

The Bible: How it is Printed and Circulated.

BY HARRY HOW.



IT will be readily understood that in attempting to write a popular article on the Bible within the limits of a short paper, one is necessarily severely handicapped. The history of the Bible is almost as great as the Book itself; hence, for present purposes, the subject narrows itself down to one which cannot but appeal to the many rather than the few. How is this wonderful volume—for which Tyndale laid down the real foundation in this country in 1530—printed, and how is it circulated, and, if one may use the word, popularized in every speaking part of the globe? It is at once a matter of historical interest in the past, and commercial enterprise, tempered with religious convictions, in the present.

We have no trace of an English Bible earlier than the 14th century, when Wycliff made a complete translation of the New Testament into English in 1380. He subsequently—with the assistance of Nicholas de Hereford—made a version of the Old Testament previous to his death in 1384. Several other versions of the Bible followed, until the year 1611, when what is known as the Authorized Version was published under the sanction of James I. "Appointed to be read in churches," are the words on the title-page, and this Authorized Version held its own for more than 250 years, until the Revision commenced in 1870, and the Revised Version was given to the world on May 18th, 1885. Biblical students, however, are of the opinion that the 1611 version was never authorized, and that the word "Appointed" in reality stood for "pointed," that is, the chapters were "pointed": marked off, "to be read in churches."

Whilst the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge have a just claim to the copyright of the Revised Version, the copyright of

the Authorized Version is in the Crown, by whom the authority to print is given by patent to the Queen's printers, and by charter a like authority to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Mr. Henry Frowde is the representative of the Oxford University Press, Messrs. Clay and Sons of the Cambridge Press, and Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode the Queen's printers. A special license must be obtained to secure the right to print the Bible in Scotland, whilst it is not on record that the Sacred Book has ever been set up in type in Ireland.

Bibles were undoubtedly printed at Cambridge earlier than at Oxford.

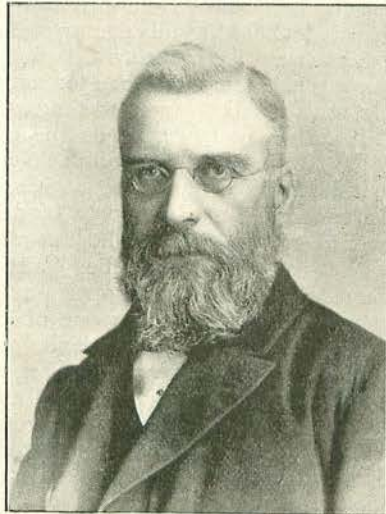
The first printer at Cambridge appears to have been John Siberch, who in the year 1521 published seven books. Some eight or nine years after this the printers' accounts contain an entry of proceedings taken against one Sygar Nicholson, a stationer of Cambridge, for being in possession of Lutheran Books. It cost the University a groat for faggots to burn them. Hence the inference is, that if Bibles were not printed, at least works of a religious character were circulated.

At the moment, however, we are more concerned with the Bible as printed and circulated to-day, and this involves a brief survey of the three great houses where it takes place, together with a glance at the work of one of the biggest Bible circulators in the world.

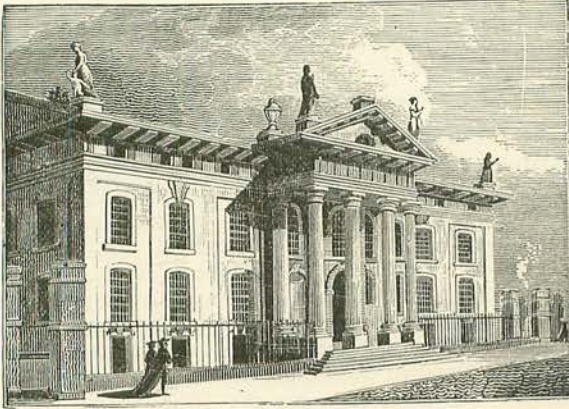
Oxford is probably the more important. The old Clarendon Press in Broad Street—it derives its name from Lord Chancellor Clarendon—was entirely erected out of the profits accruing from the sale of Clarendon's "History of the Rebellion." It is a strikingly impressive stone

edifice, with fine Corinthian columns.

The business increasing beyond the capacity of this building, new premises on a much larger scale were erected in 1825-1834, in the suburbs of the city, and here



MR. HENRY FROWDE.
From a Photo. by Elliott & Fry.



THE OLD CLARENDON PRESS.

the Oxford edition of the Sacred Word is printed. The Clarendon Press is unique in its way, for not only does it make its own paper—the new Indian paper being one of its specially interesting products—but it casts its own type, makes its own ink, and finishes the leather for binding. In short, as Mr. Henry Frowde remarked to the writer, “we manufacture the book from the raw material.”

Mr. Frowde has been associated with the Clarendon Press for twenty years. Whilst Mr. C. J. Clay and Mr. W. Aldis Wright represented Cambridge at the time of the Revision in 1870-1885, the Rev. Bartholomew Price and Mr. Frowde represented Oxford, and all the business arrangements were left in their hands. A very pleasant half-hour may be spent with Mr. Frowde, and he talks most enthusiastically of the Bible as we have it to-day.

His remark that he issued a million Bibles annually suggested the question as to whether the Bible maintained its standard of popularity.

“I think it is more popular to-day than ever,” he replied; “the sale was never so great. I do not believe that all these advanced opinions of people of the Anarchist and Socialist class have done it much harm, though it may have lessened the reverence for the Book in some quarters. The demand is increasing, particularly in Sunday schools, which I think are worked to-day on a much more intelligent basis than heretofore. Yes, the Bible circulates everywhere—though I would say that there is little call for it in India, practically no demand in China, and very little in Africa. Very large numbers go to America. The American population is very mixed—still, they like our Bible. Whilst the Americans produce Bibles of their own,

we print and bind many for them: their own are so full of printers’ errors. As an idea of what extent the Scriptures are circulated in America, one religious paper gave away no fewer than 100,000 Oxford Teachers’ Bibles in a season; and this is only one of a few.”

It would appear, however, that the enterprising Yankee is not beneath stooping to a very low level in order to make profit out of the Sacred Volume. Authors complain of their novels being pirated—it will surprise many to learn that the Bible is one of the most pirated books in the States! The sheets are photographed one by one and reproduced, bound

and sold. An examination of one of these Bibles, however, proves that they are often done in very slovenly style, for in many cases the type on one page has been photographed either larger or smaller than the type on the page opposite. The result is a very awkward and unprinter-like page. It is evident that the American knows the commercial value of the Bible.

Whilst the Revised Version of the New Testament was passing through the Press—for the New Testament was ready some four years before the complete Bible—several American firms sent their smartest men to this country with a view to obtaining advance sheets. A foreman at Oxford was offered £2,000 for an advance copy; but the foreman was not to be bought—indeed, it is stated on the best authority that as much as £5,000 was held out as a bait. But nobody nibbled at it, so much did everybody, from bishop to binder, realize how unpurchasable their honour was at this time. Our friend with the £2,000 in cash, however, was not to be easily turned aside. He determined to try one of the Revisers. He journeyed to Scotland, gained an audience with a certain Reviser, who showed him the precious volume, but never allowed his visitor to handle it. He departed, only to return one day later on with a dummy copy—a marvellously manufactured imitation—which he meant to substitute for the real book, when he knew the reverend gentleman would be out. He saw a daughter of the Reviser, but she guarded the book zealously, and the man went away £2,000 to the good and a New Testament to the bad.

Yet, whilst condemning this act one must credit our American friends with a remarkable stroke of enterprise attending the issuing of

this particular portion of the Scriptures in its revised form. The Revised New Testament was issued to the public in this country on May 17th, 1881. Both the Oxford and Cambridge Presses had dispatched copies to America for publication there on May 20th. The extra edition of the *Times* of Chicago of May 22nd contained the whole of the Revised New Testament! It was not possible for copies to reach Chicago till late on May 21st, so the *Times* ordered the whole of the Book to be wired through from New York. The four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistle to the Romans were telegraphed from New York. This portion of the New Testament contains about one hundred and eighteen thousand words, and is probably the largest despatch ever sent over the wires. The remainder was printed from copies of the New Testament received at Chicago on the evening of the 21st May.

It might be interesting to chronicle the headlines in the *Chicago Times* which accompanied this remarkable production. They run:—

THE WILL.

WHICH IS MORE COMMONLY DESIGNATED AS THE NEW TESTAMENT,

AS IT BEQUEATHS ETERNAL LIFE TO THE HEIRS OF GOD.

IT IS THE CHARTER UNDER WHICH ALL BRANCHES OF THE CHURCH ARE ORGANIZED,

AND THE SOURCE WHENCE THE THEOLOGIAN'S DERIVE THEIR DOCTRINES.

“THE TIMES” PRESENTS TO ITS READERS THE ENTIRE REVISED NEW TESTAMENT,

WHICH DOES NOT DIFFER RADICALLY FROM THE COMMON VERSION.

IN ITS RECORDS AND TEACHINGS IT IS NOT BROUGHT DOWN TO DATE,

AND OLD-FASHIONED CHRISTIANS WILL FIND IT UNOBJECTIONABLE.

The entire Bible in its revised state was issued on Monday, May 18th, 1885, and it is a striking coincidence that this took place on the eve of the Jewish Feast of Pentecost, which commemorates the Revelation on Mount Sinai, when the law was first given to Moses. The work was undertaken by order of the Convocation of Canterbury; the Revisers gave their services—many of whom either resigned or died whilst the work was in progress—and the two Universities subscribed £20,000 towards the labour, by this means securing the copyright. The revision took place in the Jerusalem Chamber, and it required a majority of two-thirds of the Revisers to alter the wording of the “Authorized” Version, and a bare majority to put their conception in the margin—the Old Testament Company sitting for a period of 792 days, of six hours each. Mr. Frowde stated that,

so far as the Oxford Version went, previous to the day of publication 5,000 people were employed in binding alone; 10,000 people altogether had the handling of the Book ere it reached the public; one paper mill alone produced enough paper sufficient to put a girdle round the world six inches wide, using 375 tons of rags for this purpose, and if the paper were piled in sheets it would form a pillar eight times the height of



From a) Vol. viii.—85.

MACHINE-ROOM, OXFORD.

[Photograph.]

St. Paul's. A copy of the Revised Version was presented to the Queen, bearing the autographs of the Revisers then living, and the following inscription: "Presented to Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen by the Convocation of the Province of Canterbury, May XV., A.D. MDCCLXXXV."

Whilst the Oxford University Press probably does the larger business in printing and publishing the Holy Word, the work of the Cambridge Press in Trumpington Street, Cambridge, and at the University Press warehouse in Ave Maria Lane, is very extensive.

The building is known as the Pitt Press, and was erected out of part of the surplus fund raised for the statue of Pitt, and completed in 1833. Since the year 1582—when Thomas Thomas was appointed—Cambridge has always had a University printer, and the present gentleman, Mr. C. J. Clay, M.A. of Trinity College, has now held that position for forty years, and his two sons have worked with him for ten and fifteen years respectively. It is interesting to note the numbers of Bibles and Prayer Books printed by the Cambridge Press from 1810 to 1850:—

1810.....	29,500
1820.....	28,750
1830.....	48,000
1840.....	195,000
1841.....	125,000
1842.....	41,250
1843.....	57,250
1844.....	38,000
1845.....	57,000
1846.....	78,000
1847.....	32,500
1848.....	76,500
1849.....	31,000
1850.....	31,000

These figures compare curiously with the fact that sometimes an edition of 500,000 penny Testaments is now printed at Cambridge. The penny Testament, however, is only one of many different types of Bibles printed at Cambridge. Perhaps, their most notable Bible of recent date is the Cambridge Teachers' Bible, which was published last year in several sizes. The Cambridge "Companion to the Bible" is bound with each volume. Mr. Clay stated that the articles in the "Companion" are written mainly by eminent Cambridge men, and the work is in the best sense representative of Cambridge scholarship at the present day.

Mr. Clay also showed me an interesting facsimile of the Bible originally printed on vellum at Cambridge for the use of King William IV. It is a huge volume, magnificently bound. The great interest surrounding it, however, lies in the fact that its first eight pages were taken off the press by eight of the most prominent men of that day, namely, the Marquis of Camden (the Chancellor of the University), the Duke of Northumberland (the High Steward of the University), H.R.H. the Duke of Cumberland, H.R.H. Prince George of Cambridge, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Duke of Wellington, Lord Hardwicke, and the Vice-Chancellor of the University. The names are given in the order in which the pages were printed and autographed, and reproduced here.

Mr. Clay considers that the Bible has done more to strengthen and sustain our standard of English than any other book.

"It is," he said, "one of the earliest authentic records of the human race—hence

I recommend it on that score, and should I feel led to make a birthday present of, say, half-a-dozen of the best books in the literature of the country to a young man, I would give him—and I place the books in order of literary and training value—the Bible, Shakespeare, Milton, Scott, Tennyson, Dickens, and Thackeray."

The Bible printing office of Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode is at Shackwell, North London. Here, in a single establishment, may be seen all the many processes a Bible has to go through before it is ready to be

issued to the public. The various buildings, which compose one of the most complete printing offices in the world, cover close upon four acres of ground, and give employment to close upon a thousand people. They are, apparently, a long-lived race of printers at Shackwell. The writer came across many "one-berth" men of thirty and forty years, whilst an old gentleman sits on guard near the strong-room—where are stored Bibles in plates and in type, a collection of immense value, formed



MR. C. J. CLAY, M.A.
From a Photo. by R. H. Lord, Cambridge.

this portion of His Majesty's Copy have, by His Majesty's Command, been affixed hereto.

Camden Chancellor.

Northumberland High Steward.

Ernest

George

W. Cantuar.

W. Mungler

Handwrit.

William French Vice-Chancellor

PAGE OF SIGNATURES FROM KING'S BIBLE (CAMBRIDGE PRESS).



ter than I—she knows English so well."

It is proposed to print and bind a Bible from start to finish. We visit one of the composing-rooms first—here they are setting the type. The "readers" in the boxes—they correct the proofs—are interesting. Some of them have been reading the Bible for forty years, and one of their number can read it in every Continental tongue. The type, being set and corrected, is reproduced in electrotype plates (which the Queen's printers were the first to substitute for stereotype plates), and made up into "formes," comprising as many as 48, 64, or even 128 pages each. These are placed upon one of the many and various machines, to be printed. Extraordinary care is taken, not only to avoid errors, but to avoid even blemishes in the work at every stage, for Bible-

during about a century and a half—who has been in the employ of the Queen's printers for fifty-five years. It was at Shacklewell that the Bible which the Archbishop of Canterbury gave to the Duke of York on his marriage was printed and bound. From here, too, came the specimen Bible which the late President Carnot accepted from Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode. It was printed in English, and the late President remarked on receiving it: "I am very pleased, but Madame Carnot will understand it bet-

work must be as perfect as human skill and watchfulness can make it. The first pages off the machines are carefully scanned—every page is examined: one man said that



From a

FOLDING AT MESSRS. EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE'S.

[Photograph.]



From a

BINDING THE BIBLE—MESSRS. EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE'S.

[Photograph.

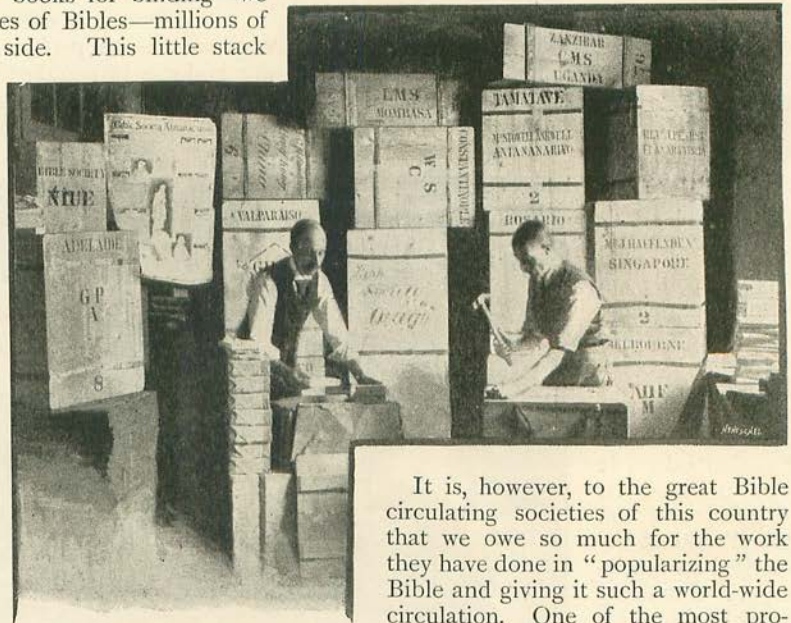
sure, and cut for the gilding of the edges—the last stage before binding. Fifty glue-pots are bubbling over as we enter the room where the binding cases are being made, and workmen are busy stamping the words "Holy Bible" on the backs of the covers. The Bible being bound, it is thoroughly dried and matured, and issued from Shacklewell in fabulous numbers, in every variety of style and

he could examine a ream—516 pages of the Bible—in a quarter of an hour, but that it had taken him thirty-nine years to attain to this state of proficiency.

Watch the paper being prepared and watered, hydraulically pressed, for the machines—1,200 reams of paper are so treated every week. As we pass on to the "gatherers"—young girls who place the sheets in order to make completed books for binding—we walk through avenues of Bibles—millions of sheets are on either side. This little stack to the right represents 48,000 Testaments, and this small parcel of 45,483 Bibles is only representative of many more.

The folding is done by girls. The sheets are then rolled and passed on to the sewers, who stitch the sheets together. Thence the volume passes to the forwarder, who with a hammer curves or rounds the back and front of the book after it has been compacted by hydraulic pres

sure, and cut for the gilding of the edges—the last stage before binding. It appears that, in proportion to its population, the Disestablished Church of Ireland absorbs the greatest number of Bibles, next to which Scotland in this respect exceeds all other countries, and that, so far as England proper goes, the greatest number of readers of the Sacred Book are to be found in the northern counties.



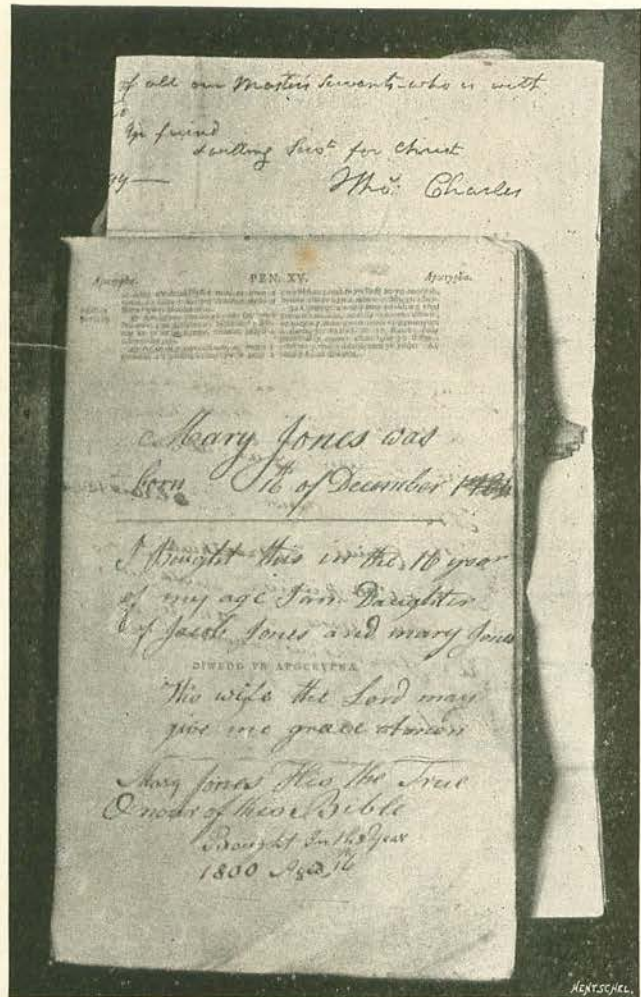
PACKING BIBLES AT THE
BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.
From a Photograph.

It is, however, to the great Bible circulating societies of this country that we owe so much for the work they have done in "popularizing" the Bible and giving it such a world-wide circulation. One of the most prominent of these is the British and Foreign Bible Society, which, up to

the end of last year, has sent out no fewer than 139,559,008 copies since its formation in 1804! The story as to how the Society came to be started is most interesting.

Mary Jones was a little Welsh girl. She had set her heart on having a Bible, so she saved up her odd halfpence until she could purchase a copy for herself, and tramped twenty-five miles with a view to obtaining one from a Welsh minister. The original Bible bought by Mary Jones is still treasured, together with the signature of the Rev. Mr. Charles, of Bala, whose idea was really the germ of the present Society. Her visit set the minister thinking. A meeting was held. It was proposed that a society should be started for sending Bibles to Wales.

"If for Wales," exclaimed a visitor at the meeting, "why not for the world?" And now the British and Foreign Bible Society have the Bible, or portions of it, printed in 320 different tongues! The stupendous nature of this work will be better understood when it is remembered that there are not sufficient scholars in Britain to undertake the many problems involved in such a task. The whole thing amounts to a great and grand linguistic achievement. We re-



PAGE OF MARY JONES'S BIBLE AND SIGNATURE OF REV. MR. CHARLES.



From a THE LIBRARY—BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

[Photograph.]

produce a few of the most curious of these. The translation of those in Tinne, Japanese, and Burmese in English is "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life," and the other two specimens in Macassar and Jaski are Mark iii., verse 35.



PAGE OF KING THEODORE'S BIBLE.

"The Grounds of Faith"—a very suggestive action.

When Manning saw the portrait of the late Earl of Shaftesbury, he stood before it contemplatively for a moment, and then quietly said:—

"There's a man that England—aye, the whole world—should be proud of!"

As he was leaving the building a friend turned to him and asked:—

"Don't you think, your Eminence, that a good deal of the asperity has departed from religious controversy?"

To which Manning replied:—

"The Spirit of God has been poured out upon us."

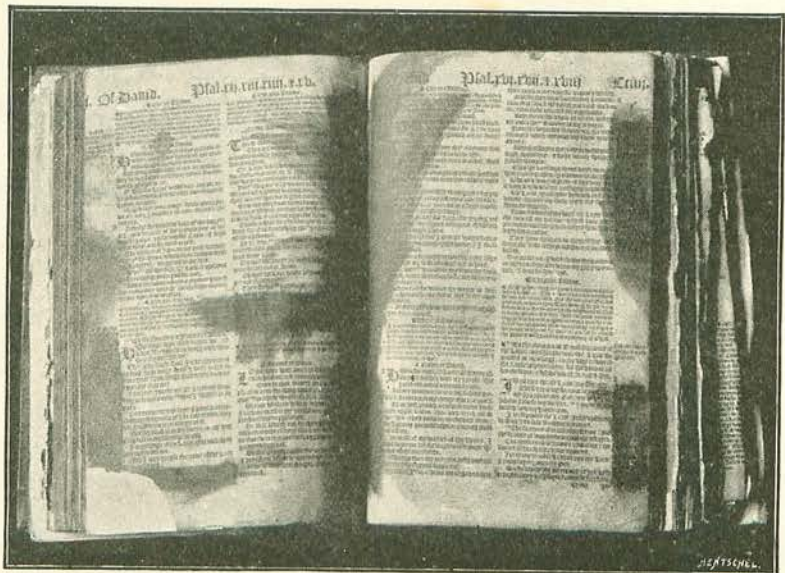
Perhaps, however, the most remarkable expression of all was that he used when entering the room where the valuable Bibles are kept.

Foreign Bible Society has one of the finest collections of Bibles in the world—some facsimiles of which are reproduced in these pages—Bibles the possession of which has meant the stake to those who read the pages; Bibles in shorthand; Bibles in pictures; Bibles great and small. It is a handsome apartment, and as the Rev. William Wright, D.D., and I stood there looking over many valuable and never-to-be-replaced volumes, the visit of the late Cardinal Manning to this room was remembered, and Dr. Wright told me three memorable expressions used by the Cardinal, which now appear in print for the first time.

I happened to mention that, though I had met the Cardinal many times, he had never once mentioned the subject of *religion*, his last act to me being to give me a little crimson-covered book, bearing the title of

"Ah!" he exclaimed, "this is the sort of place I like. Plenty of light!" And then he added, quietly, "*I am accustomed to be in dark rooms!*" Before visiting the Library the Cardinal had called into the Depot, where he purchased a copy of the Greek *Textus Receptus* and a copy of Henry Martin's Persian Testament.

The greater part of the Bibles here formed part of the collection of the late Mr. Francis

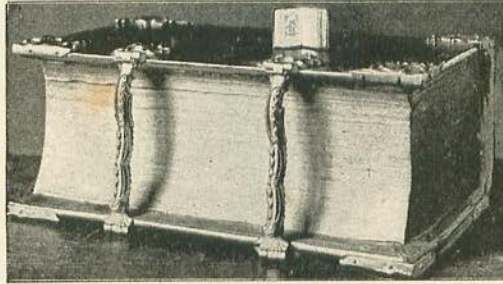


ROGERS' BIBLE—SHOWING MUTILATED MARGINS.

Fry, and were purchased for £6,500, Mr. Theodore Fry, M.P., himself contributing £1,500 towards that amount. Amongst other versions of the Scriptures one is particularly interested in Tyndale's version and Coverdale's version, and the version printed at Geneva, which may be regarded as representing the democrat; the Bishops' Bible (1568) representing the aristocrat. A first edition of the Authorized Version of 1611 is here, and a well-preserved specimen of the first Bible printed on British soil by James Nycolson in 1537. Here is the Sacred Book said to have been used by Charles I.—elaborately bound in red and gold. A remarkable book is that brought out by Rogers—he called himself Mathews, by-the-bye. He was burnt for his pains, and his Bibles mutilated with a red pigment. His marginal notes were very accurate, but they were obliterated. A copy of Rogers' Bible—one of the finest in existence—is in the possession of the

British and Foreign Bible Society, and is worth £250.

There are also preserved here numbers of copies of the Scriptures in the various English dialects—Yorkshire, Lancashire, Devonshire, Somersetshire, indeed, almost every county tongue is represented. These were the work of scholars who worked under the guidance of the late Prince Lucien Buonaparte. A curiosity in its way is a page from the Bible of King Theodore, found in the



OLD DUTCH BIBLE AND THUMB BIBLE, SHOWING RELATIVE SIZE.

church at Magdala when the fort was captured by Sir Robert Napier in 1868. The illustration is in very brilliant colours. Near at hand, in a frame, is the Queen's text, chosen and written by Her Majesty for the edition of the penny Testament presented to State scholars in Australia in commemoration of the Royal Jubilee, 1887. It is peculiarly appropriate at this period of the year, and will fittingly close this brief article.

*On Earth peace,
"Good will toward Men."*

*Victoria B.S.
Windsor Castle - March 8. 1887*

HER MAJESTY'S MOTTO.