

same verdict is likely to be rendered also on devotional grounds. It continually reminds one of the French version. At the same time it rests upon a most admirable and well-considered Greek text, and in the nice, almost pedantic, accuracy of many of its renderings cannot but serve a most important purpose as a commentary. For this we most heartily thank the revisers, even if we are scarcely prepared to surrender the noble English of the translators of 1611.

ARTICLE VII.

POLYGLOT BIBLES IN THE "JOHN CARTER BROWN LIBRARY."

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In an Article published in the *Bibliotheca Sacra*, April 1876, the writer gave a somewhat extended account of the library of the late Hon. John Carter Brown of Providence, R.I. There was a brief paragraph in the Article, on the Polyglot Bibles in the library. A more detailed description of these huge folios may not be without interest to many of the readers of the *Bibliotheca Sacra*.

I. We naturally allude, in the first place, to what is known as the "Complutensian Bible." It was published under the auspices of the celebrated Cardinal Ximenes, Archbishop of Toledo, Spain, and founder of a college at Alcala, a place which once bore the Latin name Complutum, whence, the title "Complutensian Bible." The ablest Spanish scholars were employed in the editing of this great work, which was commenced in 1502, and for fifteen years was continued without interruption. "It is equally astonishing," says Timperley, "that neither the long and tedious application wearied the constancy of the learned editors nor the oppressive cares which devolved on Ximenes relaxed either his zeal or affection for the undertaking. The whole charge of the work, including the pensions of the editors, the wages of transcribers, the price of books, the expense of journeys, and the cost of the impression amounted, according to the calculations that were made, to more than fifty thousand crowns." No pains were spared to procure the best manuscripts of the Bible; and so interested was Pope Leo X. in the prosecution of the work that he loaned several most valuable ones from the Vatican Library to the Cardinal, to be used by the biblical scholars who were in his employ. The work was published in 1522. A small number of copies, said, by the

best authorities, to have been only four, were printed on vellum. One of these vellum copies was sold, some years since, for £640, more than \$3,000. Only six hundred copies were printed on paper, of which the copy secured by Mr. Brown is one, and is in a state of excellent preservation. The work was issued in six volumes folio. In the first four volumes we find the Hebrew text with Hebrew primitives in the margin. Vol. I. contains the Pentateuch in four languages on each page. These languages are the Hebrew, the Latin Vulgate, the Septuagint Version with a Latin translation interlined in parallel columns, and below them is the Chaldee Targum of Onkelos with a Latin translation side by side. The remainder of the Old Testament is in the next three volumes, with three languages on a page, the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. In Vol. V. is the New Testament in Greek and the Latin Vulgate, and Vol. VI. is a Hebrew Dictionary, etc. After the manuscripts had been used for the purposes for which they had been procured from many sources, they were all deposited in the Library of the Alcala University. In 1784 an eminent German professor went to Alcala to examine these manuscripts. What was his dismay to learn that a stupid, ignorant librarian, who was pressed for some new books, sold all the ancient vellum manuscripts to a maker of fireworks as materials for making rockets. Among these manuscripts were seven Hebrew ones.

II. The second of the great Polyglots of which we are speaking is known as the "Antwerp." It is in eight volumes, large folio, and was published, 1569-72. It is sometimes called the "Royal Polyglot," because it was executed at the expense of Philip II. of Spain, and, again, the "Antwerp Polyglot," from the place where it was printed. We are told that the honor of projecting this work, the execution of which is truly beautiful, is said to be entirely due to Christopher Plautin, who, through the influence of Cardinal Spinoza, was so fortunate as to obtain the sanction of Philip II., who defrayed the expenses connected with the compilation and publication of the work. Connected with this subject, the following note of Dibdin's shows us how much real magnanimity was in the heart of the king. "It is said that Philip had the meanness to lend Plautin the money; and that, in consequence of the printer's struggle to refund it to the monarch, who had peremptorily demanded repayment, he became a prey to numerous creditors and terminated his life in misery and misfortune."

The "Antwerp Polyglot" contains the whole "Complutensian," with a second Chaldee paraphrase of a part of the Old Testament, a Syriac version of the New Testament, and the Latin translation of Sanctes Pagninius, altered by Arias Montanus. The last three volumes are lexicons and grammars. Only five hundred copies of this great work were printed at Antwerp, and most of these perished in the vessel which was carrying them to Spain, she having been wrecked on the passage.

In the catalogue of books offered for sale, of which this Polyglot was one, the copy which eventually came into Mr. Brown's library is spoken of as "an excellent copy for its soundness, purity, and size." A copy on vellum, the original number of volumes being ten, three of which were wanting, was sold in England in 1816 for one thousand guineas, or between 5,000 and 6,000 dollars.

III. The third of these Polyglots is a truly magnificent edition of the famous "Paris Polyglot," in ten immense folio volumes, printed in seven languages, viz. Hebrew, Samaritan, Chaldee, Greek, Syriac, Latin, and Arabic. No work executed in France in the seventeenth century was equal in splendor or celebrity to this. It was published under the auspices and at the sole expense of M. LeJay, an advocate in Parliament, who was distinguished for his profound knowledge of languages. In its publication he expended one hundred thousand crowns. It was offered for sale in England, but the price asked for it was so high that it found no purchaser. Cardinal Richlieu agreed to reimburse the original cost, provided his own name might be attached to it. The proposal was refused by M. LeJay. Its compiler was utterly ruined in fortune, and in his poverty was glad to avail himself of a shelter beneath the roof of a convent. Elegant as is the present work it was superseded by the next one to which we shall refer.

IV. The "London Polyglot," in six volumes folio, was published in England, 1654-57, under the editorial supervision of Brian Walton. Two languages were added to those found in the Paris Polyglot, viz. the Persian and the Ethiopic, thus constituting this edition more thoroughly a Polyglot than any of its predecessors. Oliver Cromwell was Lord Protector of England during the time it was issuing from the press, and greatly encouraged its publication. The paper on which it was printed was allowed to enter England free of duty, and £1000 were contributed from the public funds to defray, in part, the cost of its publication. It surpasses in value either of the other Polyglots to which reference has been made. The copy in the John Carter Brown library is elegantly "gotten up" in red morocco binding, profusely ornamented in gilt, and was purchased in 1846. The copy we are describing is called a "Republican" copy, because in its publication, as has been intimated, it enjoyed the patronage of Cromwell. At the restoration of Charles II., Dr. Walton dedicated the work to his Majesty, having, with commendable prudence, cancelled the last two leaves in the Preface, in which he had acknowledged the kindness of the Protector and his Council. He added three new leaves in which he made use of language suited to the altered state of things under the monarchy.

In connection with what has been said about the London Polyglot, we may add that we find in the library a superbly bound folio work in two volumes, a companion of the Polyglot, to wit Dr. E. Cartell's "Lexicon

Heptaglotton," published in London in 1686. Dr. Adam Clarke says that "it is probably the greatest and most perfect work of the kind ever performed by human industry." Perhaps he might modify his statement if he were now living. The editor expended both his fortune and his life in this immense undertaking. He labored at it for seventeen years, on an average of from sixteen to eighteen hours each day. During this long term of years he maintained in his own house and at his own cost seven Englishmen and seven foreigners as writers, all of whom died before the work was finished. In his dedication to King Charles he touchingly says that "he has expended all that he has inherited from his parents and all that he has acquired in his past life; that after suffering severely from the effects of the civil war and the plague he had, in the fire of London, lost his library and household goods with *three hundred* copies of his lexicon; and that to these misfortunes were added divers accidents; and from incessant study an almost total blindness."

How far these Polyglots, with the Lexicon of Cartel, will continue to serve the purposes of modern biblical scholars it may not be easy to predict. As monuments of great and heroic labors, and as evidences that the word of God has had a warm place in the regard of those who have spent so much time and strength in the work of comparison and elucidation of the manuscripts which have come down to us from earlier ages, these folios, to which we have been directing the attention of the reader, will be clothed with no inconsiderable interest. Undoubtedly they will remain on the shelves of libraries, both public and private, rarely consulted, and still more rarely perused at any very great length. We look at these elegantly bound volumes which we have been describing, and try to imagine what probably will be their future history. Is the prediction an ungracious one which we hazard, that they will come to be regarded as literary curiosities, valuable as such to bibliophiles, but intrinsically, and for purposes of actual use, of but little real worth? And yet, if this be so, who shall say that the labor expended on them was a useless toil, strength spent for nought? Surely no one can tell what of enthusiasm and courage and patience may have been aroused in the mind of more than one toiler in the field of sacred truth by the study of what to us look like huge folios of unprofitable learning. Nothing which throws light on the word of God is without value. We may, therefore, rejoice in the thought that what may seem to us to have been a futile expenditure of powers of body and mind which might have been put forth to secure some better and worthier ends was, after all, among the many instrumentalities which Divine Wisdom has selected for the accomplishment of its own holy purposes.