

Short Notes

A Copy of J. Benoit's edition of the Latin Vulgate in the Library of the Royal Malta University.

The Library of the Royal University of Malta has recently acquired a copy of the 2nd edition of the Latin Vulgate, prepared by Jean Benoit, and published in the year 1541, and reprinted in 1552. A full account of the way by which the book entered into the University Library and a detailed description of its contents have been given by Prof. Fr. S. Zarb in *SCIENTIA*, 19 (1953) 134-140, 149-168. After reading those articles one is left with the impression that this edition of the Latin Bible, which is incidentally described as 'a precious acquisition' (p. 167), 'a useful document of the XVI century which deserves to be more thoroughly studied' (p. 167), 'a critical edition of the Latin Vulgate' (p. 168), 'a precious volume' incomparably superior to all the XVI century editions of the Latin Vulgate existing in the Royal Malta Library (p. 168) (1), is really one of the best 16th century critical editions of Jerome's Latin Bible and therefore a most valuable aid for the textual criticism of the Latin Vulgate.

I am afraid the panegyric tone of Prof. Zarb's description is apt to mislead the inexperienced reader into believing that this work is really a standard critical edition of the Latin Bible. But Prof. Zarb's own words show that it is not. Every student of the history of the Latin Vulgate knows only too well that most of the 16th century editions of the Vulgate, although apparently based on a critical examination of manuscripts, have very often been made to agree with the original Hebrew and Greek texts thus disfiguring Jerome's work and adding to the

(1) Prof. Zarb enumerates these editions: One of 1538 printed in Venice in taberna libraria divi Bernardini; one of 1543 printed in Zurich: Tiguri excudebat C. Froschouerus; one of 1587 printed in Venice and represents the text of Ioannes Hentinus (sic) Mechlinensis; and one of 1594 printed in Lyons: Lugduni apud Thomam Sorbron. There are some other editions of the 16th century which have escaped Prof. Zarb's attention.

ever-increasing variety of texts. This is recognized by Prof. Zarb himself, who tries to justify those early editors by the plea that 'textual criticism had not yet attained its perfection' (p. 153). But this is exactly the great defect of J. Benoît's edition, which has no value at all for the recovery of Jerome's original work. H. Hurter in his "Nomenclator Literarius" calls J. Benoît a writer of lesser authority ("minoris auctoritatis") and mentions his "Scholia in Universam Scripturam", but not his edition of the Latin Vulgate. This is admitted by Prof. Zarb (pp. 139f). And Dom H. Quentin, O.S.B., a very high authority on the history of the Latin Vulgate, writes: "Les éditions de..... Jean Benoît (1541) s'appuient sur ces faux principes et défigurent le texte hieronymien: nous ne pouvons donc que les écarter de cette étude où nous cherchons à retracer les progrès accomplis au cours des siècles par la critique du texte de la Vulgate" (2). Finally, Benoît's edition has been used neither by Wordsworth-White nor by the Benedictines in their respective editions of the Latin Bible. So I do not think Benoît's edition 'deserves to be more thoroughly studied'. At any rate, Prof. Zarb should have given at least a specimen list of variant readings, textually superior to those of other editions, in order to stimulate further study of the edition.

I should like to add a few other remarks. The edition prepared by the Dominican Albert Castellanus was published in the year 1511 not in 1506 (p. 152). The date given at the end is 'Anno Domini. M.d.xi. V. calendas Iunii'.

The order of the books of the New Testament: Gospels, Paul, Acts, Catholic Epistles, Apocalypse, is that of the Paris Bible of the 13th century and is found in all the editions of the 15th century.

At the end of his article Prof. Zarb, with the same laudatory strain, says that none of the 16th century Latin Bibles existing in the Royal Malta Library can compare with Benoît's edition (p. 168). This is hardly correct. Prof. Zarb is underestimating the value of the edition prepared by J. Henkenius, which is among the editions existing in the Royal Malta Library. Our edition is that of the year 1587. The original edition

(2) *Mémoire sur l'établissement du texte de la Vulgate*; Rome-Paris, 1922,* p. 127.

was published in 1547; it was revised by Lucas Brugensis (1574) and was the basis of both the Sixtine (1590) and the Clementine editions of the Latin Vulgate. P.P. SAYDON.

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The Jeremias-Zacharias puzzle in Matthew 27,9.

In a short note in "The Journal of Theological Studies", 1952, 227f, Fr. E. Sutcliffe has tried to explain the attribution of a quotation from Zacharias to Jeremias by assuming that Matthew made use of a list of Old Testament books in which Jeremias was at the head of the prophets. Hence the words 'said by Jeremias' in Matthew 27,9 are equivalent to 'said in the prophets'.

This explanation fails to take into account certain facts which I am submitting here:—

1. The four major prophets were, most probably, written on separate scrolls with the name of the prophet on the respective scroll. Therefore each scroll was known by the name of its author. But the minor prophets were all gathered in one scroll with the title 'The Prophets'. They are mentioned collectively by Siracides in the 2nd century B.C. (49,12). In the New Testament they are never quoted by name, except in Acts 2,16 and Rom. 9,25, but always as 'the Prophet' (Mt. 2,5.15; 21,4) or 'the Prophets' (Acts 13,40) or 'the book of the Prophets' (Acts 7,42). Sometimes the quotation or reference is introduced by the formula 'it is written' (Mt. 11,10; 26,31; etc.) or 'the Scripture says' (Jn. 7,42; 19,37).

2. Zacharias is quoted three times in Matthew, namely, 21,4.5; 26,31 and 27,9, never by name.

3. Matthew refers to Isaias by name six times, and only twice as 'the Prophet'. This is inexplicable if Matthew made use of a list of books with Jeremias at the head of the Prophets.

4. Supposing Mt. 27,9 to be a conflate quotation, we have a similar quotation in Mc. 1,2.3 where Malachias and Isaias are separately quoted under the name of Isaias, Malachias having no proper name as he comes under the general appellation of the Prophets.

5. Conclusion: it is very likely that Matthew wrote simply 'what has been said by the Prophet', as in 21,4, and that an early copyist inserted the name of Jeremias on the ground of a certain affinity of the quotation to Jeremias.

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“Respondit et dixit” in the Vulgate.

The verb *respondere* is very often used in the Vulgate where no question has been asked and no answer is expected. Thus, limiting ourselves to the Gospels, Mt. 11, 25 ‘At that time Jesus answered and said’, but no question had been put to him; cp also Mt. 12, 38; 15, 15; 17, 4; 19, 27; 22, 1; Mc. 9, 4. 37; 10, 24; Lk. 3, 16; Jn. 2, 18; 5, 17; 10, 32. In all these cases the translation ‘and he answered’ does not fit in with the context.

The verb *respondit*, whether it is used alone or is followed by *et dixit*, is a literal translation of the Greek *apekrithe*, which is the literal equivalent of the Hebrew verb ‘ana(j). Therefore the real meaning underlying the Greek *apekrithe* and the Latin *respondit* must be sought in the Hebrew verb ‘ana(j). Now this verb means primarily ‘to express one’s mind by words, to communicate one’s thoughts’; hence ‘to begin to speak, to address (an audience), to answer’. These various meanings have been preserved and must be recognised in the Vulgate. Thus Mt. 12, 38 ‘Tunc responderunt... dicentes’ Malt. *qabzu qalulu*. Mt. 15, 15 ‘Respondens autem Petrus dixit ei’ *qabez qal Pietru*; so also Mt. 17, 4; 19, 27; Mc. 9, 5; Mt. 22, 1 ‘Et respondens Jesus dixit iterum’ *rega Gesu qabad ikellimhom*. Mc. 10, 24 ‘At Jesus rursus respondens ait illis’ *U rega Gesu qabad ighidilhom*. Sometimes, however, the particular shade of meaning inherent in the verb *respondit* is so faint that it can hardly be recognized, and the verb may be translated simply ‘he spoke’ or ‘he said’. Thus Mt. 11, 25 ‘In illo tempore respondens Jesus dixit’ *Tkellem Gesu u qal* or simply *qal Gesu*. Mc. 9, 37 ‘Respondit illi Joannes dicens’ *Qal Gwanni*. Lk. 3, 16 ‘Respondit Joannes dicens’ *Qal Gwanni*. Jn. 2, 18 ‘Responderunt Judaei et dixerunt’ *Qalulu l-Lhud* or *qabdu jghidulu l-Lhud*. Jn. 5, 17, 18 ‘Jesus autem respondit eis’ *Mela qullhom Gesu*. Jn. 10, 32 ‘Respondit eis Jesus’ *Qallhom Gesu* or even *stagsichom Gesu*.

This biblical use of the verb *respondere* is generally recognized by all modern translators of the New Testament.

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