

solemnly proclaimed on April 9th, and on the 10th the enthronization took place in the Church of St. Peter, while on Easter Sunday (18th of April) the coronation was solemnized.

"The new Pope, Urban VI., received general recognition. All the cardinals there assembled attended at his coronation, assisted him at the ecclesiastical feasts, requested spiritual favors at his hands and wrote an account of what had passed to their colleagues in Avignon, with the assurance that perfect freedom and unanimity had prevailed. The six cardinals who had been left in Avignon also acknowledged him as Pope and ordered the commandant of the Castle of St. Angelo to deliver up the keys to him, as the former Pope had made this surrendering of the keys of that fortress dependent on their consent. Moreover, Urban's escutcheon was exposed at Avignon and homage done to it." (Church History, Vol. II., p. 35.)

THE LATIN VULGATE CIVILIZING WESTERN EUROPE.

IT is impossible to study, without admiration, the ways of Providence in employing the Latin Vulgate, not only in the regeneration but in the civilization of Western Europe. These results blend together, indeed, so that to a great extent many, looking only at the religious side, lose sight entirely of the secular consequences. Yet, the more the subject is investigated, the deeper becomes the conviction in the mind as to the immense service rendered by the Latin Vulgate in introducing civilization, learning, science, and the arts, among the ruder tribes of the north and east, and the nations in central-east and southeast Europe, which had already made some advances, and, in time, extending the salutary influence throughout the world.

The Greek Church never showed great missionary spirit, or sent its priests to the nations on the north and northeast in order to win them to Christ. Its strength was wasted and its faith weakened by subtle heresies, and the struggle to repress them. The Church was too much absorbed by internal trials to carry out the great command to teach the nations. It nationalized even what it did. If Ulfilas went forth to convert his fellow Goths, he did not carry the Greek language. Both he and St. John Chrysostom had the Liturgy rendered into Gothic, and Ulfilas translated the Scrip-

tures into Gothic, to become soon obsolete, and to exercise little influence in civilizing the Gothic nation. The Gothic churches in Constantinople soon disappeared, and the race gained nothing of the civilization, culture, arts, and literature of Hellas. Only a few acquiring the language were enabled to appreciate all this, and carry their studies further. So, too, when the Greek Church sent St. Cyril and St. Methodius to the Slavonians, she failed to open the way for her culture and civilization. The clergy of the Slavs, with missal and breviary in their own tongue, looked no further, and were isolated from all the literary, scientific, and art progress of the rest of the world, and this became a field on which only one in ten thousand could enter by foreign travel and the acquisition of foreign idioms. Under this system each nation soon became isolated and stood alone, out of the current of contemporary thought and of the accumulated experience of more cultured nations.

The Greek language was the vehicle through which Christianity reached Rome, and ports of France and Spain, like Marseilles and Tarragona. For a time, even there, the Greek language was identified with the Church. The New Testament was read in Greek; the Old Testament in the version of the Septuagint. The language was in such general use that the earliest Popes all wrote in Greek. The Bible was translated into Latin, not for use in Italy, but in Spain and northern Africa. In the latter part of the Roman Empire, according to the judgment of scholars, the *Vetus Itala*, or early Latin translation, was formed. Other translations may have been made in Gaul and Spain. As the use of Greek died out in Italy, these Latin versions became the general books of the faithful; sacramentaries or missals, psalters and breviaries, in Latin, based on the *Vetus Itala*, gradually grew into use. There were variances in these translations, still greater variances in the manuscript copies, even where one type was followed. It was to put an end to this state of things, and introduce uniformity, that Pope Damasus induced St. Jerome to prepare a correct and faithful edition of the Latin Bible to serve as a standard. St. Jerome, in Palestine, aided by learned Hebrew scholars, revised the Old Testament translation by the Hebrew, and the New Testament he revised by the Greek. The book of the Psalms presented difficulties, because such differences appeared between the Latin translation in use among the clergy and the Hebrew as St. Jerome translated it, that Pope Damasus retained the old translation, substantially, while adopting the rest of St. Jerome's work for general use in the Church. The Bible thus revised by St. Jerome became the *Vulgate*, the general and recognized Latin translation of the Holy Scriptures. Liturgy and Canonical Hours conformed to it. Wherever

the Latin language continued to be spoken in Italy, in the Roman districts of northern Africa, in Spain, Gaul, in Britain, where the imperial rule had made Latin the language of the laws and the courts, the army, and official life, Latin became the voice of the spiritual empire which was to stand unshaken, and full of life, when the political fabric built up by the Cæsars crumbled away, and the once proud mistress of the world could exercise no power beyond the Alps, and was scarcely recognized beneath the shadow of the Apennines. Even where new tongues came in to supersede the Latin, the Church held her own. She taught the doctrines of Christ to the Saxon conquerors of Britain; to the Franks who subdued Gaul; the Goths who built up kingdoms in the Celtiberian peninsula; to the Lombards who seated themselves at the foot of the Alps. Heiress alone, of the past learning and civilization of Rome, she retained not only the language in her liturgy, but, training the children of the conquering tribes to its use, employed it in elevating and civilizing them, by making it the vehicle of instructing nations, destitute of a literature or written speech, in the noblest works of the poet, orator, historian, and philosopher, who were the boast of Rome. By this means she elevated their minds and taste, enabled them to appreciate and admire the work of sculptor, painter, and architect, until from these men of bold hearts and grand thoughts, nurtured amid the wildest scenes of nature, grew up new ideas of architecture and art, full of symmetry and grace, not framed by straight lines, cramped and confined, but like the works of nature, infinite in curves of beauty, aspiring as the trees of the forest, rich in variety as the flowers of the field. But the Church not only held her own against the influx of the barbarians whom she won, but, still vigorous and full of energy, she bore the cross where the eagle of Rome had never been seen or penetrated only to sustain disaster and defeat. Her missionary priests bore her Latin liturgy and her Vulgate to convert and civilize the brave Helvetii; the German bands from the Rhine to the Vistula; the tribes of the Low Countries amid their marshes; the Scandinavians, amid the mountains, cataracts and forests; to the rugged hills of Caledonia; the rich island of Erin, even to the Orkneys, Iceland, and Greenland. The word of God went to all these in Latin, and that tongue was thus in daily use among them all. Latin became the language of monastery and school; Latin, the medium by which other ancient languages, Greek and Hebrew, were acquired, and the treasures of learning laid open. To the Vulgate, and the widespread influence it gave the Latin language, western Europe owes its earlier history, the preservation of its folklore and poetry. If Latin suffered in purity, it acquired flexibility; the new conquests gave original forms to poetry, and Christian

hymnology became a new literature replete with grandeur, grace, and beauty, though it caught the echoing rhyme of the Celts, and its metre is not that of Virgil, Horace, or Ovid.

This general diffusion of Latin led to the formation of the present Italian, French, Spanish and Portuguese languages, Latin in the main with words adapted locally from the conquering races; it imbued the languages of Britain, Germany and Scandinavia with a vocabulary of new words and terms, and while these languages were gradually acquiring a permanent form and character, leading the way to modern literature, the Latin liturgy and the Latin Vulgate, which had Christianized and civilized all western Europe, made the official language of the Church the universal means of communication of learning, of intercourse among scholars, of intellectual and scientific progress. Through this language the learning of Greece entered into the studies of the west, the labors of her geographers were studied by Irish and Norseman monk; the acute reasoning of her philosophers trained scholars in the Black Forest, in Gothland, at Yarrow and Clonmacnoise; mathematics and astronomy were studied as keenly on the British isles as in the schools of Greece. Thus scholars in different little kingdoms and states, with a common language in church and school, held intercourse with each other, and all profited by any progress made. Science revealed new secrets in nature, and the value of combinations hitherto unknown. Amid all this onward movement the Vulgate stood respected and honored as the source of the civilization and culture which prevailed.

When the portals of the east and west were thrown open, the messengers of the Cross went forth bearing the Vulgate; from its pages the story of man's creation, fall and redemption were taught to the people of India and Ceylon, Farther India, Japan and China and the Philippines. The parts selected from the Gospels and other parts of the Bible were translated from the Vulgate into the languages of the far east and the islands of the Pacific.

The missionaries who followed the path of the Christ bearer of Genoa, brought the Vulgate with him to the New World. As they acquired Indian languages, parts of the Bible, especially the Epistles and Gospels for Sundays were translated by them from the venerable text of St. Jerome. The Epistles and Gospels in Mexican, printed in Italy, form a noble volume to stand beside the Clementine Bible. These Epistles and Gospels exist in the Montagnais and Huron of Canada, in our Chippewa, Cayuga, Mohawk, Illinois, in dialects of New Mexico and Texas, in Otomi, Maya, Inca, Aymara, Chilian, Tupi and Carib.

Thus the Vulgate made the circuit of the globe in its civilizing mission.

Yet this is but looking on the Vulgate from the human side in its effects on the material progress of mankind. In the supernatural life it was no less potent. The Vulgate was used by the Sovereign Pontiffs, by provincial and general councils, by universities and monastic schools. Its authority as a correct translation of the inspired writings was unassailed. In the cloister it was meditated, studied, annotated and illustrated. The pilgrims who, from the days of Adamnan visited the Holy Land, helped to elucidate and explain many points requiring local knowledge. By the Vulgate were formed the saints of all Western Europe, St. Patrick, St. Bede, St. Germanus, St. Isidore, St. Bernard, St. Bonaventure, St. Thomas of Aquin. It was borne to the nations by St. Patrick and St. Augustine, St. Kilian and St. Rumold, St. Boniface and St. Feargall, St. Columbanus and St. Gall. Its devout meditation inspired St. Bridget, St. Gertrude, St. Mechthildis, Thomas à Kempis, the founders of religious orders and of convents.

It could not have been in the order of Providence undesigned, that the Vulgate should be thus instrumental in diffusing a knowledge of the truths of Christianity, or in moulding so many generations to its spirit, till we reach the Ages of Faith. God never gave such results to a diffusion of error, however well intended the act of spreading it. Nor can any one look on the wonderful Guttenberg Bible, the first book issued from the press by the inventor of printing, admirable and enduring in its paper, enduring in its ink, perfect in its typography, and not feel that something more than accident, something higher than human thought induced the sanctifying of the new art by the production of the Latin Vulgate which had done so much for Europe. If we are to regard it as merely human, it was a proof of the veneration and respect universally entertained for that Latin translation of the Holy Scriptures, a proof of the general desire to obtain copies, a tribute to the pious love for the Vulgate which had been instilled into generation after generation.

“Up to the time of the discovery of America in 1492,” says the bibliographer, Henry Stevens, “the editions of the Bible alone, and the parts thereof in many languages and countries, will sum up not far less than one thousand, and the most of these of the largest and costliest kind.”

The greater part of these editions were of the Latin Vulgate, and of translations from it, so that in less than fifty years, fully half a million copies of the Bible had been scattered over Europe from the newly established Catholic presses.

A book multiplied so often and in different countries, at a time when there was no critical standard to guide, was represented by

numberless manuscripts of varying value, some carefully and respectfully prepared from a critical manuscript, some hurriedly made from any manuscript that came to hand. Alcuin had in vain endeavored to give a careful text; his work, and that of his school, were soon forgotten. The invention of printing did much to prevent the increase of errors; all the copies were exactly alike, and a very defective edition could be condemned and suppressed. The presses that started up in different countries gave editions of the Vulgate. The Hebrew, the Septuagint and the New Testament in Greek showed the tendency towards more thorough and critical studies; the numerous translations into German and other modern languages showed how the Church had created a love for the Word of God. Western Europe, with her Christianity based on the Vulgate, still looked to it with reverence when Luther raised the standard of revolt.

Luther began by assailing practices in the Church; his fierce vituperation gained the mob, and he next assailed points of doctrine. Lastly, he inveighed against the constitution of the Church, and denied all power to define articles of faith or establish discipline in the Church. Yet, as it was necessary that there should be authority somewhere, he placed it in the Scriptures, as interpreted by himself, decrying the authority of any part which clearly controverted his theories. As the Vulgate was the translation of the Bible uniformly used in Western Europe, he made his attack on this, denied its validity, and fell back on the Hebrew and the Greek. He announced his intention to give a new German Bible, and began with the New Testament, professing to translate from the Greek. He was not, however, a thorough Greek scholar even for his own day; not at all to be compared to Erasmus or Melancthon. He really used the Vulgate which he decried, and the twelve Catholic German translations, of which many editions had been printed before his birth and before his fall. After issuing the New Testament in parts, beginning with 1521, he set to work on the Old Testament. Slight as was his knowledge of Greek, his knowledge of Hebrew was far less, consisting of the elementary knowledge he had picked up during his stay at Wartburg. He was utterly unfitted for the serious work of rendering the Old Testament Hebrew into German, even had his violent and constant controversies given him the time such a task required. He relied on the Vulgate, on the German translations from it, on the Septuagint, and such Hebrew aids as he could obtain. The influence of existing Catholic German translations on his work has been traced and proved undeniably. But he was master of a vigorous style; his German translation, in which he cared far more for effect than for accuracy, became immensely popular.

Presented, though without foundation, as a careful, studious translation from the Hebrew and Greek, Luther's Bible was at once used to decry the Vulgate. Disregarding the fact that all the existing Christianity and sacred learning were linked inseparably with the Vulgate, it became the fashion to decry it as a faulty translation, far inferior to one made directly from the Hebrew and Greek. Yet there had been no extended collation of Greek and Hebrew manuscripts, no comparison of Hebrew manuscripts before the revision which the Jewish school at Masora made as an antidote against Christianity and those which followed that school. Any Hebrew or Greek manuscript that came to hand sufficed, and it is known that the first Greek Testament was printed from a manuscript so defective that it lacked part of the Apocalypse, which the editor supplied by translating the missing portion from the Latin Vulgate into Greek.

The same system of delusion was kept up in England where Tyndale's Testament was worked out by means of the Vulgate and Luther's translation, and where the first edition of Coverdale honestly admitted that it was "translated out of Douche and Latyn into English."

The ancient Latin translation of the Bible, revised by St. Jerome, which, in the hands of apostles and saints, had converted and sanctified Europe, was thus arraigned before the Christian world as unworthy of honor or credit. The words which had echoed through cathedral and abbey church, through cloister and cell, through university and school, were now treated by many with derision and contempt. The whole fabric of Christendom was thus shaken, and every land, every newly-coined creed, had its own Bible, interpreted and translated to suit its own ideas.

This system has continued to our day, when we see a Bible issued in which the word "*baptize*" disappears, a revised Bible in which hell gives way to the name of a heathen deity, Hades.

Such was the condition of the Christian world when bishops gathered from all lands under the authority of the Sovereign Pontiff in the Council of Trent. There it became necessary to define the position held in the Western Church by the Vulgate. After fixing the canon of Holy Scripture in the fourth session, the decree proceeds: "Moreover, the same Sacred and Holy Synod, considering that no small utility may accrue to the Church of God, if it be made known, which out of all the Latin editions now in circulation of the sacred books, is to be held as authentic, ordains and declares that the said old and Vulgate edition, which, by the lengthened use of so many ages, has been approved of in the Church, be, in public lectures, disputations, sermons and expositions, held as authentic, and that no one is to dare or presume to

reject it under any pretext whatever." The Council proceeded to check the unauthorized and irresponsible editions of the Vulgate, and directed that it should be printed in the most correct manner possible.

The words of the Holy Synod are guarded. The original Hebrew and Greek are not slighted, passed upon or rejected. No such idea entered the minds of the Fathers of the Council of Trent. But the Vulgate had been too important an element in the work of bringing the barbarians from the deep night of heathendom into the glorious light of the Gospel; too important an element in raising them from savage life to Christian culture to permit the contempt thrown upon it by the demagogues of the Reformation to remain unanswered. The Council declared the Vulgate authentic. What is the force of the Word? A recent writer (Father Prat, S. J.) says: "In ordinary language this term authentic has two principal meanings. I say that a book, a will, a work of art, a glorious feat is authentic when it really belongs to the person who passes as its author. In this sense it may be said that the Vulgate is an authentic work of St. Jerome to signify that it is not falsely ascribed to him. But it is evident that the Council did not propose to determine St. Jerome's part in the Vulgate.

Authentic is also frequently used in jurisprudence to designate a document, either copied or translated, which is declared by the testimony of public officials to agree with the original. Such a document has the same weight as the original, and can be rejected or impeached only by questioning the truth of the attestation. In this case authentic is a synonym for official and legal.

Besides this meaning is another derived from it by an easily followed reasoning. In the Middle Ages, "authentic" meant simply worthy of faith. An authentic translation is a faithful translation; an authentic copy is a copy that reproduces the original without considering the authority which declares it such. This conformity with the text or original, as may easily be conceived, has infinite degrees.

"Now what is exactly the scope of the word authentic in the mind and on the lips of the Tridentine Fathers." "In the mind of the Fathers the word authentic awakens the two ideas (official and worthy of faith) so akin to each other, and each prevails according to the context and the circumstances." "We readily concede that the principal aim of the Council was not to define the fidelity of the Vulgate, in the first place because the decree in its nature is disciplinary and not dogmatic, and especially because a thing so clear and certain needed no definition. The public and constant use of the Latin churches for nine centuries was more than a sufficient definition. What, then, did the Council do? Accept-

ing and supposing the fidelity of the Vulgate as a notorious and attested fact, it confirms and canonizes it by inserting it in a conciliar decree; and it moreover gives this version, already authorized by the general use of the Church, the official character which it did not possess."

The next step was to pray the Sovereign Pontiff to issue a carefully-edited copy of the Vulgate to serve as a standard. This was undertaken by Pope Sixtus with the aid of many able scholars, and the revised text was committed to the press; but even after the sheets were struck off, the work of criticism went on, and many changes were decided upon in order to bring the text back to the earliest and purest manuscripts. Even in its final form it did not meet the expectation of the Pontiff, who looked forward to a more thorough and extended study of Latin manuscripts, and comparison with those in Hebrew and Greek.

The task of the revisers was not to give a new Latin translation of the Bible, but to produce the best possible edition of the Vulgate, based on the oldest and most correct manuscripts. Keeping this in view, another body of learned scholars, under Clement VIII., made a more thorough revision, and their work, issued from the Apostolic Vatican press in 1592, forms a noble folio volume of 1129 pages. In the preface, the editors declare that it was not "their intention to make a new translation, or to correct or amend the ancient interpreter in any part, but to restore that ancient and Vulgate Latin version, purged from the errors of old copyists, as well as purged anew from the errors of faulty emendations, restore it to its ancient pristine integrity and purity, as far as it could be done, and to print it as correctly as possible according to the decree of the Council of Trent." This edition has remained to the present time the standard edition of the Vulgate in the Church. Though an edition appeared at Rome in 1593, and other editions have appeared from time to time in Rome, none of them have been invested with the authority of this edition of 1592.

Studies of the past centuries have brought to light numbers of manuscripts in Hebrew, Greek, Syriac and Latin, but the work of the revisers under Sixtus V. and Clement VIII. gave the world the most accurate and purest edition of the Vulgate, the Latin version of the Bible to which humanity owes so deep a debt. Studies have never impaired its value; on the contrary, it has been a beacon-light serving to guide many to the truth from which they had strayed. The most recent translations from Hebrew and Greek abandon many hasty changes and faulty renderings of their predecessors, and, guided by the best ancient manuscripts, come back to do homage to the fidelity and purity of the time-honored Vulgate.