.

It is indeed possible that the Gospels were rendered into English earlier than the tenth century, since one would naturally expect them to be the first part of the Bible which a trans-

* Stowe MS. 2, of the eleventh century.

lator would wish to make accessible to the common people; but we have no actual mention or proof of the existence of such a translation before that date.

Interlinear glosses.

As in the case of the Psalter, the earliest form in which the Gospels appear in the English language is that of glosses, or word-for-word translations written between the lines of Latin manuscripts; and the oldest copy of such a gloss now in existence is that of which mention has already been made in describing the Lindisfarne book of the Gospels. That magnificent volume was originally written in Latin about the year 700; and about 950 Aldred the priest wrote his Anglo-Saxon paraphrase between the lines of the Latin text. Some words of this translation may be seen in the facsimile given in Plate XX.; and we may regard them with a special interest as belonging to the oldest existing copy of the Gospels in the English language. The dialect in which this translation is written is naturally Northumbrian, which differed in some respects from that spoken in other parts of the island. Another gloss of the Gospels is found in a manuscript at Oxford, known as the Rushworth MS. It is of somewhat later date than the Lindisfarne book, and in the Gospels of St. Mark, St. Luke, and St. John it follows that manuscript closely; but the gloss on St. Matthew is in the Old Mercian dialect, which was spoken in the central part of England.

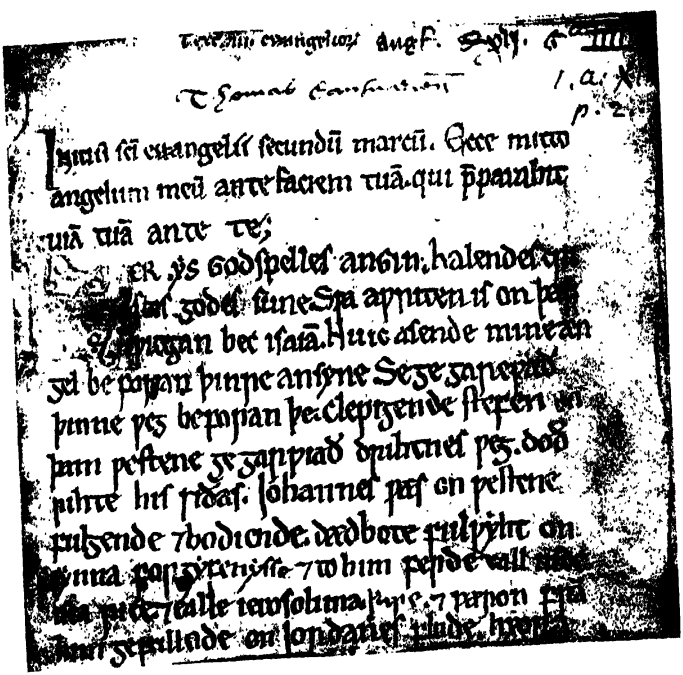
These glosses were, no doubt, originally made in order to assist the missionaries and preachers who had to instruct their congregations in the message of the Gospel; and the same must have been the object of the earliest independent translations of the Bible books. Few, if any, of the ordinary English inhabitants would be able to read; but the monks and priests who preached to them would interpret the Bible to them in their own tongue, and their task would be rendered easier by the existence of written English Gospels. We know, moreover, that during the latter part of the Anglo-Saxon period, the culture and scholarship

The Gospels of the 10th century.

of the English clergy declined greatly, so that the preachers themselves would often be unable to understand the Latin Bible, and needed the assistance of an English version. It is in the south that we first meet with such a translation of the Gospels existing by itself, apart from the Latin text on which it was based. There are in all six copies of this translation now extant, two at Oxford, two at Cambridge, and two in the British Museum. All these are closely related to one another, being either actually copied from one another, or taken from a common original without much variation. The oldest is a manuscript in the library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, which was written by one Ælfric, at Bath, about the year 1000. There can be no doubt that the original translation, of which these are copies, was made in the south-west of England, in the region known as Wessex, not later than about the middle of the tenth century. It may have been made earlier, but we have no evidence that it was so, and the total absence of such evidence must be taken as an unfavourable sign.

In Plate XXIII. is given a facsimile of one of the British Museum copies of this first independent version of the Gospels in English. The manuscript, which was written in the early part of the twelfth century, has an interest of its own, even apart from its contents; and its history is partly told by the inscriptions which it bears on its first page, here reproduced. This page contains the beginning of St. Mark's Gospel, which holds the first place in the Anglo-Saxon Gospels, and is headed "Text[us] iiii. evangelior[um]," *i.e.* "The text of the four Gospels." To the right of this are the words "aug^{r}. d xvi. G^{a} IIII." Below is the name "Thomas Cantuarien[sis]" and the figures "1 a. xiv"; and at the bottom of the page (not included in the plate) is the signature "Lumley." What do all these inscriptions tell us of the history of the MS.? They tell us that it belonged to the great monastery of St. Augustine at Canterbury, in the library of which it bore the press-mark "D[istinctio] xvi, G[r]a[dus] IV"; that after the dissolution of the monasteries

PLATE XXIII.



ENGLISH GOSPELS OF THE TENTH CENTURY—12TH CENT.

(*Original size of page,* 8¼ *in.* × 5½ *in.; of part reproduced,* 4¼ *in.* × 3 *in.*)

it passed into the possession of Archbishop Thomas Cranmer, whose secretary wrote his name (in a hand closely resembling the prelate's own writing) at the head of the page; that after Cranmer's death it was acquired, with many others of his books, by Henry Fitz-Alan, Earl of Arundel, from whom it descended to his son-in-law, John, Lord Lumley. Lumley died in 1609, and his library was bought for Henry, Prince of Wales, eldest son of James I. Thereby this volume entered the Royal Library, in which it bore the press-mark 1 A xiv.; and when that library was presented to the nation by George II. in 1757, it passed into the keeping of the British Museum, then newly established; and there, retaining the same press-mark, it still remains. So much history may a few notes of ownership convey to us.

Some readers may be curious to see the form of the language in which this first English Bible is written. It is unlike enough to our modern English, yet it is its true and direct ancestor. After quoting the first words of the Gospel in Latin, the translation begins thus: "Her ys Godspelles angin, halendes cristes godes sune. Swa awriten ys on thaswitegan bec isaiam. Nu ic asende mine ængel beforan thinre ansyne. Se gegarewath thinne weg beforan the. Clepigende stefen on tham westene gegarwiath drihtnes weg. Doth rihte his sythas. Iohannes wæs on westene fulgende & bodiende. Dædbote fulwyht on synna forgyfenysse."

This specimen will probably be enough for those who have no special acquaintance with Anglo-Saxon. Shortly after the date at which this version of the Gospels was probably made, in or about the year 990, Ælfric, Archbishop of Canterbury, translated a considerable part of the Old Testament, namely, the Pentateuch, Joshua, Judges, Kings, Esther, Job, Judith, and Maccabees, omitting such passages as seemed to him less necessary and important. Two copies of this version are known, at Oxford and in the British Museum. This completes the history of the English Bible before the Norman Conquest. That catastrophe seems to have crushed for a time the literary development of the English people. The upper class

The Old Testament of Ælfric.

was overthrown and kept in subjection; the lower orders were too ignorant to carry on the work for themselves. It is true that the existence of the manuscript described just above is a proof that the early English version of the Gospels continued to be copied, and presumably read, in the twelfth century; but it is not until the century after this that we find any resumption of the task of translating the Scriptures into the language of the common people. In the reigns of John and Henry III. the intermixture between Norman and English was progressing fast, and the English element was beginning to assert its predominance in the combination. English poetry begins again with Layamon about the year 1205. Ten years later religious verse made its reappearance in the "Ormulum," a metrical version of the daily services of the Church, including portions of Scripture from the New Testament. About the middle of the century the narratives of Genesis and Exodus were rendered into rhyming verse; and towards its end we find a nearer approach to regular translation in a metrical version of the Psalter which has come down to us in several copies. It is curious that, at this time, the Psalter seems to have been in especial favour in England, almost to the exclusion of the other books of the Bible. For about a century, from 1250 to 1350, no book of the Bible seems to have been translated into English except the Psalter; and of this there were no less than three distinct versions within that period. In addition to the verse translation just mentioned, of which the author is unknown, the Psalms were rendered into prose in 1320 by William of Shoreham, Vicar of Chart Sutton, in Kent; and almost at the same time Richard Rolle, a hermit of Hampole, near Doncaster, prepared another version, accompanied by a commentary, verse by verse.

Verse translations in the 13th century.

Some specimens of these translations will show the progress of the English language, and carry on the history of the English Bible. The following is the beginning of the 56th Psalm as it appears in the version of William of Shoreham:—"Have

mercy on me, God, for man hath defouled me. The fende trubled me, fe*gh*tand* alday o*gh*ayns me. Myn enemys defouled me alday, for many were fe*gh*tand o*gh*ains me. Y shal dred the fram the he*gh*t of the daye; y for sothe shal hope in the. Hii shal hery my wordes, what manes flesshe doth to me. Alday the wicked acurseden myn wordes o*gh*ains me; alle her thoutes ben in ivel."

The Psalters of William of Shoreham,

In Richard Rolle of Hampole, the verses are separated from one another by a commentary, much exceeding the original text in length. Many copies of this version exist, but they differ considerably from one another, so that it is difficult to say which represents best the author's original work. Here is the same passage as it appears in one of the manuscripts (Brit. Mus. Arundel MS. 158): "Have mercy of me, God, for man trad me, al day the fy*gh*tynge troubledo me. Myn enemys me trede al day for many fy*gh*tynge a*gh*enes me. Fro the hy*gh*nesse of the day schal I drede: I sothly schal hope in the. In God I schal preyse my wordes, in God I hopede. I schal no*gh*t drede what flesch doth to me. Al day my wordes thei cursede a*gh*enes me, alle the tho*gh*tes of hem in yvel."

and of Richard Rolle of Hampole.

Such was the knowledge of the Bible in England on the eve of the great revival which took place in the fourteenth century. The old Anglo-Saxon version of the Gospels had dropped out of use, as its language gradually became antiquated and unintelligible; and no new translation had taken its place. The Psalms alone were extant in versions which made any pretence to be faithful. The remaining books of the Bible were known to the common people only in the shape of rhyming paraphrases, or by such oral teaching as the clergy may have given. But with the increase of life and interest in the lower classes, and with the revival of literary activity in the English language, this condition of things

Revival of religion in the 14th century.

* The letter represented by *gh* sometimes corresponds to our y, sometimes to g or gh.

could not last. The end of the thirteenth century had seen the first recognition of the right of the common folk to representation in the national Council, which thenceforward became a Parliament. The reigns of Edward II. and Edward III. saw the steady growth of a spirit of healthy life and independence in the people. They saw also the rise of literature, in Langland and Gower, and above all in Chaucer, to a position of real influence in the national life. And with this quickening interest in their surroundings on the part of the common people, there came a quickening interest in religion, which was met and answered by the power and the will to provide religious teaching for them in their own language. Thus was the way prepared for the religious movement which makes the fourteenth century so important a period in the history of our Church and Bible. In France, under the stimulus of the University of Paris, and perhaps of the king, St. Louis, the awakening had come a century sooner, and had manifested itself alike in a revised edition of the current Vulgate text, with a great multiplication of copies for common and private use, and in the preparation of the first complete version of the Bible in French. In England the result of the movement was likewise an increased circulation of the Bible, but it was a Bible in the language of the people.

The movement of which we are speaking is commonly connected in our minds, and quite rightly, with the name of Wycliffe; but it is impossible to define exactly the extent of his own personal participation in each of its developments. The movement was at first discountenanced, and presently persecuted, by the leading authorities in Church and State; and hence the writers of works in connection with it were not anxious to reveal their names. Most of the publications on the Wycliffite side are anonymous; and the natural consequence of this is that nearly all of them have been, at one time or another, attributed to Wycliffe himself. So far, however, as our immediate subject, the translation of the Bible, is concerned, there is no reason to doubt the personal responsibility of Wycliffe; nor is there any sufficient reason for

the opinion, which has been sometimes held, that a complete English Bible existed before his time. It rests mainly on the statement of Sir Thomas More, in his controversy with Tyndale, the author of the first printed English New Testament, that he had seen English Bibles of an earlier date than Wycliffe's. No trace of such a Bible exists, and it is highly probable that More was not aware that there were *two* Wycliffite translations, and had mistaken the date of the earlier one. To the history of these translations, the first complete Bible in the English language, we may now proceed.

Wycliffe.

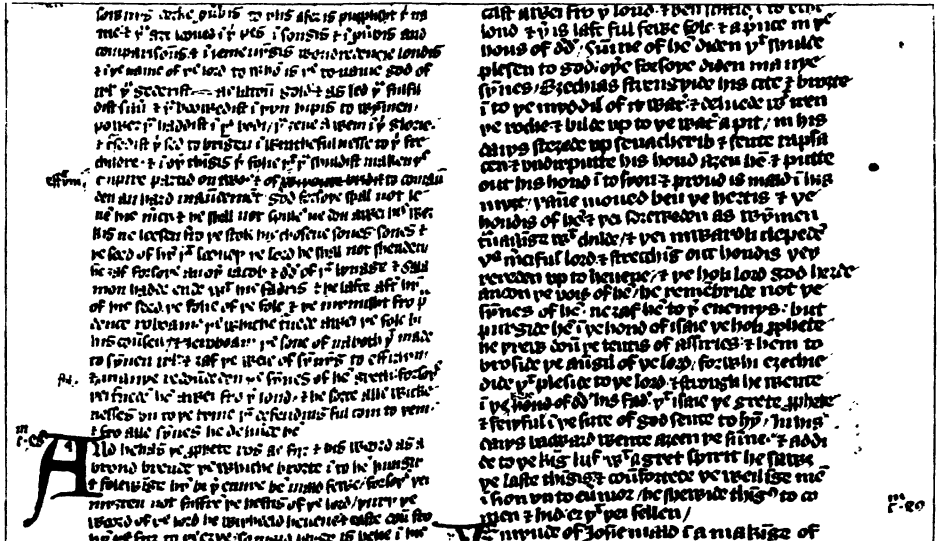
John Wycliffe was born in Yorkshire about the year 1320. He entered Balliol College at Oxford, and presently became Fellow, and, for a short time, Master of that College; but resigned the latter post when, in 1361, he was presented to the living of Fillingham, in Lincolnshire. It was not until he had passed middle life that he began to take part in public controversies; but when he did so, he at once became the most prominent leader of the party of reform. It was a period of discontent in England; discontent at the long and costly war with France, discontent at the demands of the Pope for money, discontent at the wealth of the higher dignitaries and corporations of the Church, who, in the main, supported the claims of the Pope. Wycliffe's first work was a treatise justifying the refusal of Parliament to pay the tribute claimed by the Pope in 1366; and from 1371 he was in the forefront of the religious and social disturbance which now began to rage. Papal interference and Church property were the main objects of his attack, and his chief enemies were the bishops. He was supported in most of his struggles by John of Gaunt, who wished to humiliate the Church; by the University of Oxford, consistently faithful to him except when he committed himself to theological opinions which it held heretical; and by the great mass of the common people, whose views he reflected with regard to the Pope and the Papal supporters.

With the political and religious controversy we have here

nothing to do. Whether Wycliffe was right or wrong in his attack on Church property or in his generally socialistic schemes *concerns us not now. Reformers are often carried to extremes* which dispassionate observers must condemn. But his championship of the common people led him to undertake a work which entitles him to honourable mention by men of all parties and all opinions,—the preparation of an *English Bible which every man* who knew his letters might read in his own home. And that even those who could not read might receive the knowledge of the teachings of this Bible, he instituted his order of "poor priests" to go about and preach to the poor in their own tongue, working in harmony with the clergy if they would allow them, but against them or independent of them if they were hostile.

The Earlier Wycliffite Bible.

The exact history of Wycliffe's translation of the Bible is uncertain. Separate versions of the Apocalypse and of a Harmony of the Gospels have been attributed to him, with more or less probability, but with no certainty. In any case these were but preludes to the great work. The New Testament was first finished, about the year 1380; and in 1382, or soon afterwards, the version of the entire Bible was completed. He was now rector of Lutterworth, in Leicestershire, living mainly in his parish, but keeping constantly in touch with Oxford and London. Other scholars assisted him in his work, and we have no certain means of knowing how much of the translation was actually done by himself. The New Testament is attributed to him, but we cannot say with certainty that it was entirely his own work. The greater part of the Old Testament was certainly translated by Nicholas Hereford, one of Wycliffe's most ardent supporters at Oxford. Plate XXIV. gives a reproduction of a page of the very manuscript written under Hereford's direction, now in the Bodleian Library at Oxford (Bodl. 959). The manuscript itself seems to tell something of its history. It breaks off quite abruptly at Baruch 3. 20, in the middle of a sentence, and it is evident that Hereford carried on the work no further; for another manuscript at Oxford, copied from it, ends at the same



WYCLIFFE'S BIBLE—A.D. 1382.

(Original size of page 13 in. × 9½ in.; of part reproduced 4 5/8 in. × 7 1/4 in.)

place, and contains a contemporary note assigning the work to Hereford. It may be supposed that this sudden break marks the time of Hereford's summons to London in 1382, to answer for his opinions, which resulted in his excommunication and retirement from England. The manuscript is written by five different scribes. The page exhibited, which contains Ecclesiasticus **47. 6—48. 17**, shows the change from the fourth hand to the fifth, with corrections in the margin which may be those of Hereford himself. After Hereford's departure the translation of the Old Testament was continued by Wycliffe himself or his assistants, and so the entire Bible was complete in its English dress before the death of Wycliffe in 1384.

A marked difference in style distinguishes Hereford's work from that of Wycliffe and his other assistants, if such there were. Wycliffe's style is free and colloquial. There can be little doubt that he had in his mind the common people, for whom his version was especially intended, and that he wrote in a style which they would understand and appreciate. Hereford, on the other hand, was a scholar, perhaps a pedant, trained in University ideas of exactness and accuracy. He clung too closely to the exact words of the Latin from which his translation was made, and hence his style is stiff and awkward, and sometimes even obscure from its too literal faithfulness to the original. Wycliffe's own work also was capable of improvement, and the strong contrast in style between him and his colleague called aloud for a revision of the whole version. Such a revision was taken in hand, shortly after Wycliffe's death, by one of his followers, and was completed probably about the year 1388. The pupil who executed it has left a preface, in which he describes the principles upon which his revision was made, but he has not told us his name; from internal evidence, however, and especially from the verbal resemblance between this preface and other writings of which the author is known, he is believed to have been John Purvey, one of Wycliffe's most intimate friends during the latter part of his life, and a sharer in the condemnation

The later Wycliffite Bible.

of Nicholas Hereford. The Old Testament, which stood most in need of revision, was completed first, and the reviser's preface relates to that alone. The New Testament followed later. This revised version rapidly supplanted its predecessor, and became the current form of the Wycliffite Bible during the fifteenth century.

About a hundred and seventy copies of the Wycliffite Bible are now known to be in existence; and of these, five-sixths contain the revised edition by Purvey, while less than thirty have the original form of the translation. The following instance will show the character of this, the first complete English Bible, and the extent of the alterations made by Purvey. In the first passage the author of the older version is Hereford; in the second it is Wycliffe or one of his unnamed assistants.

EARLIER VERSION.

ISAIAH 35. 1–6.

Gladen shal desert and the with oute weie, and ful out shal ioyen the wildernesse, and flouren as a lilie. Buriownynge it shal burioune, and ful out ioyen, ioyeful and preising. The glorie of Liban is youe to it, the fairnesse of Carmel and of Saron; thei shul see the glorie of the Lord, and the fairnesse of oure God. Coumforteth the hondes loosid atwynne, and the feble knees strengtheth. Seith, yee of litil corage, taketh coumfort, and wileth not dreden; lo! oure God veniaunce of yelding shal bringe, God he shal come and sauen us. Thanne shul ben opened the eyen of blynde men, and eres of deue men shal ben opened. Thanne shal lepe as an hert the halte, and opened shal be the tunge of doumbe men; for knt ben in desert watris, and stremes in wildernesse.

LATER VERSION.

ISAIAH 35. 1–6.

The forsakun *Judee* and with outen weie schal be glad, and wildirnisse schal make ful out ioye, and schal floure as a lilie. It buriownynge schal buriowne, and it glad and preisinge schal make ful out ioie. The glorie of Liban is youun to it, the fairnesse of Carmele and of Saron; thei schulen se the glorie of the Lord, and the fairnesse of oure God. Coumforte ye comelid hondis, and make ye strong feble knees. Seie ye, men of litil coumfort, be ye coumfortid, and nyle ye drede; lo! oure God schal brynge the veniaunce of yelding, God hym silf schal come, and schal saue us. Thanne the iyen of blynde men schulen be openyd, and the eeris of deef men schulen be opyn. Thanne a crokid man schal skippe as an hert, and the tunge of doumbe men schal be openyd; for whi watris ben brokun out in desert, and stremes in wildirnesse.

EARLIER VERSION.

HEBREWS 1. 1–3.

Manyfold and many maners sum tyme God spekinge to fadris in prophetis, at the laste in thes daies spak to us in the sone: whom he ordeynede eyr of alle thingis, by whom he made and the worldis. The which whanne he is the schynynge of glorie and figure of his substaunce, and berynge alle thingis bi word of his vertu, makyng purgacioun of synnes, sittith on the righthalf of mageste in high thingis; so moche maad betere than aungelis, by how moche he hath inherited a more different, *or excellent*, name bifore hem.

LATER VERSION.

HEBREWS 1. 1–3.

God, that spak sum tyme bi prophetis in many maneres to oure fadris, at the laste in these daies he hath spoke to us bi the sone; whom he hath ordeyned eir of alle thingis, and bi whom he made the worldis. Which whanne also he is the brightnesse of glorie, and figure of his substaunce, and berith all thingis bi word of his vertu, he makyth purgacioun of synnes and syttith on the righthalf of the maieste in heuenes; and so much is maad betere than aungels, bi hou myche he hath enerited a more dyuerse name bifor hem.

Such is the first complete English Bible, the first Bible which we know to have circulated among the common people of England. Many of the copies which now remain testify that they were intended for private use. They are not large and well-written volumes, such as would be placed in libraries or read to a congregation. Such copies there were, indeed,—volumes which were found in kings' houses and in monastic libraries, as we shall see presently; but those of which we are now speaking are small, closely-written copies, with no ornamentation, such as a man would have for his own reading and might carry in his pocket. In this form the Bible reached those who could not read Latin. It had indeed travelled a long way. It was no careful rendering of an accurately studied and revised Greek text, such as we have to-day. The original Greek had been translated into Latin long centuries before; the Latin had become corrupted and had been revised and translated anew by St. Jerome; St. Jerome's version had become corrupted in its turn, and had suffered many things of editors and copyists; and from copies of this corrupted Latin the English translation of Wycliffe and Purvey had been made. Still, through all these changes and chances, the substance of the Holy Scriptures remained the same; and, with whatever

imperfections, the entire Bible was now accessible to the English in their own language, through the zeal and energy of John Wycliffe.

So, at least, it has always been held; and it is nothing less than astounding to find it now suggested that the Wycliffite Bible is not Wycliffe's at all, but is the work of his bitterest opponents, the bishops of the English Church who represented the party of Rome. Such is the remarkable assertion recently made by a well-known Roman Catholic scholar in England, Father Gasquet.* Father Gasquet has earned honourable distinction for his careful and original work on the history of the Reformation of the English Church; and any views expressed by him on a matter of history deserve respect and notice. In the present case it is difficult not to feel that he has gone upon insufficient evidence; but the subject is interesting enough to deserve fuller discussion. Father Gasquet's main points are as follows: (1) the evidence connecting Wycliffe with an English version of the Bible is very slight; (2) the hostility of the bishops to an English Bible has been much exaggerated, and there is no sign that the possession or use of such a Bible was commonly made a subject of inquiry in the examinations of Wycliffe's adherents; (3) the character of the extant copies, and the rank and known opinions of their original owners, are such as to be inconsistent with the idea that they were the work of a poor and proscribed sect, as the Wycliffites are represented to have been; (4) there are indications of the existence of an authorised translation of the Bible at this period, and this we must conclude to be the version which has come down to us. The Bible of Wycliffe, if it ever existed, must have been completely destroyed.

Is the Wycliffite Bible really Wycliffe's?

Theory that it was an authorised version issued by the Bishops.

Now on the first of these points, Father Gasquet seems to ignore the strength of the evidence which connects Wycliffe and

* In the *Dublin Review*, July 1894.

his supporters, not merely with *a* translation of the Bible, but with *these* translations. That they were responsible for *a* translation is proved by the contemporary evidence of Archbishop Arundel, Knyghton, and a decree of the Council held at Oxford in 1408—all witnesses hostile to the Wycliffites. If that translation is not the one commonly known as the Wycliffite Bible, then no trace of it exists at present, which is in itself improbable. But of the actually extant translations, the Old Testament in the earlier version, as we have seen, is shown to be the work of Nicholas Hereford by the evidence of the note in the Oxford manuscript; while the later version is obviously based upon the earlier, and was, moreover, certainly the work of some one who held identical views with Purvey; further, in a manuscript of the earlier version at Dublin Purvey's own name is written as the owner, and (what is more important) the prologues to the several books commonly found in the later version have here been inserted in Purvey's own writing. Father Gasquet says "whether Hereford or Purvey possibly may have had any part in the translation does not so much concern us"; but he cannot seriously mean to maintain that an authorised version of the English Bible, existing (as on his theory it existed) in direct opposition to the Wycliffite Bible, could itself be the work of Hereford and Purvey, the two most conspicuous adherents and companions of Wycliffe. Moreover, the last words of the preface to the revised version show that the author did not know how his work might be received by those in power, and looked forward to the possibility of being called upon to endure persecution for it: "God graunte to us alle grace to kunne [understand] wel and kepe wel holi writ, and suffre ioiefulli sum peyne for it at the laste." This evidence, taken together with the proved connection of Hereford and Purvey with the extant translation, is sufficient to establish that it is, as has always been believed, the Wycliffite Bible.

Examination of this theory.

On his second point, however, Father Gasquet's position is

much stronger. There is no doubt that the Lollards (as Wycliffe's followers were called) were persecuted, but it does not appear that the possession, use, or manufacture of an English version of the Bible was one of the charges specially urged against them. The subject is not raised in the extant list of articles upon which the suspected were to be questioned. One is glad that it should be so, that the leaders of the English Church should not have been hostile to an English Bible; and one may accept Father Gasquet's argument on this point with the more willingness, because it is fatal to his two remaining points. If the Lollards were not persecuted in connection with the English Bible, it is manifestly absurd to argue that the existing Bibles cannot have been written by them because they were persecuted and their writings destroyed. It is only in rhetorical passages that the picture has been drawn of the hunted Wycliffite writing his copy of the English Bible in his obscure cottage, in constant fear of surprise and arrest. Wycliffe always had strong sympathisers, notably John of Gaunt and the University of Oxford; indeed, just as the University of Paris is identified with the first French Bible, so is the University of Oxford closely associated with the first Bible in English; and with such support Wycliffe can have had no difficulty in obtaining workmen to transcribe handsome and elaborate copies of his Bible. Nor need even those who most strongly opposed the socialistic and heretical opinions of Wycliffe have therefore refused to possess copies of his translation of the Scriptures, if the existence of such a translation formed no part of the cause of their hostility to him. Copies of the English version are known to have belonged to Henry VI., to Henry VII., to Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester, to Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, the founder of the University Library at Oxford, and to many religious houses; and if it could be shown that the Wycliffite translation was an object of persecution by the leaders of the English Church, the public possession of such copies by noted supporters of the Church would unquestionably be difficult

to explain. But since Father Gasquet has shown that this persecution did not take place, at any rate to the extent that has been supposed, the rest of his case for distinguishing the Wycliffite translation from the translations now extant breaks down.

The fact would seem to be that the Lollards were persecuted, but not their Bible. Such hostility as was shown to this was only temporary, and was confined to a few persons, such as Archbishop Arundel. Generally the translation was tolerated; and this is perfectly comprehensible, since the extant copies, which we have seen to be connected with Hereford and Purvey, show no traces of partisanship or of heretical doctrine. It is a plain translation of the Latin text of the Scriptures then current, without bias to either side: and, whatever Arundel might do, other bishops, such as William of Wykeham (who was, moreover a supporter of John of Gaunt), would not be likely to condemn it. Nor would the tendency to toleration be less as time went on, and when John of Gaunt's son, Henry IV., had succeeded to the throne. If this be admitted, then the references (often very vague) to an authorised or tolerated version, on which Father Gasquet bases his fourth point, can be explained without calling into existence a version other than that of Wycliffe and put forward in its place by the Church.

It is not from any spirit of partisanship that we have argued against Father Gasquet's novel and interesting theory. One would gladly believe that the bishops and leaders of the English Church in the fourteenth century did put forward an English translation of the Scriptures for the use of their flocks, if there were sufficient evidence to support such a view. Unfortunately, such evidence is not to be had. We know that Wycliffe and his adherents prepared a translation; we know that two of his most prominent supporters, Hereford and Purvey, had at least *some* connection with the translations which actually exist; and we can see no ground for refusing to take the further step, and say that the Wycliffite version and the existing translations

are one and the same thing. In any case Wycliffe has the credit of having been the first to translate the entire Bible into our native tongue; and one would be glad that our Church and nation should have the credit of having accepted so valuable a work, and of having allowed copies of it to be multiplied and to be preserved to the present day.

CHAPTER XI.

THE ENGLISH PRINTED BIBLE.

IN the fifteenth century, then, the Bible was circulating, to a limited extent, in the Wycliffite translations, tolerated, though not encouraged, by the powers of Church and State; but the middle of the century was barely passed, when two events took place which, though totally unconnected with one another, by their joint effects revolutionised the history of the Bible in Western Europe. In May 1453 the Turks stormed Constantinople; and in November 1454 the first known product of the printing press in Europe was issued to the world. The importance of the latter event is obvious, and has been already explained. Not only did the invention of printing do away, once and for all, with the progressive corruption of texts through the inevitable errors of copyists, but it also rendered it possible to multiply copies to an indefinite extent and to make learning accessible to every man who could read. Knowledge need no longer "rest in mounded heaps" in the monastic libraries, but could freely "melt in many streams to fatten lower lands." All that was required was that men should be found willing and able to make use of the machinery which the discovery of Gutenberg had put into their hands.

It was the other of the two events above recorded which, in great measure, provided the inspiration that was needful in order to make the invention of printing immediately fruitful. The Turkish invasion of Europe, culminating in the capture of Constantinople and the final fall of the Eastern Empire, drove to the West numberless scholars, able and willing to teach the Greek language to the people among whom they took refuge. Greek, almost forgotten in Western Europe during many centuries, had always been a living language in the East, and now, journeying westwards, it met a fresh and eager spirit of inquiry, which

welcomed joyfully the treasures of the incomparable literature enshrined in that language. Above all, it brought to the West the knowledge of the New Testament in its original tongue; and with the general zeal for knowledge came also a much increased study of Hebrew, which was of equal value for the Old Testament. Thus at the very moment when the printing press was ready to spread instruction over the world a new learning was springing up, which was only too glad to take advantage of the opportunity thus presented to it.

The revival of learning affected the Bible in three ways. In the first place it led to a multiplication of copies of the then current Bible, the Latin Vulgate. Next, and far more important, it produced a study of the Scriptures in their original languages: and though the Greek and Hebrew manuscripts then available were by no means perfect, they at least served to correct and explain the more corrupt Latin. Finally—the point with which we are especially concerned in the present chapter,—it promoted a desire to make the Scriptures known to all classes of men directly, and not through the medium of men's instruction; and this could only be done by having the Bible translated in each country into the common language of the people. Especially was this the case in the countries which, in the sixteenth century, broke away from the domination of the Pope. The monasteries were corrupt, the religious teaching, which was the special justification for their existence, was often either false or nonexistent. The reformers held that the best method of overthrowing the power of the monasteries and of the Roman Church was to enable the common people to read the Bible for themselves and learn how much of the current teaching of the priest and friar had no basis in the words of Scripture. The leaders of the Roman Church, on the other hand, doubted the advisability of allowing the Scriptures to be read by uneducated or half-educated folk, without the accompaniment of oral instruction. Some of them may have known that certain current practices could not be justified out of the Bible; others may have feared that the reformers would

introduce heretical teaching into their translations. So it fell out that the struggle of the Reformation period was largely concerned with the question of the translation of the Bible. In Germany the popular version was made, once and for all, by the great reformer, Luther; but in England, where parties were more divided, the translation of the Bible was the work of many years and many hands. In this chapter we shall narrate the history of the successive translations which were made in England, from the invention of printing to the completion of the Authorised Version in 1611, and in conclusion shall give some account of the Revised Version of 1881–5.

1. Tyndale's Bible, 1525.

The true father of the English Bible is William Tyndale, who was born in Gloucestershire about the year 1484. He was educated at Oxford, where he was a member of Magdalen Hall, then a dependency of Magdalen College. Here he may have begun his studies of Biblical interpretation and of the Greek language under the great leaders of the new learning at Oxford, Colet of Magdalen and Grocyn of New College; but about 1510 the fame of Erasmus, who was then teaching at Cambridge, drew him to the sister University, where he stayed for several years. It was while he was at Cambridge, or soon afterwards, that he formed the resolve, to the accomplishment of which his whole subsequent life was devoted, to translate the Bible into English; saying, in controversy with an opponent, "If God spare my life, ere many years I will cause a boy that driveth the plough to know more of the Scripture than thou doest." He had hoped that this might be accomplished under the patronage of the leaders of the Church, notably Tunstall, Bishop of London, to whom he first applied for countenance and support. Tunstall, however, refused his application, and although Humphrey Monmouth, an alderman of London, took him into his house for several months, it was not long before Tyndale understood "not only that there was no room in my lord of London's palace to translate the New Testament, but also that there was no place to do it in all England."

Accordingly in 1524 he left England and took up his abode in the free city of Hamburg. Here his translation of the New Testament was completed, and in 1525 he transferred himself to Cologne in order to have it printed. Meanwhile rumours of his work had got abroad. He was known to belong to the reforming party; in translating the Bible he was following the example of Luther; he may even have met Luther himself at Wittenburg, which is not far from Hamburg. His translation was probably part of a design to convert England to Lutheranism; and clearly it must not be allowed to go forward if it were possible to stop it. The secret of the printing was, however, well kept; and it was not until the printing had made considerable progress that Cochlæus, an active enemy of the Reformation, obtained the clue to it. Hearing boasts from certain printers at Cologne of the revolution that would shortly be made in England, he invited them to his house; and having made them drunk, he learnt that three thousand copies of an English translation were being printed, and that some ten sheets of it had already been struck off. Having, in this truly creditable manner, obtained the information he required, he at once set the authorities of the town in motion to stop the work; but Tyndale secured the printed sheets and fled with them to Worms. At Worms he not only finished the edition partly printed at Cologne, which was in quarto form and accompanied by marginal notes, but also, knowing that a description of this edition had been sent by Cochlæus to England, in order that its importation might be stopped, had another edition struck off in octavo form and without notes.

Both editions were completed in 1525, which may consequently be regarded as the birth-year of the English printed Bible, though it was probably not until the beginning of 1526 that the first copies reached this country. Money for the work had been found by a number of English merchants, and by their means the copies were secretly conveyed into England, where they were eagerly bought and read on all sides. The

leaders of the Church, however, declared against the translation from the first. Archbishop Warham, a good man and a scholar, issued a mandate for its destruction. Tunstall preached against it, declaring that he could produce 3000 errors in it. Sir Thomas More wrote against it with much bitterness, charging it with wilful mistranslation of ecclesiastical terms with heretical intent. The book was solemnly burnt in London at Paul's Cross, and the bishops subscribed money to buy up all copies obtainable from the printers; a proceeding which Tyndale accepted with equanimity, since the money thus obtained enabled him to proceed with the work of printing translations of other parts of the Bible.* At the same time one reprint of the New Testament after another was issued by Dutch printers, and, in spite of all efforts of the Bishops, copies continued to pour into England as fast as they were destroyed.

The English New Testament was thus irrevocably launched upon the world; yet so keen was the search for copies, both

* The account of this transaction given by the old chronicler Hall is very quaint. After describing how a merchant named Packington, friendly to Tyndale, introduced himself to Tunstall and offered to buy up copies of the New Testament for him, he proceeds thus: "The Bishop, thinking he had God by the toe, when indeed he had the devil by the fist, said, 'Gentle Mr. Packington, do your diligence and get them; and with all my heart I will pay for them whatsoever they cost you, for the books are erroneous and nought, and I intend surely to destroy them all, and to burn them at Paul's Cross.' Packington came to William Tyndale and said, 'William, I know thou art a poor man, and hast a heap of New Testaments and books by thee, for the which thou hast both endangered thy friends and beggared thyself, and I have now gotten thee a merchant which, with ready money, shall despatch thee of all that thou hast, if you think it so profitable for yourself.' 'Who is the merchant?' said Tyndale. 'The Bishop of London,' said Packington. 'Oh, that is because he will burn them,' said Tyndale. 'Yea, marry,' quoth Packington. 'I am the gladder,' said Tyndale, 'for these two benefits shall come thereof: I shall get money to bring myself out of debt, and the whole world will cry out against the burning of God's Word; and the overplus of the money that shall remain to me shall make me more studious to correct the said New Testament, and so newly to imprint the same once again, and I trust the second will much better like you than ever did the first.' And so forward went the bargain, the Bishop had the books, Packington had the thanks, and Tyndale had the money."

then and afterwards, and so complete the destruction of them, that barely a trace of these earliest editions remains to-day. Of the quarto edition, begun at Cologne and ended at Worms, only one solitary fragment exists, containing Matt. 1. 1—22. 12. It is now in the Grenville collection in the British Museum, and from it is taken the half-page reproduced in Plate XXV., showing the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount. Of the octavo, one perfect copy exists in the library of the Baptist College at Bristol,* another, imperfect, in St. Paul's Cathedral. This is all that is left of the many thousand copies which poured from the press between 1526 and 1530.

Tyndale's New Testament differs from all those that preceded it in being a translation from the original Greek, and not from the Latin. He made use of such other materials as were available to assist his judgment, namely, the Vulgate, the Latin translation which Erasmus published along with his Greek text, and the German translation of Luther; but these were only subordinate aids, and his main authority was unquestionably the Greek text which had been published by Erasmus in 1516 and revised in 1522. This was a new departure, and some of the "mistakes" which Tunstall and others professed to find in Tyndale's work may have been merely cases in which the Greek gave a different sense from the Latin to which they were accustomed. The amount of actual errors in translation would not appear to be at all such as to justify the extremely hostile reception which the leaders of the Church gave to the English Bible. More may or may not have been right in holding that the old ecclesiastical terms, such as "church," "priest," "charity," round which the associations of centuries had gathered, should not be set aside in favour of "congregation," "senior," "love," and the like: there is much to be said on both sides of the question; but certainly this was no just reason for proscribing the whole translation and assailing its author. Nor can such

* This copy was discovered in 1740 by an agent of the Earl of Oxford, who bestowed on the fortunate discoverer an annuity of £20.

The fyfth Chapter.

Mat. vi. When he ſawe the people / he went vp into a mountaine/and wen he was ſett/ hys diſciples cam vnto him / and he opened his mouth/and raught them ſayinge: Bleſſed are the powre in ſpirite: for thers is the kyngdom of heven. Bleſſed are they that mourne: for they ſhalbe comforted. Bleſſed are the meke: for they ſhall inherit * the erthe. Bleſſed are they which hūger and thurſt for righte wesnes: for they ſhalbe fylled. Bleſſed are the mercyfull: for they ſhall obteyne mercy. Bleſſed are the pure in hert: for they ſhall ſe god. Bleſſed are the mayntayners of peace: for they ſhalbe called the chyldren of god. Bleſſed are they which ſuffre perſecucion for righteweſnes ſake: for thers is the kyngdom of heven. Bleſſed are ye whē men ſhall revyle you/and perſecute you/ and ſhal falſly ſaye all manner of evle sayings agaynſt you for my ſake. Reioyce ād be gladde/ for greate is youre reward in heven. For ſo perſecuted they the prophetes which were before youre dayes.

All theſe dedes here rehearſed as to norill the peace/ to ſhewe mercy/ to ſuffre pſecucīō/ and ſo forth/ make not a man happye and bleſſed/ nether deſerve the rewarde of heven: but declare and teſtifie that we arc happy and bleſſede and that we ſhall have greate pmocīō i heven. and certyfyeth vs i oure hertes that we are goddes ſonnes/ & that the holy goost is in vs. for all good thynges are geven to vs frely of god for chriſtes bloudnes ſake & his meritte.

PYNDALE'S NEW TESTAMENT—A.D. 1525

(Unreduced size of whole page 7 in × 5.2 in

treatment be explained on the ground of Tyndale's marginal comments, controversial though they unquestionably were, and, in part, derived from those of Luther; for measures were taken to suppress the book before its actual appearance, and the proscription was not confined to the quarto, which alone contained the comments, but was extended to the octavo, in which the sacred text stood by itself. The reception which the heads of the English Church, Henry VIII. included, gave to Tyndale's Testament can only be attributed to a dislike of the very existence of an English Bible.

Tyndale's labours did not cease with the appearance of his New Testament. His hope was to complete the translation of the whole Bible; and although other works, chiefly of a controversial character, occupied some portion of his time, he now set himself to work on the Old Testament. The first instalment occupied him for four years, and in 1530 the Pentateuch issued from the press, accompanied by strongly controversial marginal notes. The five books must have been separately printed, since Genesis and Numbers are printed in black letter, and the others in Roman (or ordinary) type; but there is no sufficient evidence of separate publication. The Pentateuch was followed in 1531 by the Book of Jonah, of which only one copy is now known to exist. But Tyndale had not said his last word on the New Testament. Like a good scholar, he was as fully aware as his critics could be that his version admitted of improvement, and he undertook a full and deliberate revision of it, striving especially after a more exact correspondence with the Greek. The publication of his labours was hastened by the appearance of an unauthorised revision in 1534, the work of one George Joye. Since the original publication in 1526, the printers of Antwerp had been issuing successive reprints of it, each less correct than its predecessor, and at last Joye had consented to revise a new edition for the press. Joye had taken Tyndale's version, altered it considerably, especially by comparison with the Latin Vulgate, had introduced variations of translation in accordance with his own theological opinions, and had published the

whole without any indication of a change of authorship. Tyndale was justly indignant at this act of combined piracy and fraud; but his best antidote was found in the publication of his own revised edition in the autumn of the same year. It is this edition of 1534 which is the true climax of Tyndale's work on the New Testament. The text had been diligently corrected; introductions were prefixed to each book; the marginal commentary was re-written in a less controversial spirit; and at the end of the volume were appended certain extracts from the Old Testament which were read as "Epistles" in the Church services for certain days of the year.

With the appearance of this edition Tyndale's work was practically at an end. The battle was substantially won; for although he himself was held in no greater favour in England than before, the feeling against an English Bible had considerably abated, and the quarrel with Rome had reached an open rupture. Cromwell and Cranmer were already convinced of the desirability of having the Bible translated by authority; and Tyndale was able to present a magnificent copy of his new edition to Queen Anne Boleyn,* who had constantly favoured the undertaking of the English Bible. But the enmity of the Romanist party against Tyndale himself was not abated; and his labour for the diffusion of God's Word was destined to receive the crown of martyrdom. He was now residing at Antwerp, a free city, and was safe as an inmate of the "English House," an established home of English merchants in that city. But in 1535 a traitor, named Henry Philips, wormed himself into his confidence and used his opportunity to betray him into the hands of some officers of the Emperor Charles V., by whom he was kidnapped and carried out of the city. The real promoters of this shameful plot have never been known. It is certain that Philips was well supplied with money, which must have come from the Romanist party, to which he belonged. Henry VIII., who was now at open war with this party, can have

* This copy is now in the British Museum.

had no share in the treachery. The most that can be said against him is that he took no steps to procure Tyndale's release. Cromwell used his influence to some extent; but from the moment of the arrest, the prisoner's fate was certain. Charles V. had set himself to crush heresy by stringent laws; and there was no doubt that, from Charles's point of view, Tyndale was a heretic. After a long imprisonment at Vilvorde, in Belgium, he was brought to trial, and in October 1536 he suffered martyrdom by strangling at the stake and burning, praying with his last words, "Lord, open the King of England's eyes."

Before his arrest Tyndale had once more revised his New Testament, which passed through the press during his imprisonment. This edition, which appeared in 1535, differs little from that of 1534, and the same may be said of other reprints which appeared in 1535 and 1536. These cannot have been supervised by Tyndale himself, and the eccentricities in spelling which distinguish one of them are probably due to Flemish compositors. We shall see in the following pages how his work lived after him, and how his translation is the direct ancestor of our Authorised Version. The genius of Tyndale shows itself in the fact that he was able to couch his translations in a language perfectly understanded of the people and yet full of beauty and of dignity. If the language of the Authorised Version has deeply affected our English prose, it is to Tyndale that the praise is originally due. He formed the mould, which subsequent revisers did but modify. A specimen of his work may fitly close our account of him.* It is his version of Phil. 2. 5–13 as it appears in the edition of 1534, and readers will at once recognise how much of the wording is familiar to us in the rendering of the Authorised Version :—

"Let the same mynde be in you that was in Christ Jesu: which beynge in the shape of God, and thought it not robbery to be equall with God. Nevertheless, he made him silfe of no reputacion, and toke on him the shape of a servaunte, and became lyke

* Another specimen will be found in the Appendix, where it can be compared with the versions of his successors.

unto men, and was found in his aparell as a man. He humbled him silfe and became obedient unto deeth, even the deethe of the crosse. Wherfore God hath exalted him, and geven him a name above all names: that in the name of Jesu shuld every knee bowe, bothe of thinges in heven and thinges in erth and thinges under erth, and that all tonges shuld confesse that Jesus Christ is the lorde unto the prayse of God the father. Wherefore, my dearly beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not when I was present only, but now moche more in myne absence, even so worke out youre owne salvacion with feare and tremblynge. For it is God which worketh in you, both the will and also the dede, even of good will."

Tyndale was burnt; but he, with even greater right than Latimer, might say that he had lighted such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as should never be put out.

2. Coverdale's Bible, 1535.

His own New Testament had been rigorously excluded from England, so far as those in authority could exclude it; but the cause for which he gave his life was won. Even before his death he might have heard that a Bible, partly founded on his own, had been issued in England under the protection of the highest authorities. In 1534 Convocation had petitioned the king to authorise a translation of the Bible into English, and it was probably at this time that Cranmer proposed a scheme for a joint translation by nine or ten of the most learned bishops and other scholars. Cranmer's scheme came to nothing; but Cromwell, now Secretary of State, incited Miles Coverdale to publish a work of translation on which he had been already engaged. Coverdale had known Tyndale abroad, and is said to have assisted him in his translation of the Pentateuch; but he was no Greek or Hebrew scholar, and his version, which was printed abroad in 1535 and appeared in England in that year or the next, professed only to be translated from the Dutch [*i.e.* German] and Latin. Coverdale, a moderate, tolerant, earnest man, claimed no originality, and expressly looked forward to the Bible being more faithfully presented both "by the

ministration of other that begun it afore" (Tyndale) and by the future scholars who should follow him; but his Bible has two important claims on our interest. It was not expressly authorised, but it was undertaken at the wish of Cromwell and dedicated to Henry VIII; so that it is the first English Bible which circulated in England without let or hindrance from the higher powers. It is also the first complete English printed Bible, since Tyndale had not been able to finish the whole of the Old Testament. In the Old Testament Coverdale depended mainly on the Swiss-German version published by Zwingli and Leo Juda in 1524–1529, though in the Pentateuch he also made considerable use of Tyndale's translation. The New Testament is a careful revision of Tyndale by comparison with the German. His task was consequently of a secondary character, consisting of a skilful selection from the materials of others; but such editorial work is far from being unimportant, and many of Coverdale's phrases have passed into the Authorised Version. In one respect he departed markedly from his predecessor, namely, in bringing back to the English Bible the ecclesiastical terms which Tyndale had banished.

In addition to the Bible issued in 1535–6, Coverdale, in 1538, published a revised New Testament with the Latin in parallel columns.* Meanwhile the demand for the Bible continued unabated, and a further step had been made in the direction of securing official authorisation. Two revised editions were published in 1537, and these bore the announcement that they were "set forth with the king's most gracious license." The bishops in Convocation might still discuss the expediency of allowing the Scriptures to circulate in English, but the question had been decided without them. The Bible circulated, and there could be no returning to the old ways.

* This was printed in England, but so inaccurately that Coverdale had a second edition printed at once in Paris. This no doubt led to a coolness with his English printer, Nycolson, of Southwark, who issued another edition, also very inaccurate, substituting the name of "Johan Hollybushe" for that of Coverdale on the title page.

Fresh translations, or, to speak more accurately, fresh revisions, of the Bible now followed one another in quick succession. The first to follow Coverdale's was that which is known as Matthew's Bible, but which is in fact the completion of Tyndale's work. Tyndale had only published the Pentateuch, Jonah, and the New Testament, but he had never abandoned his work on the Old Testament, and he had left behind him in manuscript a version of the books from Joshua to 2 Chronicles. The person into whose hands this version fell, and who was responsible for its publication, was John Rogers; and whether "Thomas Matthew," whose name stands at the foot of the dedication, was an assistant of Rogers, or was Rogers himself under another name, has never been clearly ascertained.* The Bible which Rogers published in 1537, at the expense of two London merchants, consisted of Tyndale's version of Genesis to 2 Chronicles, Coverdale's for the rest of the Old Testament (including the Apocrypha), and Tyndale's New Testament according to his final edition in 1535; the whole being very slightly revised, and accompanied by introductions, summaries of chapters, woodcuts, and copious marginal comments of a somewhat contentious character. It was printed abroad, dedicated to Henry VIII., and was cordially welcomed and promoted by Cranmer. Cromwell himself, at Cranmer's request, presented it to Henry and procured his permission for it to be sold publicly; and so it came about that Tyndale's translation, which Henry and all the heads of the Church had in 1525 proscribed, was in 1537 sold in England by leave of Henry and through the active support of the Secretary of State and the Archbishop of Canterbury.

3. Matthew's Bible, 1537.

The English Bible had now been licensed, but it had not yet been commanded to be read in Churches. That honour was

* It has also been suggested that Matthew stands for Tyndale, to whom the greater part of the translation was really due. The appearance of Tyndale's name on the title page would have made it impossible for Henry VIII. to admit it into England without convicting himself of error in proscribing Tyndale's New Testament.

reserved for a new revision which Cromwell (perhaps anxious lest the substantial identity of Matthew's Bible with Tyndale's, and the controversial character of the notes, should come to the king's knowledge) employed Coverdale to make on the basis of Matthew's Bible. The printing was begun in Paris in 1538, but before it was completed came an order from the French king, forbidding the work to proceed and confiscating the printed sheets. Coverdale, however, rescued a great number of the sheets, conveyed printers, presses, and type to London, and there completed the work, of which Cromwell thereupon ordered that a copy should be put up in some convenient place in every church. The Bible thus issued in the spring of 1539 is a splendidly printed volume of large size, from which characteristic its popular name was derived. In contents, it is Matthew's Bible revised throughout, the Old Testament especially being considerably altered in accordance with Münster's Latin version, which was greatly superior to the Zurich Bible on which Coverdale had relied in preparing his own translation. The New Testament was also revised, with special reference to the Latin version of Erasmus. Coverdale's characteristic style of working was thus exhibited again in the formation of the Great Bible. He did not attempt to contribute independent work of his own, but took the best materials which were available at the time and combined them according to his own editorial judgment. He was an editor, and a very judicious one, not a translator.

4. The Great Bible, 1539-1541.

In accordance with Cromwell's order, copies of the Great Bible were set up in every Church; and we have a curious picture of the eagerness with which people flocked to make acquaintance with the English Scriptures in the complaint of Bishop Bonner that "diverse wilful and unlearned persons inconsiderately and indiscreetly read the same, especially and chiefly at the time of divine service, yea in the time and declaration of the word of God." One can picture to oneself the great length of Old St. Paul's (of which the bishop is speaking) with the preacher haranguing

from the pulpit at one end, while elsewhere eager volunteers are reading from the six volumes of the English Bible which Bonner had put up in different parts of the cathedral, surrounded by crowds of listeners who, regardless of the order of divine service, are far more anxious to hear the Word of God itself than expositions of it by the preacher in the pulpit. Over all the land copies of the Bible spread and multiplied, so that a contemporary witness testifies that it had entirely superseded the old romances as the favourite reading of the people. Edition after edition was required from the press. The first had appeared in 1539; a second (in which the books of the Prophets had again been considerably revised by Coverdale) followed in April 1540, with a preface by Cranmer, and a third in July. In that month Cromwell was overthrown and executed; but the progress of the Bible was not checked. Another edition appeared in November, and on the title-page was the authorisation of Bishop Tunstall of London, who had thus lived to sanction a revised form of the very work which, as originally issued by Tyndale, he had formerly proscribed and burnt. Three more editions appeared in 1541, all substantially reproducing the revision of April 1540, though with some variations; and by this time the immediate demand for copies had been satisfied, and the work alike of printing and of revising the Bible came for the moment to a pause.*

It is from the time of the Great Bible that we may fairly date the origin of the love and knowledge of the Bible which has characterised, and which still characterises, the English nation. The successive issues of Tyndale's translation had been largely wasted in providing fuel for the opponents of the Reformation; but every copy of the seven editions of the Great Bible found, not merely a single reader, but a congregation of readers. The Bible

* Several of the editions of the Great Bible were printed by Whitchurch, and it is under the name of Whitchurch's Bible that the rules laid down for the guidance of the revisers of 1611 refer to it. The rule (which instructs the revisers to refer to "Tindale's, Matthew's, Coverdale's, Whitchurch's" and the "Geneva" translations) is quoted in the preface to the Revised New Testament of 1881.

took hold of the people, superseding, as we have seen, the most popular romances; and through the rest of the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries the extent to which it had sunk into their hearts is seen in their speech, their writings, and even in the daily strife of politics. And one portion of the Great Bible has had a deeper and more enduring influence still. When the first Prayer Book of Edward VI. was drawn up, directions were given in it for the use of the Psalms from the Great Bible; and from that day to this the Psalter of the Great Bible has held its place in our Book of Common Prayer. Just as, eleven hundred years before, Jerome's rendering of the Psalter from the Hebrew failed to supersede his slightly revised edition of the Old Latin Psalms, to which the ears of men were accustomed, so the more correct translation of the Authorised Version has never driven out the more familiar Prayer-Book version which we have received from the Great Bible. It may be, it certainly is, less accurate; but it is smoother in diction, more evenly balanced for purposes of chanting; above all, it has become so minutely familiar to us in every verse and phrase that the loss of old associations, which its abandonment would produce, would more than counterbalance the advantage of any gain in accuracy.

One other translation should be noticed in this place for completeness sake, although it had no effect on the subsequent history of the English Bible. This was the Bible of R. Taverner, an Oxford scholar, who undertook an independent revision of Matthew's Bible at the same time as Coverdale was preparing the first edition of the Great Bible under Cromwell's auspices. Taverner was a good Greek scholar, but not a Hebraist; consequently the best part of his work is the revision of the New Testament, in which he introduces not a few changes for the better. The Old Testament is more slightly revised, chiefly with reference to the Vulgate. Taverner's Bible appeared in 1539, and was once reprinted; but it was entirely superseded for general use by the authorised Great Bible, and exercised no influence upon later translations.

5. Taverner's Bible, 1539.

The closing years of Henry's reign were marked by a reaction against the principles of the Reformation. Although he had thrown off the supremacy of the Pope, he was by no means favourably disposed towards the teachings and practices of the Protestant leaders, either at home or abroad; and after the fall of Cromwell his distrust of them took a more marked form. In 1543 all translations of the Bible bearing the name of Tyndale were ordered to be destroyed; all notes or comments in other Bibles were to be obliterated; and the common people were forbidden to read any part of the Bible either in public or in private. In 1546 Coverdale's New Testament was joined in the same condemnation with Tyndale's, and a great destruction of these earlier Testaments then took place. Thus not only was the work of making fresh translations suspended for several years, but the continued existence of those which had been previously made seemed to be in danger.

6. The Geneva Bible, 1557-1560.

The accession of Edward VI. in 1547 removed this danger, and during his reign the Bible was frequently reprinted; but no new translation or revision made its appearance. It is true that Sir John Cheke, whose memory is preserved by Milton, as having "taught Cambridge and King Edward Greek," prepared a translation of St. Matthew and part of St. Mark, in which he avoided, as far as possible, the use of all words not English in origin, substituting (for example) "gainrising" for "resurrection" and "biword" for "parable"; but this version was not printed, and remains as a mere linguistic curiosity. Under Mary it was not likely that the work of translation would make any progress. Two of the men most intimately associated with the previous versions, Cranmer and Rogers, were burnt at the stake, and Coverdale (who under Edward VI. had become Bishop of Exeter) escaped with difficulty. The public use of the English Bible was forbidden, and copies were removed from the churches; but beyond this no special destruction of the Bible was attempted.

Meanwhile the fugitives from the persecution of England were gathering beyond sea, and the more advanced and earnest among

them were soon attracted by the influence of Calvin to a congenial home at Geneva. Here the interrupted task of perfecting the English Bible was resumed. The place was very favourable for the purpose. Geneva was the home, not only of Calvin, but of Beza, the most prominent Biblical scholar then living. Thought was free, and no considerations of state policy or expediency need affect the translators. Since the last revision of the English translation much had been done, both by Beza and by others, to improve and elucidate the Bible text. A company of Frenchmen was already at work in Geneva on the production of a revised translation of the French Bible, which eventually became the standard version for the Protestants of that country. Amid such surroundings a body of English scholars took in hand the task of revising the Great Bible. The first-fruits of this activity was the New Testament of W. Whittingham, brother-in-law of Calvin's wife and a Fellow of All Souls' College, Oxford, which was printed in 1557; but this was soon superseded by a more comprehensive and complete revision of the whole Bible by Whittingham himself and a group of other scholars. Taking for their basis the Great Bible in the Old Testament, and Tyndale's last revision in the New, they revised the whole with much care and scholarship. In the Old Testament the changes introduced are chiefly in the Prophetical Books and the Hagiographa, and consist for the most part of closer approximations to the original Hebrew. In the New Testament they took Beza's Latin translation and commentary as their guide, and by far the greater number of the changes in this part of the Bible are traceable to his influence. The whole Bible was accompanied by explanatory comments in the margin, of a somewhat Calvinistic character, but without any excessive violence or partisanship. The division of chapters into verses, which had been introduced by Whittingham from Stephanus's edition of 1551, was here for the first time adopted for the whole English Bible. In all previous translations the division had been into paragraphs, as in our present Revised Version.

Next to Tyndale, the authors of the Geneva Bible have exercised the most marked influence of all the early translators on the Authorised Version. Their own scholarship, both in Hebrew and in Greek, seems to have been sound and sober; and Beza, their principal guide in the New Testament, was unsurpassed in his own day as an interpreter of the sacred text. Printed in legible Roman type and in a convenient quarto form, and accompanied by an intelligible and sensible commentary, the Geneva Bible (either as originally published in 1560, or with the New Testament further revised by Tomson, in fuller harmony with Beza's views, in 1576) became the Bible of the household, as the Great Bible was the Bible of the church. It was never authorised for use in churches, but it was cordially received by the heads of the English Church, and until the final victory of King James's Version it was by far the most popular Bible in England for private reading; and many of its improvements, in phrase or in interpretation, were adopted in the Authorised Version.

With the accession of Elizabeth a new day dawned for the Bible in England. The public reading of it was naturally restored, and the clergy were required once more to have a copy of the Great Bible placed in their churches, which all might read with due order and reverence. But the publication of the Geneva Bible made it impossible for the Great Bible to maintain its position as the authorised form of the English Scriptures. The superior correctness of the Geneva version threw discredit on the official Bible; and yet, being itself the Bible of one particular party in the Church, and reflecting in its commentary the views of that party, it could not properly be adopted as the universal Bible for public service. The necessity of a revision of the Great Bible was therefore obvious, and it happened that the Archbishop of Canterbury, Matthew Parker, was himself a textual scholar, a collector of manuscripts, an editor of learned works, and consequently fitted to take up the task which lay ready to his hand. Accordingly, about the year 1563, he set on foot a scheme for the revision of the Bible by a

7. The Bishops' Bible, 1568.

number of scholars working separately. Portions of the Bible were assigned to each of the selected divines for revision, the Archbishop reserving for himself the task of editing the whole and passing it through the press. A considerable number of the selected revisers were bishops,* and hence the result of their labours obtained the name of the Bishops' Bible.

The Bishops' Bible was published in 1568, and it at once superseded the Great Bible for official use in churches. No edition of the earlier text was printed after 1569, and the mandate of Convocation for the provision of the new version in all churches and bishops' palaces must have eventually secured its general use in public services. Nevertheless, on the whole, the revision cannot be considered a success, and the Geneva Bible continued to be preferred as the Bible of the household and the individual. In the forty-three years which elapsed before the appearance of the Authorised Version, nearly 120 editions of the Geneva Bible issued from the press, as against twenty of the Bishops' Bible, and while the former are mostly of small compass, the latter are mainly the large volumes which would be used in churches. The method of revision did not conduce to uniformity of results. There was, apparently, no habitual consultation between the several revisers. Each carried out his own assigned portion of the task, subject only to the general supervision of the Archbishop. The natural result is a considerable amount of unevenness. The historical books of the Old Testament were comparatively little altered; in the remaining books changes were much more frequent, but they are not always happy or even correct. The New Testament portion was better done, Greek being apparently better known by the revisers than Hebrew. Like almost all its predecessors, the Bishops' Bible was provided

* Alley, Bishop of Exeter; Davies, Bishop of St. David's; Sandys, Bishop of Worcester; Horne, Bishop of Winchester; Bentham, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry; Grindal, Bishop of London; Parkhurst, Bishop of Norwich; Coxe, Bishop of Ely; and Guest, Bishop of Rochester. The other revisers were Pearson, Canon of Canterbury; Perne, Canon of Ely; Goodman, Dean of Westminster; and Giles Lawrence.

with a marginal commentary, on a rather smaller scale than that in the Geneva Bible. A second edition was published in 1572, in which the New Testament was once more revised, while the Old Testament was left untouched; but the total demand for the Bishops' Bible, being probably confined to the copies required for public purposes, can never have been very great.

Meanwhile the zeal of the reformed churches for the possession of the Bible in their own languages drove the Romanists into competition with them in the production of translations. For each of the principal provinces of the Latin Church a translation was provided conformable to the views of that Church on the text and interpretation of Scripture. It was not that the heads of the Roman Church believed such translations to be in themselves desirable; but since there was evidently an irrepressible popular demand for them, it was clearly advisable, from the Roman point of view, that the translated Bible should be accompanied by a commentary in accordance with Roman teaching, rather than by that of the Genevan Calvinists or the English bishops. The preparation of an English version naturally fell to the scholars of the English seminary which had lately been established in France. The original home of this seminary was at Douai, but in 1578 it was transferred for a time to Rheims; and it was during the sojourn at Rheims that the first part of the English Bible was produced. This was the New Testament, which was published in 1582. The Old Testament did not appear until 1609, when the seminary had returned to Douai; and consequently the completed Bible goes by the name of the Rheims and Douai version.

8. The Rheims and Douai Bible, 1582-1609.

The most important point to observe about this Roman Catholic Bible is that the translation is made, not from the original Hebrew and Greek, but from the Latin Vulgate. This was done deliberately, on the ground that the Vulgate was the Bible of Jerome and Augustine, that it had ever since been used in the Church, and that its text was preferable to the Greek wherever the two differed, because the Greek text had been corrupted by

heretics. Furthermore, the translators (of whom the chief was Gregory Martin, formerly Fellow of St. John's College, Oxford) held it their duty to adhere as closely as possible to the Latin words, even when the Latin was unintelligible. Bishop Westcott quotes an extraordinary instance in Ps. 57. 10: "Before your thorns did understand the old briar: as living so in wrath he swalloweth them." The general result is that the translation is almost always stiff and awkward, and not unfrequently meaningless. As a contribution to the interpretation of Scripture it is practically valueless; but, on the other hand, its systematic use of words and technical phrases taken directly from the Latin has had a considerable influence on our Authorised Version. Many of the words derived from the Latin which occur in our Bible were incorporated into it from the Rheims New Testament.

The Romanist Bible had no general success, and its circulation was not large. The New Testament was reprinted thrice between 1582 and 1750; the Old Testament only once. Curiously enough, the greater part of its circulation was in the pages of a Protestant controversialist, Fulke, who printed the Rheims and the Bishops' New Testaments side by side, and also appended to the Rheims commentary a refutation by himself. Fulke's work had a considerable popularity, and it is possibly to the wider knowledge of the Rheims version thus produced that we owe the use made of it by the scholars who prepared the Authorised Version: to which version, after our long and varied wanderings, we are now at last come.

9. The Authorised Version.

The attempt of Archbishop Parker and the Elizabethan bishops to provide a universally satisfactory Bible had failed. The Bishops' Bible had replaced the Great Bible for use in churches, and that was all. It had not superseded the Geneva Bible in private use; and faults and inequalities in it were visible to all scholars. For the remaining years of Elizabeth's reign it held its own; but in the settlement of religion which followed the accession of James I., the provision of a new Bible held a prominent place. At the

Hampton Court Conference in 1604, to which bishops and Puritan clergy were alike invited by James in order to confer on the subject of religious toleration, Dr. Reynolds, President of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, raised the subject of the imperfection of the current Bibles. Bancroft, Bishop of London, supported him; and although the Conference itself arrived at no conclusion on this or any other subject, the King had become interested in the matter, and a scheme was formulated shortly afterwards for carrying the revision into effect. It appears to have been James himself who suggested the leading features of the scheme; namely, that the revision should be executed mainly by the Universities; that it should be approved by the bishops and most learned of the Church, by the Privy Council, and by the king himself, so that all the Church should be concerned in it; and that it should have no marginal commentary, which might render it the Bible of a party only. To James were also submitted the names of the revisers; and it is no more than justice to a king whose political misconceptions and mismanagements have left him with a very indifferent character among English students of history, to allow that the good sense on which he prided himself seems to have been conspicuously manifested in respect of the preparation of the Authorised Version, which, by reason of its after effects, may fairly be considered the most important event of his reign.

It was in 1604 that the scheme of the revision was drawn up, and some of the revisers may have begun work upon it privately at this time; but it was not until 1607 that the task was formally taken in hand. The body of revisers was a strong one. It included the professors of Hebrew and Greek at both Universities, with practically all the leading scholars and divines of the day. There is a slight uncertainty about some of the names, and some changes in the list may have been caused by death or retirement, but the total number of revisers was from forty-eight to fifty. These were divided into six groups, of which two sat at Westminster, two at Oxford, and two at Cambridge. In the first instance each group worked separately, having a special part of

the Bible assigned to it. The two Westminster groups revised Genesis — 2 Kings, and Romans — Jude; the Oxford groups Isaiah—Malachi, and the Gospels, Acts, and Apocalypse; while those at Cambridge undertook 1 Chronicles—Ecclesiastes and the Apocrypha. Elaborate instructions were drawn up for their guidance, probably by Bancroft. The basis of the revision was to be the Bishops' Bible; the old ecclesiastical terms (about which Tyndale and More had so vehemently disagreed) were to be retained; no marginal notes were to be affixed, except necessary explanation of Hebrew and Greek words; when any company had finished the revision of a book, it was to be sent to all the rest for their criticism and suggestions, ultimate differences of opinion to be settled at a general meeting of the chief members of each company; learned men outside the board of revisers were to be invited to give their opinions, especially in cases of particular difficulty.

With these regulations to secure careful and repeated revision, the work was earnestly taken in hand. It occupied two years and nine months of strenuous toil, the last nine months being taken up by a final revision by a committee consisting of two members from each centre; and in the year 1611 the result of the revisers' labours issued from the press. It was at once attacked by Dr. Hugh Broughton, a Biblical scholar of great eminence and erudition, who had been omitted from the list of revisers on account of his violent and impracticable disposition. His disappointment vented itself in a very hostile criticism of the new version; but this had very little effect, and the general reception of the revised Bible seems to have been eminently favourable. Though there is no record whatever of any decree ordaining its use, by either King, Parliament, or Convocation, the words "appointed to be read in churches" appear on its title-page; and there can be no doubt that it at once superseded the Bishops' Bible (which was not reprinted after 1606) as the official version of the Scriptures for public service. Against the Geneva Bible it had a sharper struggle, and

for nearly half a century the two versions existed side by side in private use. From the first, however, the version of 1611 seems to have been received into popular favour, and the reprints of it far outnumber those of its rival. It cannot have been authority in high places of Church or State that caused the final victory of the new version; for the Geneva version had outlived the competition of the Bishops' Bible, and the period in which it finally fell before King James's version was that in which Church and State were overthrown. It was its superior merits, and its total freedom from party or sectarian spirit, that secured the triumph of the Authorised Version, which from the middle of the seventeenth century took its place as the undisputed Bible of the English nation.

Its excellence and influence,

The causes of its superiority are not hard to understand. In the first place, Greek and Hebrew scholarship had greatly increased in England during the forty years which had passed since the last revision. It is true that the Greek text of the New Testament had not been substantially improved in the interval, and was still very imperfect; but the chief concern of the revisers was not with the readings, but with the interpretation of the Scriptures, and in this department of scholarship great progress had been made. Secondly, the revision was the work of no single man and of no single school. It was the deliberate work of a large body of trained scholars and divines of all classes and opinions, who had before them, for their guidance, the labours of nearly a century of revision. The translation of the Bible had passed out of the sphere of controversy. It was a national undertaking, in which no one had any interest at heart save that of producing the best possible version of the Scriptures. Thirdly, the past forty years had been years of extraordinary growth in English literature. Prose writers and poets—Spenser, Sidney, Hooker, Marlowe, Shakespeare, to name only the greatest—had combined to spread abroad a sense of literary style and to raise the standard of literary taste. Under the influence, conscious or unconscious, of masters such as these, the revisers wrought out the

fine material left to them by Tyndale and his successors into the splendid monument of Elizabethan prose which the Authorised Version is universally admitted to be.

Into the details of the revision it is hardly necessary to go far. The earlier versions of which the revisers made most use were those of Rheims and Geneva. Tyndale no doubt fixed the general tone of the version more than any other translator, through the transmission of his influence down to the Bishops' Bible, which formed the basis of the revision; but many improvements in interpretation were taken from the Geneva Bible, and not a few phrases and single words from that of Rheims. Indeed, no source of information seems to have been left untried; and the result was a version at once more faithful to the original than any translation that had preceded it, and finer as a work of literary art than any translation either before or since. In the Old Testament the Hebrew tone and manner have been admirably reproduced, and have passed with the Authorised Version into much of our literature. Even where the translation is wrong or the Hebrew text corrupt, as in many passages of the Prophets or the last chapter of Ecclesiastes, the splendid stateliness of the English version makes us blind to the deficiency in the sense. And in the New Testament, in particular, it is the simple truth that the English version is a far greater *literary* work than the original Greek. The Greek of the New Testament is a language which had passed its prime, and had lost its natural grace and infinite adaptability. The English of the Authorised Version is the finest specimen of our prose literature at a time when English prose wore its stateliest and most majestic form.

The influence of the Authorised Version, alike on our religion and our literature, can never be exaggerated. Not only in the great works of our theologians, the resonant prose of the seventeenth-century Fathers of the English Church, but in the writings of nearly every author, whether of prose or verse, the stamp of its language is to be seen. Milton is full of it; naturally, perhaps, from the nature of his subjects, but still his practice shows his

sense of the artistic value of its style. So deeply has its language entered into our common tongue, that one probably could not take up a newspaper or read a single book in which some phrase was not borrowed, consciously or unconsciously, from King James's version. No master of style has been blind to its charms; and those who have recommended its study most strongly have often been those who, like Carlyle and Matthew Arnold, were not prepared to accept its teaching to the full.

But great as has been the literary value of the Authorised Version, its religious significance has been greater still. For nearly three centuries it has been the Bible, not merely of public use, not merely of one sect or party, not even of a single country, but of the whole nation and of every English-speaking country on the face of the globe. It has been the literature of millions who have read little else, it has been the guide of conduct to men and women of every class in life and of every rank in learning and education. No small part of the attachment of the English people to their national church is due to the common love borne by every party and well-nigh every individual for the English Bible. It was a national work in its creation, and it has been a national treasure since its completion. It was the work, not of one man, nor of one age, but of many labourers, of diverse and even opposing views, over a period of ninety years. It was watered with the blood of martyrs, and its slow growth gave time for the casting off of imperfections and for the full accomplishment of its destiny as the Bible of the English nation.

The Authorised Version accepted as final.

With the publication of the Authorised Version the history of the English Bible closes for many a long year. Partly, no doubt, this was due to the troubled times which came upon England in that generation and the next. When the constitutions of Church and State alike were being cast into the melting-pot, when men were beating their ploughshares into swords, and their pruning-hooks into spears, there was little time for nice discussions as to the exact text of the Scriptures, and little peace for the labours

of scholarship. But the main reason for this pause in the work was that, for the moment, finality had been reached. The version of 1611 was an adequate translation of the Greek and Hebrew texts as they were then known to scholars. The scholarship of the day was satisfied with it as it had been satisfied with no version before it; and the common people found its language appeal to them with a greater charm and dignity than that of the Genevan version, to which they had been accustomed. As time went on the Authorised Version acquired the prescriptive right of age; its rhythms became familiar to the ears of all classes; its language entered into our literature; and Englishmen became prouder of their Bible than of any of the creative works of their own literature.

Need of a revision in our own time.

What, then, were the causes which led to the revision of this beloved version within the present generation, after it had held its ground for nearly three hundred years? They may be summed up in a single sentence: The increase of our knowledge concerning the original Hebrew and Greek texts, especially the latter. The reader who will glance back at our history of the Greek texts in Chapters VI.—VIII. will see how much of our best knowledge about the text of the New Testament has been acquired since the date of the Authorised Version. Of all the manuscripts described in Chapter VII. scarcely one was known to the scholars of 1611; of all the versions described in Chapter VIII. not one was known except the Vulgate, and that mainly in late and corrupt manuscripts. The editions of the Greek text chiefly used by the translators of 1611 were those of Erasmus, Stephanus, and Beza; and these had been formed from a comparison of only a few manuscripts, and those mostly of the latest period.* The translators used the best materials that they had to their hands, and with good results, since their texts were substantially true, though not in detail; but since their time the materials have increased

* Stephanus consulted two good uncials, D and L, but only to a slight extent.

enormously. New manuscripts have come to light, and all the earliest copies have been minutely examined and discussed. Many scholars have devoted years of their lives to the collection of evidence bearing on the text of the New Testament; and the general result of these generations of study is to show that the text used by the translators of 1611 is far from perfect.

10. The Revised Version.

For two centuries scholars laboured on without pressing for a revision of the English Bible, though small alterations were silently introduced into it until late in the eighteenth century; but in the middle of the present century the discrepancies between the received and the amended Greek texts became so many and so generally known that the desirability of a revision became apparent. The discovery of the Codex Sinaiticus, and the critical texts published by Tischendorf and Tregelles, did much to bring this need home to all who cared for the accuracy of the English Bible. Partial translations were published by individual scholars, which served a good purpose in their own time, though they need not be described here, since none of them exercised any direct influence on the Revised Version; but the final result was that in 1870 decisive steps were taken to secure an authoritative revision of the whole English Bible in the light of the fullest modern knowledge and the best Biblical scholarship.

The history of the revision is told at sufficient length in the preface to the Revised Version of the New Testament. The initiative was taken by the Convocation of the province of Canterbury. In February of the year 1870 a definite proposal was made that a revision of the Authorised Version should be taken into consideration. In May the broad principles of the revision were laid down in a series of resolutions, and a committee of sixteen members was appointed to execute the work, with power to add to its numbers. The committee divided itself into two companies, one for each Testament, and invitations were issued to all the leading Biblical scholars of the United Kingdom to take part in the work. The invitations were not confined to members

of the Church of England. The English Bible is the Bible of Nonconformists as well as of the Established Church, and representatives of the Nonconformist bodies took their seats among the revisers. Thus were formed the two companies to whom the Revised Version is due. Each company consisted originally of twenty-seven members, but deaths and resignations and new appointments caused the exact numbers to vary from time to time; and it cannot be questioned that most of the leading Biblical scholars of the day were included among them. Further, when the work had barely begun, an invitation was sent to the churches of America asking their co-operation; and, in accordance with this invitation, two companies were formed in America, to whom all the results of the English companies were communicated. The suggestions of the American revisers were carefully and repeatedly considered, and those of their alterations on which they desired to insist, when they were not adopted by their English colleagues, were recorded in an appendix to the published version. The Revised Version is, consequently, the work not of the English Church alone, nor of the British Isles alone, but of all the English-speaking churches throughout the world; only the Roman Catholics taking no part in it.

The methods of the revision left little to be desired in the way of care and deliberation. The instructions to the Revisers (which are given in full in their preface) required them to introduce as few alterations as possible consistently with faithfulness; to use in such alterations the language of the Authorised or earlier versions, where possible; to go over their work twice, in the first revision deciding on alterations by simple majorities, but finally making or retaining no change except two-thirds of those present approved of it. Thus the Revised Version represents the deliberate opinions of a large majority of the best scholars of all English-speaking churches in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

It was on the twenty-second of June 1870 that the members of the New Testament Company, having first received the Holy Communion in Westminster Abbey, held their first meeting in the

Jerusalem Chamber; the Old Testament Company entered on their work eight days later. It was on the eleventh of November 1880 that the New Testament Revisers set their signatures to the preface of their version, which finally issued from the press in May 1881. The Old Testament preface is dated the tenth of July 1884, and the entire Bible, with the exception of the Apocrypha,* was published in May 1885. The New Testament company records that it sat for about forty days in each year for ten years. The Old Testament revision occupied 792 days in a space of fourteen years. Whatever judgment be passed on the merits of the Revised Version, it cannot be held to have been made precipitately, or without the fullest care and deliberation.

What, then, of the results? Is the Revised Version a worthy successor to the Authorised Bible which has entered so deeply into the life of Englishmen? Has it added fresh perfection to that glorious work, or has it laid hands rashly upon sacred things? What, in any case, are the characteristics of the revision of 1881–5 as compared with the version on which it is based?

Characteristics of the Revised Version: A. Changes in text.

The first class of changes introduced in the Revised Version consists of those which are due to a difference in the text translated; and these are most conspicuous and most important in the New Testament. The version of 1611 was made from a Greek text formed by a comparison of very few manuscripts, and those, for the most part, late (see p. 99). The version of 1881, on the other hand, was made from a Greek text based upon an exhaustive examination, extending over some two centuries, of all the best manuscripts in existence. In Dr. Hort and Dr. Scrivener the New Testament Company possessed the two most learned

* The revision of the Apocrypha was not initiated by Convocation, but by the University Presses, which commissioned a company, formed from the Old and New Testament Companies, to undertake the work. Material for the revision is comparatively scanty, but the Variorum Edition, by the Rev. C. J. Ball, 1892, is accepted both in England and in Germany as a very important contribution to this branch of Biblical literature. As this sheet is finally going to press, the Revised Apocrypha is announced for immediate publication.

textual critics then alive; and when it is remembered that no change was finally accepted unless it had the support of two-thirds of those present, it will be seen that the Greek text underlying the Revised Version has very strong claims on our acceptance.* No one edition of the Greek text was followed by the Revisers, each reading being considered on its own merits; but it is certain that the edition and the textual theories of Drs. Westcott and Hort, which were communicated to the Revisers in advance of the publication of their volumes, had a great influence on the text ultimately adopted, while very many of their readings which were not admitted into the text of the Revised Version, yet find a place in the margin. The Greek text of the New Testament of 1881 has been estimated to differ from that of 1611 in no less than 5,788 readings, of which about a quarter are held notably to modify the subject-matter; though even of these only a small proportion can be considered as of first-rate importance. The chief of these have been referred to on p. 3, but the reader who wishes for a fuller list may compare the Authorised and Revised readings in such passages as: Matt. **1.** 25; **5.** 44; **6.** 13; **10.** 3; **11.** 23; **17.** 21; **18.** 11; **19.** 17; **20.** 22; **23.** 14; **24.** 36; **27.** 35. Mark **7.** 19; **9.** 44, 46, 49; **15.** 28; **16.** 9-20. Luke **1.** 28; **2.** 14; **9.** 35, 54, 55; **11.** 2-4; **17.** 36; **23.** 15, 17. John **4.** 42; **5.** 3, 4; **6.** 69; **7.** 53—**8.** 11; **8.** 59. Acts **4.** 25; **8.** 37; **9.** 5; **15.** 18, 34; **18.** 5, 17, 21; **20.** 15; **24.** 6-8; **28.** 16, 29. Rom. **3.** 9; **4.** 19; **7.** 6; **8.** 1; **9.** 28; **10.** 15; **11.** 6; **14.** 6; **16.** 5, 24. 1 Cor. **2.** 1; **6.** 20; **8.** 7; **11.** 24, 29; **15.** 47. 2 Cor. **1.** 20; **12.** 1. Gal. **3.** 1, 17; **4.** 7; **5.** 1. Eph. **3.** 9, 14; **5.** 30. Phil. **1.** 16, 17. Col. **1.** 2, 14; **2.** 2, 18. 1 Thess. **1.** 1. 1 Tim. **3.** 3, 16; **6.** 5, 19. 2 Tim. **1.** 11. Heb. **7.** 21. 1 Peter **4.** 14. 1 John **4.** 3; **5.** 7, 8, 13. Jude 23. Rev. **1.** 8, 11; **2.** 3; **5.** 10; **11.** 17; **14.** 5; **16.** 7; **21.** 24; **22.** 14.

* The Revisers' Greek text has been edited by Archdeacon Palmer at Oxford, and Dr. Scrivener at Cambridge; and it would be a great gain if this could be adopted in our schools and universities as the standard text of the Greek Testament, in place of the old "received text," which every scholar knows to be imperfect.

This list, which any reader of the Variorum Bible may extend indefinitely for himself (with the advantage of having the evidence for and against each change succinctly stated for him), contains some of the more striking passages in which the Revised Version is translated from a different Greek text from that used in the Authorised Version, and few scholars will be found to deny that in nearly every case the text of the Revised Version is certainly superior.

In the Old Testament the case is different. This is not because the translators of the Old Testament in the Authorised Version were more careful to select a correct text than their colleagues of the New Testament, but simply because our knowledge of the Old Testament text has not increased since that date to anything like the extent that it has in respect of the New Testament. As we have seen in the earlier chapters, all extant manuscripts of the Hebrew Scriptures contain what is known as the Massoretic text, and they do not greatly differ among themselves. Such differences of reading as exist are traced by a collation of the early versions, *e.g.* the Septuagint or the Vulgate; but we know too little as yet of the character and history of these versions to follow them to any great extent in preference to the Hebrew manuscripts. The Revisers, therefore, had no choice but to translate, as a rule, from the Massoretic text; and consequently they were translating substantially the same text as that which the authors of King James's Version had before them. This is one explanation of the fact, which is obvious to every reader, that the Old Testament is much less altered in the Revised Version than the New; * and the reader who wishes to learn the improvements which might be introduced by a freer use of the ancient versions must be referred to the notes in the Variorum Bible.

* A well known example of an altered reading occurs in Isa. 9. 3 (the first lesson for Christmas Day), "Thou hast multiplied the people and *not* increased the joy; they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest," etc.; the marginal reading being *to him*. In the Revised Version these readings change places, "his" (lit. *to him*) being in the text, and *not* in the margin. The note in the Variorum Bible explains that in the Hebrew both readings are pronounced alike.

The situation is reversed when we come to consider the differences, not of text but of interpretation, between the Authorised Version and the Revised. Here the advance is greater in the Old Testament than in the New, and again the reason is plain. The translators of the New Testament in the Authorised Version were generally able to interpret correctly the Greek text which they had before them, and their work may, except in a few passages, be taken as a faithful rendering of an imperfect text. On the other hand, Hebrew was less well known in 1611 than Greek, and the passages in which the Authorised Version fails to represent the original are far more numerous in the Old Testament than in the New. The reader who will take the trouble to compare the Authorised and Revised Versions of the prophetical and poetical books will find a very considerable number of places in which the latter has brought out the meaning of passages which in the former were obscure. To some extent the same is the case with the Epistles of St. Paul, where, if we miss much of the familiar language of the Authorised Version, we yet find that the connection between the sentences and the general course of the argument are brought out more clearly than before. But it is in the Old Testament, in Job, in Ecclesiastes, in Isaiah and the other Prophets, that the gain is most manifest, and no one who cares for the meaning of what he reads can afford to neglect the light thrown upon the obscure passages in these books by the Revised Version.*

B. Changes in interpretation.

Besides differences in text and differences in interpretation, we find in the Revised Version very many differences in language. By far the greater number of the changes introduced by the Revisers are of this class,

C. Changes in language.

* The most striking single passage in the New Testament where the Revised Version has altered the interpretation of the Authorised Version is Acts 26. 28, where for the familiar "almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian" we find "With but little persuasion thou wouldest fain make me a Christian,"—unquestionably a more correct translation of the Greek.

and it is on them that the general acceptance, or otherwise, of the new translation very largely depends. Sometimes these changes embody a slight change of meaning, or remove a word which has acquired in course of time a meaning different from that which it originally had. Such are the substitution of "Sheol" or "Hades" for "hell," "condemnation" for "damnation," and "love" for "charity" (notably in 1 Cor. 13). Others are attempts at slightly greater accuracy in reproducing the precise tenses of the verbs used in the Greek, as when in John 17. 14 "the world hated them" is substituted for "the world hath hated them." Others, again, are due to the attempt made to represent the same Greek word, wherever it occurs, by the same English word, so far as this is possible. The translators of the Authorised Version were avowedly indifferent to this consideration; or rather, they deliberately did the reverse. Where there were two or more good English equivalents for a Greek word, they did not wish to seem to cast a slight upon one of them by always using the other, and so they used both interchangeably.*

* See the Translators' Preface (unfortunately omitted from our ordinary Bibles, but very rightly inserted in the Variorum Bible, p. xxiii.): "Another thing we think good to admonish thee of, gentle Reader, that we have not tied ourselves to an uniformity of phrasing, or to an identity of words, as some peradventure would wish that we had done, because they observe, that some learned men somewhere have been as exact as they could that way. Truly, that we might not vary from the sense of that which we had translated before, if the word signified the same thing in both places, (for there be some words that be not of the same sense every where,) we were especially careful, and made a conscience, according to our duty. But that we should express the same notion in the same particular word; as for example, if we translate the *Hebrew* or *Greek* word once by *purpose*, never to call it *intent*; if one where *journeying*, never *travelling*; if one where *think*, never *suppose*; if one where *pain*, never *ache*; if one where *joy*, never *gladness*, &c. thus to mince the matter, we thought to savour more of curiosity than wisdom, and that rather it would breed scorn in the atheist, than bring profit to the godly reader. For is the kingdom of God become words or syllables? Why should we be in bondage to them, if we may be free? use one precisely, when we may use another no less fit as commodiously? . . . Now if this happen in better times, and upon so small occasions, we might justly feel hard censure, if generally we should make verbal and unnecessary changings. We might also be charged

The Revisers of 1881–5 took a different view of their duty. Sometimes the point of the passage depends on the same or different words being used, and here it is misleading not to follow the Greek closely. So much weight is laid on the exact words of the Bible, so many false conclusions have been drawn from its phrases by those who are not able to examine the meaning of those phrases in the original Greek or Hebrew, that minute accuracy in reproducing the exact language of the original is highly desirable, if it can be had without violence to the idioms of the English tongue. One special class of passages to which this principle has been applied occurs in the first three Gospels. In these the same events are often recorded in identical words, proving that the three narratives have some common origin; but in the Authorised Version this identity is often obscured by the use of different renderings of the same words in the various Gospels. The Revisers have been careful to reproduce exactly the amount of similarity or of divergence which is to be found in the original Greek of such passages.

Reception of the Revised Version.

What, then, is the final value of the Revised Version, and what is to be in future its relation to the Authorised Version to which we have been so long accustomed? On the first appearance of the Revised New Testament it was received with much unfavourable criticism.

(by scoffers) with some unequal dealing towards a great number of good *English* words. For as it is written of a certain great Philosopher, that he should say, that those logs were happy that were made images to be worshipped; for their fellows, as good as they, lay for blocks behind the fire: so if we should say, as it were, unto certain words, Stand up higher, have a place in the Bible always; and to others of like quality, Get you hence, be banished for ever; we might be taxed peradventure with St. *James's* words, namely, *To be partial in ourselves, and judges of evil thoughts.* Add hereunto, that niceness in words was always counted the next step to trifling; and so was to be curious about names too: also that we cannot follow a better pattern for elocution than God Himself; therefore He using divers words in His holy writ, and indifferently for one thing in nature: we, if we will not be superstitious, may use the same liberty in our *English* versions out of *Hebrew* and *Greek*, for that copy or store that He hath given us."

Dean Burgon of Chichester, occupying towards it much the same position as Dr. Hugh Broughton in relation to the Authorised Version, assailed it vehemently in the *Quarterly Review* with a series of articles, the unquestionable learning of which was largely neutralised by the extravagance and intemperance of their tone. The Dean, however, was not alone in his dislike of the very numerous changes introduced by the Revisers into the familiar language of the English Bible, and there was a general unwillingness to adopt the new translation as a substitute for the Authorised Version in common use. When, four years later, the revision of the Old Testament was put forth, the popular verdict was more favourable. The improvements in interpretation of obscure passages were obvious, while the changes of language were less numerous; moreover, the language of the Old Testament books being less familiar than that of the Gospels, the changes in it passed with less observation. Scholars, however, were not by any means universally satisfied with it, and the reviews in the principal magazines, such as the *Quarterly* and *Edinburgh*, were not favourable. It must be remembered, however, that most of the leading scholars of the country were members of the revision companies, and that the reviews, as a rule, were necessarily written by those who had not taken part in the work. The grounds of criticism, in the case of both Testaments, were two-fold; either the critics objected on scientific grounds to the readings adopted by the Revisers, or they protested against the numerous changes in the language, as making the Revised Version less suitable than its predecessor to be the Bible of the people. But with respect to the first class of criticisms, it may fairly be supposed that the opinion of the Revisers is entitled to greater weight than that of their critics. In a work involving thousands of details, concerning many hundreds of which the evidence is nearly equally balanced, it was not to be supposed that a result could be reached which would satisfy in every point either each member of the revision companies themselves, or each critic outside; and consequently the less weight can be attached to the

fact that reviewers, who themselves had taken no direct part in the work, found many passages on which their own opinion differed from that to which the majority of the Revisers had come. As regards the fitness of the new translation to be the Bible of the people, that question will be decided neither by the Revisers nor their critics, but by the people; and it is impossible as yet to forecast their ultimate verdict. We who have been brought up entirely on the Authorised Version, to whom many of its phrases are the most familiar words in our language, are hardly able to judge fairly of the literary merits of the Revision. For a long time, in any case, the two versions must exist side by side; and it will be a generation that has become familiar with both of them that will decide whether or not the Revised Version is to supersede the Authorised Version, as the Vulgate, after a long struggle, superseded the Old Latin, and as the Authorised Version superseded the Bible of the Elizabethan Bishops.

So ends, for the present, the history of the English Bible. We have talked much in this book of divergent manuscripts, of versions, of corruptions, of revisions. It is good to end with a re-affirmation of that with which we began, and to remind the reader that through all these variations of detail it is the same unchanged Word of God that has come down to us. Men have been careless at times of the exact form in which they had it; they are rightly jealous now for the utmost accuracy that it is possible to attain. But whether men were careless or careful, God has so ordered it that the substantial truths of the Christian story and the Christian faith have never been lost from His Word. Men might draw from it false or imperfect conclusions of their own; but their little systems have arisen, have had their day and ceased to be, while still, unchanged and unchangeable, the Word of the Lord abideth for ever.

APPENDIX.

SPECIMENS OF THE ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF THE BIBLE.

THIS Table contains Heb. 1. 1-9 as translated in all the principal versions described in Chapter XI. A portion of the same passage as it appears in the Wycliffite Bibles has already been given on p. 203. A comparison of these passages will illustrate the truth of the statement made in the text, that the foundation of the Authorised Version is to be found in Tyndale. The Wycliffite versions stand apart, and have had no influence upon subsequent translations; but in Tyndale, even in his earliest New Testament, we find already the cadences and the phrases of the Authorised Version. Matthew's Bible gives Tyndale's version as finally revised by him, and all the other translations are plainly nothing but revisions of this model. The extract from Tyndale is taken from Mr. F. Fry's facsimile reprint of the Bristol copy; the rest are from originals in the British Museum.

Tyndale, 1526.

God in tyme past diversly and many wayes, spake vnto the fathers by prophetes: but in these last dayes he hath spoken vnto vs by his sonne, whom he hath made heyre of all thynges: by whom also he made the worlde. Which sonne beynge the brightnes of his glory, and very ymage of his substance, beerynge vp all thynges with the worde of his power, hath in his owne person purged oure synnes, and is set on the right hande of the maiestie on hye, and is more excellent then the angels in as moche as he hath by inheritaunce obteyned more excellent name then have they,

For vnto which of the angels sayde he at eny tyme: Thou arte my sonne, this daye begate I the? And agayne: I will be his father, and he shalbe my sonne. And agayne when he bringeth in the fyrst begotten sonne in to the worlde, he sayth: And all the angels of god shall worshippe hym. And vnto the angels he sayth: He maketh his angels spretes, and his ministers flaumes of fyre. But vnto the sonne he sayth: God thy seate shal be for ever and ever. The scepter of thy kyngdom is a right scepter. Thou hast loved righteweanes and hated iniquitie: Wherfore hath God, which is thy god, anointed the with the oyle of gladnes above thy felowes.

Coverdale, 1535.

God in tyme past diuersly and many wayes, spake vnto the fathers by prophetes, but in these last dayes he hath spoken vnto vs by his sonne, whom he hath made heyre of all thinges, by whom also he made the worlde. Which sonne beynge the brightnes of his glory, and very ymage of his substaunce, beerynge vp all thinges with the worde of his power, hath in his owne person purged oure synnes, and is set on the right hande of the maiestie on hye: beynge euen as moch more excellent then the angels, as he hath obteyned a more excellent name then they.

For vnto which of the angels sayde he at eny tyme: Thou arte my sonne, this daye begate I the? And agayne: I will be his father, and he shalbe my sonne. And agayne when he bringeth in the fyrst begotten sonne in to the worlde, he sayth: And all the angels of God shall worshippe him. And of the angels he sayth: He maketh his angels spretes, and his ministers flaumes of fyre. But vnto the sonne he sayth: God, thy seate endureth for ever and ever: the scepter of thy kyngdom is a right scepter. Thou hast loved righteousnes, and hated iniquite: wherfore God which is thy God hath anointed the with the oyle of gladnesse aboue thy felowes.

Matthew, 1537.

God in tyme past diuersly and many wayes, spake vnto the fathers by the Prophetes: but in these last dayes he hath spoken vnto vs by his sonne, whom he hath made heyre of all thinges, by whom also he made the worlde. Which sonne beynge the brightnes of his glory, and the very ymage of his substance, beerynge vp all thinges with the worde of his power, hath in his owne person purged oure synnes, and is set on the right hande of the maiestie on hye: beynge euen as moch more excellent then the angels, in as moche as he hath by inheritaunce obteyned more excellent name then they.

For vnto which of the angels sayde he at eny tyme: Thou arte my sonne, this daye begate I the? And agayne: I will be his father, and he shalbe my sonne. And agayne when he bringeth in the fyrst begotten sonne into the worlde, he sayth: And all the angels of God worshippe him. And of the angels he sayth: He maketh his angels spretes, and his ministers flaumes of fyre. But vnto y^ sonne he sayth: God, thy seate shalbe for ever and ever. The scepter of thy kyngdome is a ryght scepter. Thou hast loved ryghteweanes and hatist iniquite. Wherefore God which is thy God, hath anoynted the with the oyle of gladnes above thy felowes.

Great Bible (Cromwell's), 1539.

God in tyme past diuersly and many wayes, spake vnto the fathers by Prophetes: but in these last dayes he hath spoken vnto vs by hys awne sonne, whom he hath made heyre of all thinges, by whom also he made the worlde. Which sonne beynge the brightnes of hys glory, and the very ymage of hys substaunce, beerynge vp all thynges with the worde of hys power, hath in hys awne person purged oure synnes, and sytteth on the right hande of the maiestye on hye: beynge so moch more excellent then the angels, as he hath by inheritaunce obteyned a more excellent name then they.

For vnto whyche of the angels sayde he at eny tyme: Thou arte my sonne, this daye haue I begotten the? And agayne: I will be his father, and he shalbe my sonne. And agayne, when he bringeth in the fyrst begotten sonne into the worlde, he sayth: And let all the angels of God worshyppe hym. And vnto the angels he sayth: He maketh hys angels spretes, and hys ministres flaumes of fyre. But vnto y^ sonne he sayth: God, thy seate shalbe for ever and ever. The scepter of thy kyngdome is a ryght scepter. Thou hast loved ryghteweanes and hatist iniquyte. Wherefore God whych is thy God, hath anoynted the with the oyle of gladnes aboue thy felowes.

The Geneva Bible, 1560.

1. At soundrie times and in diuers maners God spake in y^ olde time to *our* fathers by the Prophetes:
2. In these last dayes he hathe spoken vnto vs by his Sonne, whome he hathe made heir of all things, by whome also he made the worldes.
3. Who being the brightnes of the glorie, and the ingraued forme of his person, and bearing vp all things by his mightie worde, hath by him self purged our sinnes, and sitteth at the right hand of the maiestie on hie:
4. And is made so much more excellent then the Angels, as he hath by inheritance obteyned a more excellent name then they.
5. For vnto which of the Angels said he at anie time, Thou art my Sonne, this day haue I begotten thee? And againe: I will be his father, and he shalbe my sonne?
6. And againe when he bringeth in the first begotten Sonne into the worlde, he saith, And let all the Angels of God worship him.
7. And of the Angels he saith, He maketh the spirits his messengers, and his ministers a flame of fyre,
8. But vnto the Sonne *he saith*, O God, thy throne is for euer and euer: the scepter of thy kingdome *is* a scepter of righteousnes.
9. Thou hast loued righteousnes and hated iniquitie. Wherefore God, *euen* thy God, hathe anointed thee with y^ oyle of gladnes aboue thy fellowes.

The Bishops' Bible, 1568.

1. God which in tyme past, at sundrie times, and in diuers maners, spake vnto the fathers in the prophetes:
2. Hath in these last dayes, spoken vnto vs in the sonne, whome he hath appointed heyre of all, by whome he made also the worldes.
3. Who being the brightnesse of his glorie, and the figure of his substaunce, and beryng vp all things by the word of his power, making purgation of sinnes, sitteth on the right hand of the Maiestie in the high places:
4. Being made so much better then the Angels, as he hath inherited a more excellent name aboue them.
5. For to which of the Angels hath he said at any time, *Thou art my sonne, to day haue I begotten thee?* And againe, *I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a sonne?*
6. And againe, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, *And let all the Angels of God adore him.*
7. And to the Angels truely he saith, *He that maketh his Angels, spirites: and his ministers, a flame of fyre.*
8. But to the Sonne: *Thy throne o God for euer and euer: a rod of equitie, the rod of thy kingdom.*
9. *Thy kingdom. Thou hast loued iustice, and hated iniquitie: therfore God, euen thy God, thy God hath anounted with the oile of exultation aboue thy fellowes.*

The Rheims New Testament, 1582.

1 Diuersely and many vsances in times past God speaking to the fathers in the prophets: last of al in these dayes hath spoken to vs in his Sonne, whome he hath appointed heire of al, by whome he made also the worldes.
3 Who being the brightnesse of his glorie, and the figure of his substaunce, and carying all things by the word of his power, making purgation of sinnes, sitteth on the right hand of the Maiestie on hie high places:
4 Being made so much better then the Angels, as he hath inherited a more excellent name aboue them.
5 For to which of the Angels hath he said at any time, *Thou art my sonne, to day haue I begotten thee?* And againe, *I will be to him a father, and he shal be to me a sonne.*
6 And when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, *And let all the Angels of God worship him.*
7 And to the Angels he saith: *He maketh his Angels spirites, and his ministers a flame of fire.*
8 But to the Sonne: *Thy throne o God for euer and euer: a rod of equitie, the rod of thy kingdom.*
9 *Thou hast loued iustice, and hated iniquitie: therfore God, euen thy God hath anounted with the oile of exultation aboue thy fellowes.*

The Authorised Version, 1611.

1 God who at sundry times, and in diuers manners, spake in time past vnto the Fathers by the Prophets,
2 Hath in these last dayes spoken vnto vs by *his* Sonne, whom he hath appointed heire of all things, by whom also he made the worlds,
3 Who being the brightnesse of his glory, and the expresse image of his person, and vpholding all things by the word of his power, when *he* had by himselfe purged our sinnes, sate downe on y^ right hand of the Maiestie on high,
4 Being made so much better then the Angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent Name then they.
5 For vnto which of the Angels said he at any time, Thou art my Sonne, this day haue I begotten thee? And againe, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Sonne.
6 And againe, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the Angels of God worship him.
7 And of the Angels he saith: Who maketh his Angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.
8 But vnto the Sonne, *he saith*, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousnesse is the sceptre of thy kingdome.
9 Thou hast loued righteousnesse, and hated iniquitie, therefore God, *even* thy God hath anointed thee with the oyle of gladnesse aboue thy fellowes.

The Revised Version, 1881.

1 God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by diuers portions and in diuers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made
3 the worlds; who being the effulgence of his glory, and the express image of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;
4 having made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent Name
than they.
5 For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day haue I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?
6 And when he again bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the Angels of God worship him.
7 And of the angels he saith: Who maketh his angels winds, And his ministers a flame of fire:
8 but of the Son *he saith*, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever;
And the sceptre of uprightness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.
9 Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity;
Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee
With the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

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NOW after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD it came to pass, that the LORD spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying,

2 Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, *even* to the children of Israel.

3 Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses.

4 From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going

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